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THESIS:

**Comparison between primary education in Norway and North Macedonia:
approaches, methods and curricula**

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to look into the primary education systems in North Macedonia and Norway. It concentrates on all aspects of education, from subjects to grades, as well as learning and teaching methods. It tries to define the similarities and differences, as well as how these schools function in these two countries. It examines how the differences affect effectiveness and what the beneficial outcome is. Schooling is an unavoidable aspect of every human being's life. With the advancement of the world today, everyone has the opportunity to study abroad. As a result, the purpose of this thesis is to learn more about the perspectives of learners in both countries, teachers' perspectives on education, curricula, and approaches, and learning dynamics and environments. This study takes place at Asker International School in Norway, Asker and Bratstvo Migjeni in North Macedonia, Tetovo. In this study, teachers, administrators and students are taking part. Teachers are being observed and given questionnaires. Data from primary school curricula in North Macedonia and Norway is being collected and analyzed. To measure the above-mentioned goals, a quantitative research method is being used. The study included 40 teachers. The study's findings provide me with more information about how the educational systems in these two countries operate. How similar these two countries are in terms of education, and how different educators operate when teaching the same subjects to students from different backgrounds but the same age.

Keywords: Teaching methodology, outdoor learning and activities, support, teaching assistants

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Introduction

This study aims to investigate the educational systems at primary level in North Macedonia and Norway. It focuses on the structure of the schools, subjects, grades ,curriculum, learning and teaching methods. It emphasizes the similarities and differences of both countries and how the schools operate.Primary school is a first stage of a basic education provided to all children. It is intended to teach fundamental reading, writing, and math skills. Furthermore, it provides pupils with a broader understanding of several courses and areas of life. North Macedonia and Norway had designed their own systems of education to meet the needs of their students in the best possible way. Norwegian schools are most focused on learning throughout activities , practices and reflections, whereas Macedonian schools are more focused on theoretical learning, reading and exams. Both education systems have different methods of teaching/learning and they are facing different challenges.

Norwegian education has stood up in the 21st century. One of the main reasons for standing out is their reputation for having good test scores at the end , even though they are not having

exams during their primary years. Norway does things differently from North Macedonia. A few differences are : having longer learning days, having less homework, focusing on learning not teaching, having 40% outdoor learning in every weather condition , focus on reading and writing from a very early age and having no grades.

North Macedonian Education has developed through the years by setting higher standards, encouraging inquiring by the students and implementing different methods of teaching and learning. The aim is to achieve national standards in the areas of language literacy, mathematics, natural science, learning other languages , personal and social development. Teachers goal is to prepare students for responsible life by developing abilities and skills for research and presentations.

All children are expected to enroll in school and it is their obligation to. Everyone is equal and fully entitled to everything one student needs in order to finish school. Primary school is only the first step in everyone's life, but it has a significant impact on a child's growth. It is critical for a child to receive a high-quality education from a well educated teacher in order to be prepared to face the challenges ahead, to respect diversity, to uphold basic human rights, and to work cooperatively with others.

1.Educational system at primary level in Norway

In Norway, primary and secondary education lasts 13 years. Primary education lasts from grade one to grade seven. After graduating from grade 7, students must attend lower secondary school, which lasts from grade 7 to grade 10. Students begin school in the calendar year when they are six years old and finish primary school when they are thirteen years old. The majority of schools in Norway are municipally owned and operated, and they are run and administered by the municipality. Primary schools in Norway are free and compulsory, and they are formed on the concept of mutual and adjusted education for all in a structured and comprehensive school system. The aim is for all youngsters to learn basic skills, to become a part of society, to gain knowledge regarding values and traditions, and to have full equality and insights in life. At a young age, students are being prepared to overcome all obstacles and challenges in school. At the primary school level, there are no grades. Students' knowledge is assessed in order to determine their progress at school. There are before and after school programs and activities led by qualified teachers and teaching assistants to give students the opportunity to participate in a variety of activities, clubs, sports, and so on. They are mandatory and required by law, but they

are not required for students of any age. The Norwegian Directorate of Education and Training is in charge of monitoring the quality of primary and secondary education. Outdoor learning and Forest School play a significant role in Norwegian primary schools. Many of the classes are held outside around three times per week. Students spend long periods of time learning outside of the classroom in a variety of settings, regardless of the weather. Norwegians are famous for saying, "There can not be bad weather, just people wearing inappropriate clothes for that time of the year." Students in Norway get more hands-on activities rather than testing. A typical school day in Norway starts at 9 o'clock in the morning and finishes at 3:30 pm. Students have a lot of time to themselves in between classes because they have two long breaks in the morning where they can go outside for 15 minutes and then have a snack inside for another 15 minutes. At 12:15 p.m., students are allowed to go outside for a longer break of 30 minutes, followed by another 30 minutes inside for lunch. Students have Forest School during the school day, where they spend another 45 minutes or 90 minutes if the session is double, doing activities related to forest school or doing a normal subject lesson outside. Students have more educational games and adapt to the school environment during their first year of education. Children face a significant challenge when transitioning from kindergarten to school, and they require time to adjust to their new school environment. In years 1 and 2, they learn Norwegian and English, as well as phonics, mathematics, physical education, art, music, ICT, science, forest school, and religion. They are focusing not only on Christianity, which is Norway's dominant religion, but also on all other religions. Because Norway is an international and intercultural country, it is critical for children to be aware of other religions and cultures. It is also significant from a historical standpoint. The alphabet, learning to read and write, numbers, basic addition and subtraction, and fundamental English abilities, such as learning how to build a sentence, vital aspects, and so on, are the primary focus of the children. From second to seventh grade, students study the same subjects, but they also study history, geography, social studies, and aesthetics. The children's primary goal is to learn how to study and reflect. They are given the majority of the time to conduct research and report their findings. They are encouraged to speak up and ask questions. The major goal is for the children to motivate themselves by finding areas they want to explore and are interested in, rather than for the teacher to organize and lead. On a weekly basis, children are asked to complete homework. Each student receives his or her own folder, which contains the activities and assignments that must be completed by the end of the next week. At the elementary level of

Norwegian education, homework is an unavoidable part of the pupils' learning experience. Children in grades 1 through 7 are required to turn in their homework on time. Parents can track their children's learning progress using the SeeSaw app. The teacher can use this application to post images of the pupils' work and share their learning with their parents during each lesson. As a parent, you are not obligated to participate in the application, and as a teacher, you are not obligated to publish images all of the time. This application is simple to use for everyone, including students of all ages. It is not only for publishing materials, assignments, and images, but also for students to reflect on their learning, do homework, express their ideas, and engage in group work within the classroom. Students can create graphics, make videos for home learning, take pictures, and record themselves speaking and presenting using creative tools. It's an online platform that encourages kids to use technology to complete their schoolwork in unique ways. It is a classroom application that is utilized in several nations, including the United States, Sweden, Norway, and Finland, among others. Because most schoolwork currently is completed online, pupils are supplied with their own chromebooks and tablets by the school. They are stored in school, and students can take their chromebooks home if necessary. Pupils usually take their devices home during the long summer or winter holiday. For the safety of kids and parents, these devices have restricted access to particular pages. Children in primary school have a classroom teacher from year one to year five, as well as a classroom assistant who assists kids and facilitates learning. The only teachers who have changed throughout the course of these five years are those who teach English Language, Art, and Physical Education. Different teachers can teach different subjects from year 5 through year 7. Mathematics is no longer taught by a classroom teacher, but by a math specialist.

1.1. Outdoor activities

Outdoor learning, often known as Forest school, is an important aspect of Norwegian education, and it is required in all primary schools. When children are in kindergarten, they spend about 70% of their time outside and only 30% of their time indoors. When they start school, the amount of time they spend outside is reduced, but not eliminated. Students spend around an hour outside each day, and it has been demonstrated that this helps them develop in many ways. The Norwegian ideal of *friluftsliv* (open air life) refers to spending time outside and taking pleasure in nature's engagement.. (Elissa B. Brown 2014). Outdoor school is related to the

learning process that utilizes pupils, regardless of age or subject matter, to engage in tasks far outside the school setting on a daily basis.(Jorder,1998). An official definition that addresses some of the motivators and perks:

Outdoor school (Uteskole) is a working approach in which elements of school life are brought out of the classroom and into the community. Uteskole refers to extracurricular activities that take place outside of the classroom on a regular basis.Students with the hands-on approach can fully use the experience and have a feel from the real world through activities provided. This experience can positively impact the students mind set.

Academic activity, communication, social connection, experience, spontaneity, play, curiosity, and fantasy are all possible in Forest School. Outdoor learning is all about integrating all of the school topics into an integrated training program that includes both outdoor and indoor activities. Students learn in a hands-on environment: individuals gain knowledge regarding existence in nature, community in civilization, and the general conditions in the surrounding ecology.(Jordet 1998).Andrew Brookes wrote that the discourse of outdoor learning it has been ruled by naturalism and cultural explanations of ecologic learning that struggle to consider the large cultural, biographical, geographic, and figurative variations, and are inadequate as a base for outdoor learning theory . (Andree Bookes 2002,). Outside education is obligatory education that includes extracurricular activities that take place on a regular basis outside of the classroom. These activities are led by the teacher at Asker International School, who is fully qualified to do so. Teachers who have completed a high education course that includes all areas of running a Forest School and teaching children survival and fundamental skills in nature are qualified. The training is a one-year programme that provides one individual with all of the necessary qualifications to conduct all related activities in outdoor sessions on school grounds or in the community.The lessons are designed to focus on natural science, such as making and launching a rocket using baking soda and vinegar in conjunction with a unit that the students are currently studying (unit about space). There may also be math lessons, Norwegian lessons, social studies, physical education, and art classes. Many teachers prepare their classes in accordance with the current school unit. One class might focus on more hands-on activities, while another might place a greater emphasis on the beneficial interactions children can form outside. However, it's fun to make lesson ideas outside of the classroom and see what happens. When children are not in the classroom, they tend to react differently and improve their self and self-esteem. It is

important to have this course in a child's life. Pupils can form bonds with their classmates and organize themselves to work in a group setting. Reflection and inquiry are the most common teaching strategies. By exploring themselves, looking at various natural items, and becoming more fascinated about nature, students gain more information. Students are more likely to learn about nature and the environment while being at one, as well as how to safeguard it.

“Whenever we walk outside, it provides the children greater freedom, room to wander, area to communicate, place to think, area to encounter various types of materials, place to see a blossom rather than read about it in a book, space to see a rabbit rather than read about something in a book; it influences the way the kids are taught. Many of our children are not fluent in Norwegian and arrive in Norway with limited vocabulary knowledge. While I was speaking to them, I realized that I believed kids understood all such common words, such as what a plant, a stone, grass, a vehicle, air, and clouds are, stuff that one often does. Sometimes we believe that children know more than they do. If they have not seen that animal in real life, just a picture of it, they can not be expected to know a lot about it. It is completely different when you observe the colors and shapes of the material in real life and it is different when you see them online, on the internet. A person could be surprised by how different one thing can be. There is way more understatement of the object or the animal when you are able to touch it, smell it or just look at it. The knowledge and the perception that one person can develop is not nearly the same as the perception you have for that object when you just see a photo of it.” (Elissa Brown 2014).

“There are children who go outside the country and have wonderful vacations, but there are children that do not know any of that. If there is a discussion of how many of them have been somewhere, there would be at least a few that will say that they have not been anywhere besides the country they live in. Forest gives a common experience to everyone and all of the children at the end can share that experience and have something in common. That is the main principle in all of outdoor learning. A person can give a group of children a similar experience that they can all be proud of.” (Elissa Brown 2014).

1.1.2. Asker International School/ Forest School aims and goals

Asker International School believes that extending the learning beyond the classroom walls is motivating. It stimulates new methods of thinking ,learning and knowledge acquisition. We live in an era where everything is connected to technology, and we , as adults and children, are constantly exposed to screens. We learn about nature, the environment, Earth Day , and other topics through screens, rather than having the opportunity to learn in real life by exploring on our own. It allows kids to express themselves outside of the classroom in a safe and comfortable environment. By encountering unique difficulties and experiences outside of the classroom students can develop strong relationships, trust , and communication with their classmates and teachers. Asker International School goals are:

- Through the utilization of nature, activities and new experiences, Asker International School - The Forest School inspires students to collaborate, be able to work in teams , and raise awareness of self and others.
- The forest school aims to boost children's self-esteem and confidence.
- The forest school encourages children to become risk-takers by taking risks on their own, as well as being determined to learn and try new things.
- The forest school seeks to educate inquiring,knowledgeable, and caring kids who are eager to participate in forest school.
- The forest school intends to provide a comprehensive approach to self-improvement.
- The forest school seeks to provide activities that are appropriate for each season . The children can learn how to stay outside in both warm/cold conditions.
- The Forest school gives the opportunity to learn how to use tools within the appropriate age as well as lighting a fire (learning about types of fires, ways of lighting a fire).
- The forest school provides connections between the unit in the classroom and outside and gives the children a chance to learn something more in different surroundings.
- The forest school gives an equal chance and opportunity to every child.

-The forest school gives a safe zone outside the classroom.

Forest school can boost a child's self-esteem and confidence. It can affect children's development further in their way. Children can acquire valuable lessons about life, learning, nature, relationships, and other topics.

The major purpose is to stimulate children's curiosity and discovery.

1.1.3. Lifelong Learning

Children are always encouraged to explore outside of the classroom by themselves, with sufficient supervision given. They are keen on taking risks themselves and learn how to assess the risk of the place they are in or of the activity they want to do. If there is a tree in front of them, they need to think if they should climb the tree or not, what can be a potential danger if they do that, and what can happen. Are there any benefits or not? Are the benefits greater than the risks?. Thinking and learning abilities like decision-making, review and evaluation, and communication amongst the children help to promote this independence. The outdoor setting looks to be an environment that encourages people to make adjustments and get out of their comfort zone. Taking a risk is getting out of the comfort zone and thinking of doing something, or doing something that may have a potential risk as an outcome. Teachers, teaching assistants and forest school leaders have to always be prepared that the children are going to take risks on their own. Therefore they all have to teach them about safety tools, things that they can touch and use and things or tools that they can not. By preparing a forest school accident assessment, leaders may set their expectations and have a clear picture of what might happen. Everyone should be aware of the assessment before going out in the forest, and children should take part in the reviewing also. In that way they can be aware of what is expected of them and what they can see outside.

The following are some of the advantages of taking risks:

- It aids adults in their evaluations and encourages them to intervene.
- Encourage pupils to make decisions and choices on their own.
- Creates tasks that everyone can complete.
- Evaluate each student's skills and abilities.
- Encourage parents to take their children outside to explore new activities
- It gives students the chance to see what they like and don't like.

1.1.4. Grading system/Assessments at Primary Schools in Norway

In Norway's primary schools, there are no grades. Grades are not used to evaluate children; instead, feedback and teacher-parent conferences are used. The Norwegian government believes that not having grades is beneficial to students' self-esteem and growth. Anyone who is having a good time at school can focus completely on their studies. As a result, forming a social network with classmates and teachers is essential for a positive learning mindset. It's critical that the teacher and the learner are on the same level. Students must be willing to make mistakes. The student will show interest in the learning process, if there is an open communication line between the student and the professor. It is essential for the student to have a professor whom he likes and feel safe with. Students have shown greater results of studying if they have an open communication and good relationship with the teacher. (Lucie Renard 2016). When students are ready, Norwegian education allows them to feel confident enough to move on to a new task and assignment. They make sure that when the pupils are ready, they are eager to move forward. Students will acquire a positive attitude toward learning and themselves as a result, and they will be able to attain good achievements. Their job at school is to learn and grasp the material, not to worry about the grade they'll get at the conclusion of the unit. Students can see where they need to improve and what they need to work on. Teachers are in charge of successful learning and feedback at the conclusion of the process. Teachers argue that assigning grades to pupils in primary school is inappropriate. There is frequently subjectivity involved. Every teacher has his or her unique grading system and principles. One child may receive the highest grade in one subject because the teacher believes the student has met the requirements for that subject; however, the same child who received the highest grade in the first subject may receive a lower grade in the second subject due to the different criteria and requirements. This kind of grading could be demotivating for kids who come from various backgrounds, have recently moved to the nation, have limited language abilities, and lack parental support, among other things. It is more vital for a child to integrate, socialize, and fit in when they first start school, than to be concerned about their final grade. Teachers believe that grades will be a significant barrier for them and a factor in their lack of motivation. Norwegian schools are keen to focus on teaching children how to write and read at a young age in grade 1 and grade 2, and teachers believe that grades will be a significant obstacle for them. According to Asker International School, grading systems may not effectively reflect what students are learning. It's difficult to explain why a kid

received a particular grade. It is not only the paperwork that is involved, but also the interaction that occurs during class time. Although some students are capable of learning more and others are capable of learning faster, this does not imply that they are less successful or prone to worse grades. Teachers at Asker International Schools also argue that after a kid enters grade 5, it is more necessary to focus on research skills and the development of the student as an individual rather than on grades. When a child understands what a grade implies, he or she will be unable to concentrate on what is important. Instead of developing as a prospective student for the future, kids can tend to think of the pressure parents might give them for getting a grade they were not expecting.

1.1.5. Grades are time-consuming

According to the Norwegian Ministry of Education, many teachers must spend a significant amount of time establishing a grading system with a scale that gives all pupils an equal chance. Teachers should consider what units will be included in the grading system and whether they will be able to cover everything in the time allotted while teaching. Rather than focusing on producing enjoyable and educational activities, they must spend time evaluating and attempting to assign the appropriate grades to all students. Many Asker International School teachers argue that they are already overburdened with planning events, presentations, and plans without having to take or grade assessments at the end. Can grading be used as a motivation for students to learn more and be more focused on learning? Student who go to school just because they want to go and they think that is the right thing to do can show better results when learning or doing assignment than students who think that they have to come to school and that they have to learn and do things at school because they will be evaluated with a grade at the end it is essential for their learning progress and future learning journey. In Norway, children understand that they need to learn because it is up to them, to decide if they want to be more knowledgeable and have more insight about common and general things in life.

1.1.6. Feedback/Assessment

Feedback is particularly important to Norwegian elementary schools, according to them. It emphasizes what the pupil is capable of. It discusses the advantages of learning and

self-reflection. It focuses mostly on the student's abilities, but it also includes some areas where the student requires additional attention and development. Many students have their focus on the grade when a grading paper is delivered by the teacher. Even if that graded paper has feedback written, students won't be able to have their focus on that writing, but on the grade it is written. Even if the feedback is motivating or encouraging, students and parents will have the focus on the grade instead of the written comment.(Alexandria, VA, 2008.). Teachers give feedback to the parents during teacher parents conferences, and they use summative evaluations and assessments to evaluate the knowledge and skills of their students. Teachers are able to provide oral feedback for this evaluation during these teacher-parent conferences, however grades are not included. During the evaluation at the end of each subject, students can see how much they have learnt. Evaluative and descriptive feedback are the two types of feedback that are commonly given. In grades 4,5,6, and 7, evaluative input is particularly important. Teachers might include praise and criticism in this type of feedback, as well as areas where pupils need to improve or focus more. While descriptive feedback focuses on how a student learns, how they behave in the classroom, the positive aspects of the learning process, and the student's strengths, descriptive feedback focuses on how a student learns, how they behave in the classroom, and what are the positive aspects of the learning process. Students in grades 1, 2, 3, and 4 are more likely to receive descriptive comments from their teachers. Students at Asker International School said that receiving feedback, such as grades, can be scary and demotivating. Grading does not appear to provide appropriate feedback that will help students improve their efforts in the future. This is especially true for problem-solving and creativity-related tasks. If there can be a possibility of having the opposite then grade and a comment, what if there can be a comment without a grade, may take the focus more on the written comment. Students can show understanding about the feedback.(Butler R, Nisan M. J.Educ Psychol 1986) ; (Crooks TJ.1988); (Kitchen E, King SH,Robison DF, Sudweeks RR, Bradshaw WS, Bell JD CBE life Sci Education 2006) Swinton OH (1176-1182) Furthermore, it was shown that a grading system that directly recognized effort in addition to knowledge piqued students' desire in improving. This means that feedback can be a grade for the student, leading to more rewarding effort in the future, rather than negative repercussions and energy directed at school and learning.

1.1.7. Teaching Methodology

Teachers utilize a variety of teaching approaches to organize their students' learning in the classroom. Teaching methods are critical to students' learning progress and achievement of their objectives. As a teacher, I am always evaluating and anticipating the pupils' prior knowledge and comprehension levels. Not everyone is the same, and not every student understands the same things. Some pupils acquire and comprehend information more quickly than others, which is why teachers must carefully select their teaching approaches. As a result of technological advancements, teaching methods have changed. Traditional methods were widespread in the past, but with the introduction of technology, teachers must change their teaching approaches. From a young age, students are taught how to type and use chromebooks, laptops, and iPads. Teaching becomes more effective when it is done in a faster reaction to the demands of the students, necessitating the use of a variety of approaches to transmit more knowledge and ideas. "Teaching and Learning Methods" rather than "Teaching Methods" is preferable because we all know that the end result of teaching is learning, therefore separating the two activities is ineffective (Tom, 1997). The amount and quality of learning that pupils receive are the criterion for determining successful teaching (Shahida, 2011). In Norway, the teaching technique is based on student and teacher learning. It is concentrated on the student-teacher relationship. This means that instead of just the teacher lecturing, students spend more time in the classroom and have more opportunity to connect with one another. Students are the most important component of a learning day, and they are the ones that are always asking questions. Before beginning a new lesson/unit, students raise specific questions, and teachers construct lessons in response to their inquiries. They can get solutions to their questions by taking the courses they're studying. As a result, students maintain their motivation and study things that they are interested in. According to Yukhymenko et al. (2014) M. A., Brown, S. W., Lawless, K. A., Brodowinska, K., & Mullin, G. (2014). The teacher should not be the one controlling the classroom and analyzing the students behavior. These tasks are given to everyone in the classroom and they are implemented by all students. Teachers' role is to create a positive environment for everyone in the classroom, and prepare the activities and lessons plan for the day. The classroom does not belong just to the teacher but to everyone who is inside, taking an active part in the learning process. Even though teachers follow an already given

plan to them as a part of curriculum they are free to add things and activities by themselves that can grab the students attention. They have the freedom to create things fun and interesting to everyone according to their needs and level of learning. Textbooks, journals, and online resources such as Twinkle or instructional sites are used to supplement teaching materials. Teachers can also use images and sounds with specific learning objectives and aims to help them prepare and plan. Pupils with special needs require additional teaching assistance from someone other than the classroom teacher. In that instance, educational materials should be provided to the best of the individual's capacity. Teachers at Asker International School like activities like show and tell, which provide students the opportunity to choose a topic and speak about it in front of the class. According to research, students' higher cognitive thinking, acquiring knowledge, and ambition all enhance in classroom, structuralist classroom setting, notably in STEM programs. (Boddy, N., Watson, K., & Aubusson, P. (2003). From an early age, it develops their presentational abilities and allows the teacher to examine the pupils' interests, communication, and expression styles. At Asker International School, students in years 1 and 2 study Norwegian as well as how to read and write using a Phonics program. After the first two months of school, children's understanding of letters and sounds is assessed. Teachers can examine students' ability to recognize various sounds, letters, and words in consultation with a language specialist. Students who do not speak Norwegian as their first language are given extra aid and classes to help them acquire the language faster. A class is split into two smaller groups, with one teacher leading a group with a higher comprehension level and the other leading a group with a lower comprehension level. Students who are in the middle of a level are allocated to a third instructor, usually the school's language expert, who will help them study. Children have a thorough comprehension of all the sounds in the Norwegian language after two months of phonics training and are ready to begin reading and writing. During the first two months, students are simply taught about the sounds separately, not how they are spoken in a word. Students learn about sounds that are pronounced differently in different words during the school year. The first ten minutes of the phonics lesson are spent with all of the pupils in the classroom, where the teacher uses visuals and flashcards to introduce a new letter sound. After 10 minutes, the students are divided into groups and sent to smaller reading rooms to begin their studies. Teachers use Project X books to teach students how to

read and write. One type of book is studied throughout the week, and students read the same book in pairs every day. Typically, the books are small, with no more than seven pages. At the beginning of the book, there are words in green and red. The green words can be sounded out, whereas the red ones are written one way but pronounced another. Project X is a groundbreaking new reading program that aims to entice young children to read, support their early literacy development, and help them grow into confident, fluent, self-sufficient, and joyful readers. A broad, engaging, and exciting selection of reading materials for children in the twenty-first century is provided by this collection of 200 remarkable and incredibly creative novels. These include fascinating informative books, high-quality stories for children created by some of the best children's authors, and electronic texts complemented by audio and video media. While the books are aimed at children of various ages, they pay special attention to the needs and preferences of readers. The ability of most readers to stay motivated is critical to their success. Reading motivation and engagement are low among many children and teenagers. (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development; OECD (2017), PISA 2015 Results); In a survey of students from 50 nations, 40% said they were only "somewhat" or "less than" engaged in their reading classes. (PIRLS, 2016). Individual goals, values, and beliefs about the themes, procedures, and outcomes of reading are referred to as reading motivation. (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). For example a child might read a book about a video game, because the child is interested in playing that video game and shows higher level of motivation into reading the book just because of the game. Therefore teachers believe that finding the right book for the right child is crucial for further motivation and reading development. Teachers at Asker International School work closely with the children to understand their beliefs and interests before sending them to the right phonics group. Literacy development refers to an individual's thoughts and feelings about passage, whilst trying to read interaction makes reference to an individual's participating actively in reading as evidenced in actions, influence, or comprehension. (Guthrie, Wigfield, & You, 2012). The books used in Asker International School's phonics program have a wonderful character journey that entices youngsters to read and serves as a great springboard for their writing. It provides the best support for phonics teachers by giving texts and stories. With easy-to-use notes, clear assessment targets, and assessment for learning recommendations, it provides great support

for guided and group reading. At Asker International school there is the direct method of teaching, where the English language is being taught only in English, and Norwegian language is taught only in Norwegian. Educators find this method really effective because it makes children who do not speak that language at the moment learn faster. The principles of direct method are:

1.Students should only use the L2 language in the classroom. In this way students build clear speaking skills and it gives good practice.

2.Teachers motivate students to make conversations in the language of learning by giving them topics to discuss.

3.Teachers should not translate, but demonstrate. In that way students are able to memorize the meaning of the words or sentences in the L2 language, without having the need to translate in future. This gives them a chance to start thinking in the new language.

4.Students learnt a lot about the culture by learning the language. Direct method gives a chance to everyone to learn a lot about the culture by just speaking the language .

1.1.8. Homework at primary level schools in Norway

Homework help stretches back to the 1980s. The main aim was to support and help students that have difficulties understanding the language having parents who are struggling to provide help due to their Norwegian language skills.Homework help was frequently provided free of charge by volunteer organizations. This method grew in popularity over time. Approximately half of Norwegian schools gave homework help to their students during one school year. This help has been provided during an after school club known SFO or in Norwegian skolefritidsordningen.(Haugsbakken et al., 2009).The Norwegian Parliament in June of 2010 has set the rule that required all of the teachers in primary level schools to help students with their homework and provide support where needed. This requirement was for students in grade 1,2,3 and 4.The government pays for all schools, public and private, to provide this service, and all schools are required to do so. It is up to the parents to decide whether or not to accept this offer. Starting in the 2010/2011 academic year, the policy was introduced. Later on the Norwegian government decided not to keep this assistance just for students in the grades from 1 to 4, but to extend the help and provide it to students starting from grade 1 to grade 10.

The ministry of education in Norway believes that homework is an essential part of a students' learning process and time. Good and Brophy (2003) talk about homework as, "An important extension of in-school opportunities to learn". Homework is essential since it aids in the development of key abilities and instills a feeling of responsibility in youngsters. Through homework, children learn time management, the ability to finish a task within a specified period of time, and the development of communication with their peers and teachers. It helps students to track their own progress while also allowing them to feel involved in their own learning. Homework was found to be positively related to student achievement in a study led by Hill, Spencer, Alston, and Fitzgerald (1986). They argue that giving students homework is a reasonable strategy to boost their academic preparation without increasing staff or changing the curriculum. The emphasis on homework started increasing just as gaining a better score at a test increased. It was important for everyone and it was essential in one's learning process. If a child has a lot of work to do in a short period of time at school, they are likely to become overwhelmed. Some kids who find it difficult to understand and absorb everything at school should spend extra time at home doing their homework, understanding and improving. They can arrange their own learning and assist themselves comprehend the material and content of the lessons with the help of homework. Having extra learning time at home can help kids understand the topic better and make it easier for all pupils who learn at different rates. When it comes to school assessments, this extra time can make a difference in motivation and self-achievement. According to Asker International School, homework gives students self-discipline and facilitates further learning. It is a pattern that pupils adhere to in order to get better academic outcomes in the future. When a child understands how to study the most effectively and which learning methods are most effective for them, they will be able to guide themselves in the appropriate way. Different types of homework were recommended, as well as the emphasis of worksheets on relevant, innovative, and creative thinking endeavours instead of exhausting lot of works and test, were both promising signs..(Hill, Spencer, et. al, 1986)

Teachers benefit from homework as well. Students who couldn't concentrate during the session will be able to go over the same content at home, and students who couldn't concentrate during the lesson will be able to go over the same material at home. It provides teachers with assurance that their lectures were worthwhile and effective.

1.1.9. Homework policy at Asker International School

After having a conversation with the Coordinator at Asker International School the following statements were concluded:

One of the most important things at the primary level of Asker International School is homework or also known as home learning. Students need some time to complete their home learning tasks. Students should be able to actively follow and participate in the lectures, so with the help of home learning, students can achieve that goal.

Students are given 1 week to complete all the home learning assignments. Homework does not have an effect on the feedback the student will get as a sort of an assessment, but it does indicate how much time students have spent actively learning.

- Parents should be involved in home learning activities but they must not do the homework themselves. They should give the needed assistance and help the children to overcome the obstacles they face.
- Parents should not be asked to teach or answer questions.
- The amount of time spent doing homework varies from Year to Year.
- Students should not be overwhelmed with homework. Each student should get the right tasks and assignments.
- Students should not be overwhelmed with homework during summer or winter holiday. They should get assignments for their practice, but it should not take a lot of their free time.
- Home learning can be an open-ended task such as personal reflection.
- Asker International School motivates students to do their homework through research done at home.
- Asker International School seeks students to reflect on their homework by presenting it in front of the class.
- Home learning helps students to identify their strengths and weaknesses by themselves and try to overcome the challenges.

1.1.10. Teaching assistant and classroom support

In Norway, primary schools are required to provide teaching assistants and classroom support when necessary. In year one, a teaching assistant is required to assist students in the classroom

full time, whereas in other years (2,3,4,5,6,7) teaching assistants might not be needed full time. It is critical for young students to receive the assistance they require, especially if they are new to the school setting. In Norway, the maximum number of children in a primary school class is 28, if there is enough room. The learning is being affected not only by the class size, but also if there are two or one educator in it. In Norway, teaching assistants are individuals who have previous experience as a support in a classroom. That can be adults who had previously worked in a kindergarten, or the ones who are still going through teaching training and are willing to become educators. As previously mentioned class size matters and also it matters how many educators are in it to maintain the learning process and make sure that children are having a positive attitude towards each other. The article written by Lazear (2001) says that the learning environment is affected by the students' behavior. If one of the students is struggling to behave well and keep up with the discipline, all of the students can have trouble focusing and concentrating on the work provided by the teacher. As said in the Salamanca Statement, a collaborative school should react to their pupils' varied needs, making sure decent education for everywhere throughout regular learning, organizational structures, teaching techniques, asset use, and teamwork. (UNESCO 1994). For a classroom to be truly inclusive and active, another educator must monitor the learning, standing in for the instructor when necessary, and providing all of the assistance that the students require. Support is available to kids who want to learn more, inquire more, and challenge themselves more, not simply those with particular needs or learning abilities. Many schools around the world lack the financial resources to hire additional support workers or teachers to assist kids. Many schools are now hiring learning support assistants (LSAs), sometimes known as teaching assistants, as a result of this. (Giangreco, Doyle, and Suter 2014), paraprofessionals (Carter et al. 2009, Carter, E., L. O'Rourke, L. G. Sisco, and D. Pelsue. 2009.) This role has a different name in different nations and schools. The following titles can be found in Norwegian primary schools:

- *Classroom Assistant
- *Non Teaching Staff
- *Learning support Assistant
- *Special Teacher Assistant
- *Special Support Assistant
- *Learning Need Assistant

*Teaching Assistant

The Department for Education and Skills has made the most recent endeavor to clarify terminology and establish consistency. It goes like this:

Teaching assistant' is a term used to describe someone who works as a teacher's helper. The government's chosen generic word for all people in paid support roles for teachers in primary, secondary, and special schools is TA. Those with a general function as well as those with specialized responsibility for a kid, subject area, or age group fall into this category. It shows how important teaching assistants are in students' learning process and how much work they do for both students and teachers. They fill every gap that is missing in between teaching and studying both.

Many adults have sought to define a teaching assistant's position in a classroom; the positions can be classified in a variety of ways. Had said that the role of one support in the classroom can be :

- Support for the pupils
- Support for the teachers
- Support for the curriculum
- Support for the school
- Leading after school activities designed to support children in different area
- Leading clubs
- Planning materials and plans for the clubs and for the optional after school activities provided for all children

Support in the classroom can be given in different ways, depending on the structure of the classroom and the students. Also what has an impact on the kind of support is the type of subjects. Sometimes some of the students show high performance in one subject but a lower performance in another subject. It is crucial for a teaching assistant to track their progress and meet the students needs. After a conversation with the teaching assistants in Asker International School and their coordinator, the responsibilities by the teaching assistants at AIS are:

- *Preparing all the materials that students need in order to conduct a lesson.
- *Circling around the classroom, and being there for the students.
- *Listening to the students' needs and questions.

- *Answering questions, clarifying situations and giving instructions where needed.
- *Helping teachers to plan lessons.
- *Giving teachers feedback and suggestions for planning lessons, or evaluating certain students.
- *Taking active part in students assessments, grouping, levels.
- *Preparing differentiated materials for students with lower ability levels.
- *Reading out loudly to students.
- *Helping students find books at the library, reading with them , correcting where needed and giving support while reading together.
- *Making a safe environment for all the children.
- *Being actively involved in conversation and tasks.
- *Helping students overcome barriers and challenges.
- *Supporting children who are struggling to complete a task, and making sure that they are keeping up with the pace of the class. At the same time, challenging students that are able and keen to learn more.
- *Taking charge of small groups activities and taking groups out of the classroom when needed.
- Supporting students' wellbeing and getting charged if an accident occurs.
- *Keeping classroom records and notes about the progress of all the children.
- *Keeping parents informed about the progress of their children.

Joyce Carroll in 1980 wrote that it is essential for a classroom to have writers and in order to have good ones, practice is important. This improvement must focus first on our greatest resource- the teacher. John Wahlquist thinks that teaching assistants are "de facto instructors". He argues that it is common knowledge that the traditional T.A does a lot. In every institution the biggest work is done by the teaching assistant but yet is being presented as the work of the teacher. At university level there are many teaching assistants who prepare and deliver lectures before they become professors. A teaching assistant is also vital for a primary school's improvement. It is a person who holds everything together in a classroom and plays an important role. A person who simultaneously observes, helps, instructs, and listens. To work as a teaching assistant in Norway, no formal degree is required (skoleassistent- in norwegian). A person who wants to learn more and gain more experience before working in a school setting can obtain a school certificate from a higher education institution and work as a skilled child and youth

worker. Even Though it is not required by the law to have a formal education in order to become a teaching assistant at primary level schools in Norway, many of the managers would rather higher someone who has either experience, certificate also known in norwegian as fagbrev, or is in the process of holding a degree in education. There is a high competition between adults in this profession, so around 90% of the teaching assistants hold a degree in pedagogy.

1.1.11.Special Needs Support

In Norway, students who require special education in primary schools are entitled to the same number of school hours as normal students. Subjects and curriculum may be modified to meet the needs of pupils, as well as the number of hours they spend in school. Deaf students are entitled to additional educational hours. The major goal is that they do not miss any classes. Depending on their understanding and abilities, these kids may not require more lessons. Deaf students are entitled to teachers who are fluent in both Norwegian and English sign language. Every kid with a disability, whether physical or mental, is entitled to special assistance from the municipality. In Norway this assistance is known as special education needs teacher (SEN). A special education teacher from the municipality comes into the classroom to observe that particular student and determine how many hours weekly or daily the student requires additional support. Even though the classroom already has a teaching assistant, this is a separate individual devoted solely to that student, whereas the teaching assistant is assigned to all students unless otherwise specified. Special needs teachers are skilled and trained educators who can communicate with kids with special needs and build a trusting relationship with them. SEND (special educational needs and disability) is a concept that has evolved over several decades, with distinct definitions at each stage. (UCLES, 2017). Rousan (1998) Special education, according to him, is a field of study dealing with the evaluation, diagnosis, and creation of appropriate instructional programs and teaching and learning approaches for various types of exceptional children. According to, UCLES (2017) the word refers to students who have learning difficulties, making learning difficult for them in comparison to youngsters of the same age group. This implies that someone who is trained to assist children with learning difficulties must provide secure conditions for those children, as well as find a mechanism for them to track their progress and keep up with the classroom learning pace.

The SEN Code of Practice (DfES, 2015) says the term special educational needs is defined as a special ability with whom students need help with. Some of the students need more support and help some less.

This picture shows how many children needed some support over the past years starting from 2014 ending 2018.

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Number of children with a statement of special educational needs	7799	7950	8290	8674	8813
Proportion of all kindergarten children	2,7%	2,8 %	2,9 %	3,1 %	3,2 %

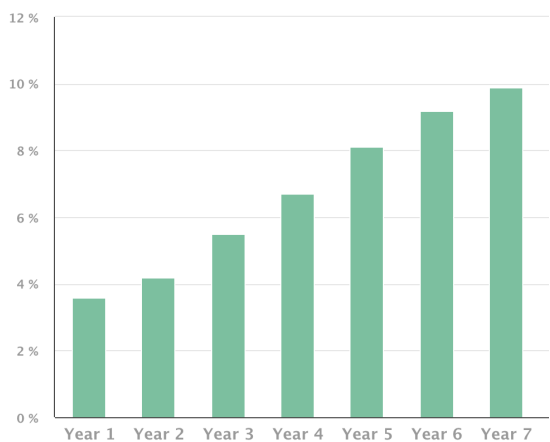
Source: Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training / BASIL

Teachers in special education are needed in schools where students with varying learning, physical, and mental abilities are present. In Norway, these teachers are entitled to and paid by the municipality, not the school where they would be employed. The municipality can either request that the school locate its own teacher to assist that student, or they can do it themselves. The primary responsibility of a special needs teacher is to give assistance to students with exceptional educational needs who are assigned to the teacher. The special needs teacher ensures that the students can participate completely in class activities and, if feasible, interact and associate with other children. A SEN teacher often works during school hours during the week, with the hours varying based on the requirements and ability of the children. According to the Norwegian Directorate for Education and training a lot of programs and educational courses need to be based on a ground of how many students need special support help and to be planned according to that information. In that way a special educational need teacher can have a designed schedule according to the students who need to get the support. It is essential to have a pre-plan designed activities and planning according to the student level.

The better the standard of living, the less the need for special accommodations. When mainstream services are good, they have a favorable impact on special needs services. (Haug, 2017) Not all children and students receive the assistance they require. Many people receive assistance too late and are treated with low expectations. (Ministry of Education and Research, 2019) The number of special needs services given in Norway varies by municipality. The

proportion of declared students getting more than 271 hours varies between 30 and 69 percent in the ten largest municipalities, according to the Norwegian directory of education and training. As a result, we can see that different options are available for kids in need. 64 percent of indicated pupils in some of the schools presented with something less than one hundred students who get something around 271 hours of support. Among the schools with a high proportion of special needs students, Steiner, Montessori, and Christian schools stand out.

The picture shows the percentage of the students who receive special needs support by level

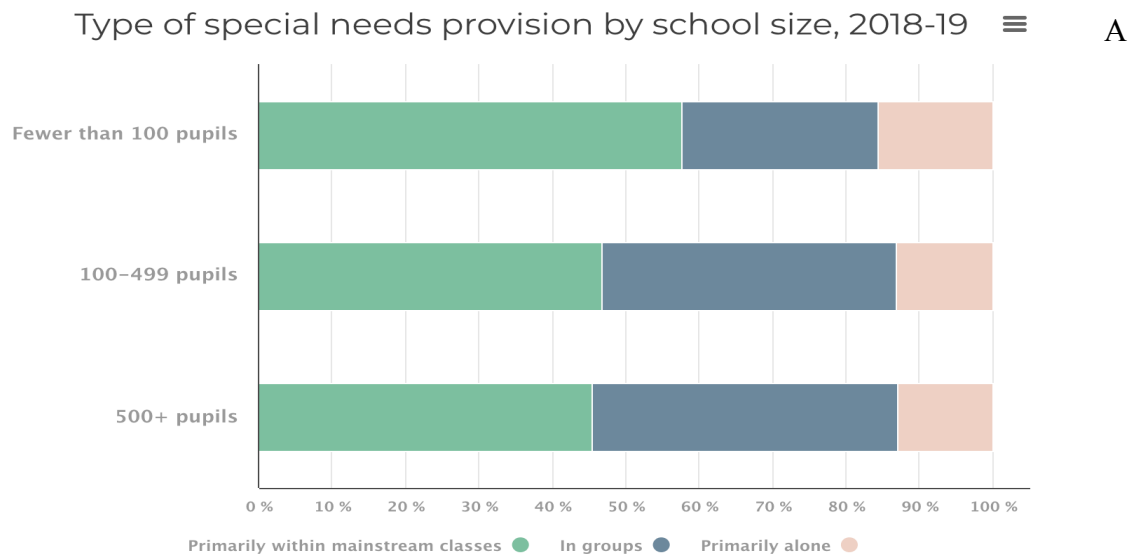


Source: [Norwegian Directorate for Education & Research](#)

After having a conversation with the coordinator at Asker International school ,the main goals of a SEN teachers were clarified :

- A SEN teacher should be support pupils in classroom all the time
- Should closely monitor the pupil's progress.
- To modify materials needed for that specific pupil, depending on the learning ability that the student has.
- Prepare games, visual prompts, flashcards, worksheets, everything that would make the students' learning smoother and easier.
- Closely collaborate with the SENCO and classroom teachers.
- Support the interaction between the students, and keep them engaged together.
- Provide inclusion to the students.

- Positive reinforcement and motivation for the students in need. Reward system or another type of praise that would work.
- Providing regular feedback to the parents, SENCO and teachers.
- Collaboration with the parents, giving clear expectations and instructions.
- Promoting learning at all levels.
- Participating in relevant professional development if needed.
- Maintaining confidentiality between students, parents, schools.
- Following school procedures and rules.
- Getting involved in situations where needed.
- Providing a safe environment for the students



Source: [Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training](#)

SEN teacher has to have training in aspects of SEN and dyslexia. The Teacher needs to have a deep understanding of the cultural and social difference that the student has. It has to have an interest in learning more about that child and closely observing and monitoring every day. A SEN teacher needs to assist with the organization of the learning environment for those students and be responsible for leading the learning process at that time.

The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training administers a grant program that allows publishers to develop required teaching aid for students with special needs. The grant program is administered by a yearly announcement that invites publishers to apply.

2.Educational system at primary level in North Macedonia

The schooling institution in the Republic of North Macedonia represents pupils' necessities for academic, interpersonal, and cognitive identity. All schools that are under primary and secondary level of education are managed by the municipalities. There is an exception with the schools in the capital city of North Macedonia, Skopje where all of them are under responsibility by the capital city. The learning plans and the yearly programs are prepared by the ministry of education but the planning itself is the teachers' responsibility. Teachers with collaboration with teachers and certain research are able to come up with the materials that are given to the students. The primary level of education has 9 years of learning. Students are starting at the age of 6, or in some cases age of 5 and a half, and are finishing primary school at the age of 14. After the graduation in grade 9, students continue their education at the secondary level that lasts for another four years. Primary school is free of charge and obligatory for all the children who live in North Macedonia. The teaching in primary schools is conveyed in two languages. Macedonian language is the official language in the country, but students get to choose in what language they want to follow the learning, Albanian or Macedonian. There are different classes where the teaching happens in Macedonian language and different classes where the teaching happens in Albanian languages. There are schools that have mixed classes and students get to learn both languages fluently. Students are expected to do homework on a regular basis, and take part in different activities and projects. For every subject they have, students get different homework that is expected to be done by the end of the day or week. Teachers have the responsibility to assign homework and give deadlines for it. At the beginning of the school year students get to focus mostly on adapting to the school environment and class. In year 1, they have 9 mandatory classes/subjects led by a classroom teacher and a language teacher when it comes to learning English. Subjects are : Language, Mathematics, English Language as a first foreigner language, Physical Education, Music, Art, Science, Unit and an optional subject. The same amount of subjects is implemented in year 2, but from year 3 there are subjects that are being added to the current ones. In year 3,4 and 5, students get to learn more about technical education. It is focused on building and creating things. From the year 5 students get to have Geography, Biology, Religion, Physics, Science, Traditional Dance Subjects as addition to the current subjects. By the

beginning of 9 grade, students have 13 main and obligatory subjects that everyone needs to follow.

It occurs a couple times a year for students. The tests are required, and the teacher determines when they will take place. Students are usually given tests at the end of each lesson to measure their knowledge and gain a visual representation of how much they know. A teacher can produce a final grade at the completion of the school semester or year by collecting the grades from each test. For the first three years of school, students receive written grades for all subjects, then for the remainder of each year, they receive numerical grades. Every student and subject has its own grade, which is written by the teacher. They are being gathered from all of the pupils' knowledge and reflections. Students are evaluated frequently, and grades are assigned after three months of study in the first school semester. These are not final grades, and they can be modified if the students are willing to do so. A numerical grade is assigned, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the greatest. Depending on the performance of the students, numerical grades can rise or fall. Students receive final grades only for the first half of the school year when it is completed, but these grades are not final for the entire school year. Students are examined once more after three months of the second semester, following the winter break. Finally, each student receives a numerical grade that is recorded on their school transcript and is significant for future education. School transcripts are vital for obtaining scholarships at universities or private secondary schools since they indicate each student's performance. Parent-teacher conferences and meetings are common, and they allow parents to understand more about their children's academic development. Teachers write report cards for each kid and hand them out to parents during parent-teacher conferences. Additionally, parents can schedule individual meetings with classroom teachers before and after school when it is convenient for them. Students have classes that begin at 7:30 a.m. on a daily basis. Depending on the size of the school, there may be shifts where certain grades attend school in the morning and conclude their learning at 12 p.m., while others attend school in the afternoon and finish around 6 p.m., depending on the number of classes the children have that day. Students enjoy a 5-minute break after every second lesson to relax, and a 20-minute break in the middle of the day to have their lunch/snack or breakfast. Some teachers prefer to send their pupils outside for a longer recess while they observe them. Sizes of the classroom differ from school to school. It depends on the school's circumstances. The number of students in a class might range from 20 to 35. Some schools have larger

classrooms, which allows for more pupils, yet due to the size of the classroom, some schools or grades do not have as many students as others.

Both educational systems in these two countries have certain similarities and some differences. School and educational program curriculums, on the other hand, are tailored to the specific needs of their pupils in order to best prepare them for the future.

2.1. Outdoor Activities

Outdoor education in North Macedonia is considered less important and popular than outdoor education in Norway.

The importance of outdoor play in early childhood education and care has been emphasized in the past and in the present. The conditions for spending time outside varied between schools and kindergartens. In recent years, there has been change in the opportunities for children to play outside and study outside. Several factors have affected the reduced opportunities and hours in both primary and secondary schools. Limited space, insufficient tools to entertain children, insufficient budget for purchasing appropriate items for forest school/outdoor learning, screen-based activities, insufficient teachers on the side to accompany the students, fear of children's safety, and a lack of qualifications are some of the factors influencing this change. A variety of factors, including teaching methods, social mores, policies, educator personal characteristics, and conceptions of gaining knowledge and enjoying outside, appear to impact having one curriculum in primary level.(Copeland, Kendeigh, Saelens, Kalkwarf, & Sherman, 2012; Logue & Harvey, 2009; Maynard & Waters, 2007; McInnes, Howard, Miles, & Crowley, 2011; Sandseter, 2013; Sandseter, Little, & Wyver, 2012) Petty and .McClintic (2015) stated that, even though many educators and teachers in early years of education believe that learning outside is of a great importance, they tend not to use that belief in their practice just because of the great responsibility that comes with spending time outside with young children. Teachers at Tetovo, Bratstvo Migjeni, a primary school in North Macedonia, understand the importance of outdoor education and play, but they lack the materials and skills to provide it. They claim that the circumstances do not allow them adequate opportunities to do so. There is also a dearth of support from parents who are afraid of their children being exposed to the elements. They first believe that allowing a youngster to play outside on a wet day is risky and can cause a child to catch a cold. Taking risks outside is part of outdoor learning and

playing. If there is no risk presented, children will not be able to enjoy themselves as much as they should have. Outdoor education, outdoor learning and activities go together parallel with taking risk and being open minded person. (Kernan & Devine 2010)

Not having appropriate clothes for different seasons has a negative impact on the children's health. The schools do not have easy access to a forest nearby or a lake. Not many adults recognize the importance of being outside and their benefits. The authorities do not emphasize and promote outdoor learning and why it is important for children to get used to taking risks as young individuals. Adults would prefer the safe learning environment inside, just that they will not need to worry about what can happen afterwards. Also adults are not keen on making risk assessments sheets, just because they think if there is a need to make one, that is a well enough reason not to put a child in that situation and not taking any chances when it comes to their safety. (Brussoni et al., 2012, 2015; Grill, 2007; Sanseter & Sando, 2016; Wyver et al., 2010). Because it is not a required activity in primary school, instructors must determine whether the timing is appropriate and the pupils wish to be outdoors. Being more creative, coming up with more ideas for playing games are all connected with the mindset of the children when they are outside. They are more open minded individuals with better ideas for creative games according to Freeman and Tranter (2011). Spending time outside, even if it is not in a forest or natural setting, has been found to improve well-being and mental health.

2.1.2. Assessment

The grading system in North Macedonia differs from the one in Norway. From the beginning of primary education, children have been assigned grades. Students receive a written evaluation from the teacher when they enter grade 1, which is the first grade in the schooling system, until they reach grade 3. This kind of grading is considered as a descriptive evaluation paper. This type of evaluation is available to parents three months after their children begin school, at the middle of the school year, three months before they finish school and at the end of the school year. Teachers are developing their own criteria in order to completely fill out these reports and provide parents with a detailed picture of their child's growth. Students receive numerical grades twice a year beginning in fourth grade. The first grades awarded after three months of school are not final, and students have the opportunity to improve and change their grades throughout the second half of the school

year. The grades children earn at the completion of the school year are their final grades, and they are recorded on their report card/transcript of grades. These marks are crucial for future study and progression through high school, college, or university. Teachers and students in primary schools are obliged to read the syllabus at the start of the school year in order to better comprehend the grading system. Every teacher has their own syllabus prepared in accordance with the school's and ministry's norms and regulations, which clearly states what a student is expected to do and learn. Every numerical grade has its own explanation and ultimate grade that a student can receive. Written tests, oral exams, midterm exams, presentations, and homework are used to determine numerical grades. The teacher evaluates one student throughout the year, and the student has the right to complain about the grade if the student believes it deserves more or less. The final grade complaint should be considered as soon as the grading period is completed. After the grade is given, the student has the option to retake a written or oral exam. It depends on the professors' expectations. The grade may be altered if the student demonstrates superior learning abilities on the new exam. Students and teachers at the elementary school Bratstvo Migjeni claim that they all have an equal chance of receiving a higher grade, and that this possibility is provided after each exam or grading period. The North Macedonian ministry of education believes that grades are essential for students' progress and have positive effects on the student itself. One of the negative sides of having a written feedback or also known as a descriptive one is that many students avoid reading the comments and not focusing on what it says. Some students tend to not get the writing in a serious way as they would have with a grade. Sometimes the written criticism is not enough to show the evaluation of the students' work. Descriptive feedback requires students being able to not just read the feedback but also fully comprehend it. (Sinclair HK, Cleland JN Med Educ. 2007). According to other research, many students read and analyze criticism, but the feedback is written in a way that students do not find helpful in improving future work. (Higgins R, Hartley P, Skelton 2002). If a student gets a written feedback and a grade it can be shown in the best way where to focus will go and what will be easier to be understood by the students. Having a numerical grade or just a letter that shows a certain grade could be way easier than comprehending a full text by a professor. The provision of written remarks did not improve student performance on follow-up assignments in these situations. (Marble Wo, Winne Ph, Martin JF. 1978) states,

grades and feedback do not go together. When there is a grade students put their focus straight away on the grade, missing the feedback and missing the opportunity to fully understand the descriptive evaluation. Even when written evaluation is reviewed, students often agree that instructor criticism is difficult to grasp and transfer into better future performance.(Weaver MR.2006). Teachers in the primary school Bratstvo Migjeni agree that it is very important for students to get to understand the grading system as soon as possible because it will give guidance in the learning process. GPA is the first thing that institutions of higher education/ high schools will consider when they are deciding whether to admit or deny a student. Furthermore, for highly professional courses such as law school, engineering, medical school, business school etc, even greater emphasis is placed on grades. The students' GPA score will be the biggest factor that determines the admission.

2.1.3.Scholarships in North Macedonia

In North Macedonia, many scholarships are awarded based on a student's GPA. If a student wishes to attend a private high school, the tuition amount may be extremely expensive. In order to cut costs, several private high schools award scholarships to kids who succeeded in primary school. Grades play a significant part in the educational system since they determine which students are eligible for scholarships. Teachers at the elementary school Bratstvo Migjeni believe that the numerical grading system is beneficial since it distinguishes between students' abilities and capabilities. It also demonstrates how hard the kid had worked and studied to achieve that particular grade. Furthermore, it gives an equal chance for all pupils who had studied more and had been focused more on the learning process than someone else. In that way these students can get the chance to go to a private university, obtaining better learning conditions than in a public one, for less tuition. Private universities in North Macedonia are more expensive than the public ones but still offer different types of scholarships for students who had shown a high record of studying in their transcripts from high school. With this in mind students can be motivated to do their assignments promptly.(Butler R. 1988). In North Macedonia the transcript of grades is carried with the student for the rest of the student learning journey. It is an important factor not just getting a place in a good private high school but also being evaluated for college and a good degree program later. Colleges and universities consider grades whenever they

want to provide scholarships to students. Teachers at the primary school Bratsvo Migjeni say that having a descriptive evaluation for the students in grade 1 to grade 3 is the right thing to do. It gives them and the parents some sort of information on the students' learning process but it keeps the support at the same time. Some of the parents might be overreacting if they see a low numerical grade to the student transcript, so in this way the youngest students are having the descriptive evaluation until they are ready to understand the grades themselves, not just the parents. At the same time grades are external or extrinsic motivation that students have. Most of the students at the primary school Brastvo Migjeni are motivated by having the grades and knowing that they will be positively rewarded for their work on the exam.

Does having numerical grades actually motivate students to learn for the grade or to learn for themselves?

“While I understand that grades are crucial for measuring student learning and performance, I worry that a grade-focused system could harm students' motivation. Students might easily lose sight of the objective of education in their pursuit of desired grades. This is because education is typically promoted as the way to "success" and a "future with promise." As a result of this view of education's value, students often get captivated with their grades as a measure of their aptitude, intelligence, or even self-worth. As a result of being preoccupied by their grades, they may have grade anxiety and significant academic stress. Students may even be tempted to cheat in order to relieve some of the strain ,, as reported by Barbara Palmer (Stanford Report 2005).

2.1.4. Teaching Methodology

Teachers are antonyms regarding planning and implementing teaching methodology in their classrooms. According to the planning and curriculum , each teacher is choosing its own strategy to teach the unit. Specific subjects, like teaching English as a second language, require certain textbooks to be followed but again specialized teachers in these subjects are able to choose their own materials, papers in addition to the textbooks they need to use. The Ministry of education recommends implementing and promoting active learning and critical thinking. The plans and materials have to be standardized in order to promote successful results at the tests and examinations during the school year. Promoting active learning and participation is crucial for getting a higher grade at the end of the school year. It is important

for students' success but also for teachers. All textbooks are developed according to the curriculum provided for each grade, approved by the Ministry of Education. The books are based on self inquiry, developing reflection and active learning. One textbook is approved and used by the classroom teacher for one subject. Textbooks that come from abroad are needed to be approved before using them in a classroom. All textbooks are free of charge and are given to every student with the requirement to return the textbook back in a good condition at the end of the school year. Teachers can decide to use different literature and magazines in the classroom , but this proposal needs to be approved by the Ministry of Education. Educators are increasingly being urged to use a constructivist approach to learning in their classrooms. (Brophy, 1999; Dollard and Christensen, 1996).In North Macedonia teachers use a teacher-centered approach rather than student-centered approach. Teacher - centered approach is an approach where the teacher leads the class most of the time, by lecturing and not getting involved with others.In the classroom, a philosophical teacher is much more likely to foster engaged conversations, private and intimate relationships with pupils, tolerance and respect, favorable attitudes, and regulation adaptability, as well as learners' self, self-determination, and autonomy.(Willower, Eidell, & Hoy, 1967).Similarly, Wolfgang (2001) states that relationship-listening, confronting-contracting, and rules-consequences are three conceptual parts of discipline. It's from the standpoint of a classroom where the teacher is in command all of the time, and how that impacts the children's listening, as well as when the opposing students are actively participating in the learning process, asking questions and being driven to hear the answers. Rogers and Freiberg (1994) explain how one classroom and a relationship can look like in teacher-centered environment :

- Teacher is the sole leader.
- Management is a form of oversight.
- It is the teachers responsibility to look after the classroom and take control over all the worksheets and paperwork given to the students.
- All the rules and regulations of how one should behave in the classroom comes from the teacher's side. No suggestions accepted from the students.

- Regular students are helping the teacher. They are chosen by the teacher and have not been changed since the start. Other students are not able to take turns from time to time and get responsibilities in the classroom.
- Classroom organization led by the teacher.
- Rules are developed only by the teachers.
- Consequences are fixed for all students.
- Rewards are mostly extrinsic.
- Some students have everyday tasks to maintain, such as watering the plants, making sure that the chairs are in the right place in the classroom.
- Few students are taking care of the classroom library.

Teacher-centered approach is imposed in a teacher-centered classroom by having absolute control over things. It is of great importance for all the teachers to be leaders and have the power. (Dollard & Christensen, 1996). The teacher is in charge of the classroom's organization, as well as school activities and learning. Teachers at Bratstvo Migjeni, a primary school in North Macedonia, said it is easier for them to utilize this strategy because the classes are large and children cannot participate in every activity equally at all times. Teachers are leading classes on their own, with no additional teacher, educator, or assistant teacher present to assist with the classroom time. There is no other adult who can support the student where needed. Student-teacher approach does not show the need of having only one person being in control of things. It is based on positive relationships and open communication between all the members of the classroom community. It refers not only between the teacher and students, but among students as well. (Dollard & Christensen, 1996). If some of the students show bad behavior during the class in a teacher-centered environment they need to receive a penalty such as going outside of the classroom, not taking part in the activity, or having some time off the lesson. (Lovitt, 1990). Teachers who are in charge of classrooms and have a large number of students may give time out to those who are not following instructions and behaving badly. The term "teaching style" refers to a set of beliefs that teachers employ when explaining pedagogy and passing on knowledge to pupils. (Grasha and Yangerber-Hicks, 2000; Hsieh et al., 2011; Prescott, 2014). The classroom is frequently affected by the teaching style and methodology, and vice versa.

Teachers adjust their teaching methods and lectures to the learning styles of their students. Classroom management and behavior are another aspect that influences instructional methods. When students are uninterested and distracted, teachers tend to teach in a different way. As proven by the usage of technology and the addition of more ICT classes, students can stay involved if they are interested in the materials of the lessons. In primary education, year 1 and 2 instructors strive to make their lectures more engaging and interactive. It is critical for children to become accustomed to the school atmosphere and learn how to follow teacher directions. The working methods are based on becoming communicators, playing games, group work, research methods, and implementing practical lectures where students learn about coins, money, and other topics. Teachers frequently design programs and teach lessons in the form of shops, in which half of the pupils are customers and the other half are sellers, so that youngsters can actively learn about money while having fun. During the first two years of primary school, teachers are focused on teaching the children how to write letters and how to pronounce them. The main focus is using textbooks appropriate for their writing. In addition to textbooks, teachers use games to support their learning and ensure that the students understand the things they have to learn. After conversation with the principal of the primary school Bratstvo Migjeni, it has been stated that teaching methods vary from teacher to teacher. Mostly like from year 3 forward teacher-centered approach is predominant, where in Year 1 and Year 2 it is opposite. Student-center approach is predominant with the younger children who just started school. A professional educator is mainly concerned with helping the child in interacting with challenges and circumstances, looking under the ground, fiddling with countless potential solutions or theories, and at last establishing oneself or own interpretation. (Ryan & Cooper, 2001) A few of the teaching methods or techniques used in such classroom setting include critical reflection, investigation, observational conversations, character, demonstrations, productions, and simulations. (Edwards, 2004). Having observational conversation helps both students and teachers in proposing plans for the learning environment. If both sides, teachers and students observe the classroom may come up with ideas that can help the teaching and the learning. Students need to feel safe to communicate their ideas out and set suggestions for the teacher. There may be behavioral or other types of challenges even in a classroom with a student-centered approach. Teachers are more likely to settle a problem

gently and with the student's full understanding rather than imposing punishments such as time out or refusing to allow a child to engage in a fun activity. Students who have just started school are unfamiliar with the environment, and some struggle to adjust and study at a slower speed. As a result, teachers must exercise patience and use a student-centered approach. In order for students to be able to freely communicate their ideas and suggestions, they need to practice and improve their social skills as well. This can take place in classroom gatherings, events, debates and some public activities in front of their classmates and students in the school. Students in year three, on the other hand, are more likely to attend more theory-based courses in order to broaden their theoretical knowledge. Teachers in the classroom begin by covering a broader range of topics. During the instructional period, students are expected to follow all instructions and actively listen. At the end of the lesson, they are given the opportunity to ask questions and receive further clarification if something is unclear. Students are expected to prove their knowledge and level of understanding on the exams and while writing homework.

2.1.5. Homework

Homework, according to many teachers and parents, is an important aspect of a student's education. It is necessary for a better understanding of the lectures and a review of the topics covered in school. Students develop study skills and a habit of learning after school with homework. It can assist youngsters in better preparing for tests, remembering information more quickly, and developing a lifelong study habit. North Macedonia's ministry of education does not require homework, however it is encouraged for all teachers. The teacher can choose whether or not to offer some homework. Most teachers assign homework to their students in order to keep track of their progress and assess how well they are prepared for the next unit or chapter. It also allows students, parents, and teachers to see how prepared kids are for exams and what their ultimate grade might be. When pupils start school for the first time, they should be able to show love towards going to school, subjects, books, teachers and classmates. Having too much to do, being overload with homework from the start can have an opposite effect and make students not have a positive feeling. Furthermore, because many young kids lack the study abilities necessary to effectively profit from homework, it may be a waste of time. (Cooper, 1989; Cooper et al.,

2006; Marzano & Pickering, 2007). Schoolwork could indeed help children start planning for research and writing, and research shows that homework could have minor benefits for future learning. (Cooper et al., 2006) Every type of homework, online or offline is beneficial for the child. A homework assignment can be a small assignment that could be accomplished during the day or week. It does not necessarily have to be a long research project, or challenging math solving problems. However teachers should have in mind that not every child has the right tool to do the homework efficiently and effectively. Sometimes parents are too busy to help their children with their homework, and that can lead to frustration from the students' side. (Especially young children, Year 1 and Year 2, who are not yet capable of reading by themselves and doing homework independently) Issues such as a lack of a silent space at home, assets such as a computer or internet connection, or parental involvement may all be obstacles for children. Many children that get help from their parents can show better results at school because they are more self confident. Homework can be a useful tool for parents who want to get more involved in their children's education. (Walker et al., 2004)

2.1.6. Homework policy at the primary school Bratstvo Migjeni

Following a discussion with the primary school coordinator, Bratstvo Migjeni, the following homework policy and goals were established:

- Homework is required by all students.
- Assignments and tasks to be equally provided by the teachers and clearly explained to all the students.
- Assignments and tasks should be designed according to the students needs, benefits and can vary from student to student.
- Homework should be completed within the deadline that's set to students in advance.
- Students who can not do homework independently should get help and involvement from the parents. If that is not possible, parents should inform the classroom teacher.
- Parents should not do the homework instead of their children.

- Parents are not responsible for providing clear explanations, but more for supporting their needs during writing homework.
- Homework to follow during summer and winter holidays. Students should be able to practice and get involved in school activities during the summer.
- Different homework should be assigned for every subject.
- Homework should not be overwhelming and not given before an exam that determines a final grade.

The goal of the homework policy at Bratstvo Migjeni is:

- Students understand how important it is.
- Homework teaches students about time management.
- Homework helps students to understand how much they've learned.
- Homework gives a second change to students to repeat and review the material.
- Homework gives students a clear picture of their understanding.
- Homework is motivating, and challenging.

2.1.7. Teaching Support

Teaching assistance is not required in classes without students with physical limitations, according to the Ministry of Education. It is the job of teachers to maintain classroom learning and provide a comprehensive approach to teaching. As previously said, teaching assistants have grown increasingly vital in a school setting as a result of a variety of pupils with varying learning skills. Teachers at North Macedonia's primary schools are responsible for looking after each kid and keeping track of their progress. All the primary teachers in every school in North Macedonia are fully trained and qualified to deal with different students and follow their needs. They are required to prepare and plan for students with different learning styles and students that are struggling to understand. There are differentiated sheets and tasks for the ones that learn at a slower pace. The Minister, on the recommendation of the Bureau for School Development, established the Concept for Inclusive Education, which defines the inclusion of all children in normal primary education.

There are different protocols that need to be followed by teachers and parents, that are provided by the ministry of education for children with disabilities.

- There should be individualized educational support with professional associates.
- Professional teacher observing and monitoring all time.
- Programs for children with disabilities.
- Use of teaching aids and tools that help the students learn.
- Counseling work with family.
- Close collaboration with family.
- Clear expectations and instructions for the family.
- Overcoming the language barrier if the spoken language is not the first language of the child.
- Support of technological tools if needed.
- A special SEN teacher is assigned if needed.
- Mandatory training to teachers at school who are directly involved with children that have learning or physical disabilities.
- Providing social interaction with other children in the classroom.
- Fully inclusion in all activities if possible.

Three levels need to be followed when evaluating a student with learning or physical disabilities. All evaluations need to be within the school, and according to the rules and law. Level 1 : Is also known as general support and it is decided within the school and parents. It includes a professional who tracks the students' progress from time to time, closely working with the teacher and receiving feedback from the teacher.

Level 2 : Is also known as intensified support which is used if the general support is not enough. If the results from the general support are not showing any progress, it is required to make a plan where the student can learn better. By using different teaching aids and technological tools, students could be assisted more during the learning time.

Level 3: Is also known as a special support, where the student gets a special educational need teacher as a full time support. That teacher is paid by the government and is required to follow the student's needs and help the student learn. Special support is responsible for :

- Student's eagerness to learn, interests and talents.
- Engaging students in the learning process.
- Acquire reading and writing skills.
- Integrate and developmentally appropriate.
- Enhancing their language skills and social skills.
- Motivate students to collaborate with others.
- Track the progress of the students and provide feedback to classroom teachers.
- Closely monitoring and observing the student for progress.
- Closely collaborating with parents.

3. Research Methodology

The desire to compare the two educational systems and schools in Norway and North Macedonia inspired me to do this research because I spent eight years as a student in North Macedonia and am currently a teacher in Norway. As a current teacher at Asker International School, I was able to feel this contrast and determine which approach works best and where improvements might be made. Because of the approaches I used, I was able to create this research and collect all of the necessary data. Students at both schools come from quite different origins and hold very different cultural ideas. Despite their differences, the teachers shared many characteristics. The main thing that all teachers had in common was that they all had the same objectives. The main goal for all teachers is to assist and support students while learning at school.

3.1. Aims and objective

The purpose of this research is to provide an overview of the educational systems in North Macedonia and Norway. With the goal of providing general knowledge about how these systems are built and what they are based on. The goal is to look at and study the views of curricula, pedagogical, and methodological approaches in order to gain a better knowledge of the educational system. Furthermore, it aims to highlight the most important aspects that influence the learning process and environment. With the use of various approaches and procedures, understanding of the differences and similarities between the two learning systems was gained.

-Aims:

- 1.To determine which teaching approaches are in use and how beneficial they are in the development of learner profiles in the future.
- 2.To learn more about how the curriculum is designed and what it focuses on the most.
- 3.To determine the methodological techniques used in the educational system.
- 4.To determine the views and attitudes of teachers and students toward the school.

3.1.1. Hypothesis

As part of this study the research includes three hypotheses:

- 1.Students who get writing and reading instruction in small groups led by a single teacher are more likely to achieve positive results sooner.
- 2.Students find that learning outside for the majority of the day is more advantageous in terms of developing social skills, self-confidence, and self-esteem than learning indoors for the most of the day.
- 3.Having a teaching assistant in the classroom is beneficial for the students development.

3.1.2. Instruments

The instruments used in this research were mostly surveys and interviews. I also did long observations in both schools in order to get the final conclusion for my research. My observations happened during December 2021 and January 2022. At Asker International School I observed teachers and teaching assistants having phonics lessons with children from year 1 and year 2. Also I observed the lectures in year 3, year 4, year 5 and year 6. In North Macedonia the observation happened in February 2022 after the winter holiday. I was able to attend classes in year 1, year 2, year 3, year 4 , year 5 and 6.

3.1.3 Participants

The participants that were involved in this research were teachers who work at Asker International School , students that study at the same school and teachers that work at Bratstvo Migjeni school as well students that study at the same school. There were 20 adult participants who took part in this research from North Macedonia, and 20 adult participants who took part in this research from Norway. The same people were being interviewed, observed and gave their opinions in the provided surveys. There were 10 students from both schools taking part in this research by giving answers to specific questions. For the purpose of this research, the two

coordinators\principles from both schools in Norway and North Macedonia had meetings with me, explaining and clarifying the learning goals at the schools.

4.Findings

In order to conduct my research and get all the information I needed to compare the educational systems in both North Macedonia and Norway . For the aim of the search , I had to prepare questionnaires and surveys for the teachers and students working in two schools. For me it is essential that North Macedonia should improve its education system, by focusing less on the testing of standardized tests, but more on the child's interest. Teachers should be focused more on giving a student-centered learning approach rather than teacher-centered learning.

In my experience, it was easy to conduct the interviews and get a detailed overview of both systems and curricula because I have been a student at the primary school Bratstvo Migjeni , and now I am a teacher at the primary school Asker International School. The questionnaire prepared for the teachers at Asker International School and the teachers at Bratstvo Migjeni gave different overviews and opinions for the schooling systems. As well there were different answers provided by the students in these two schools telling what are the advantages and disadvantages for the learning system from a student perspective .With the questions prepared the following data was collected, presented in this chapter.

4.1. Findings based on comparison between the two systems

The survey was given to teachers at the primary school in North Macedonia and to teachers at the primary school in Norway. Questions presented in the survey were following:

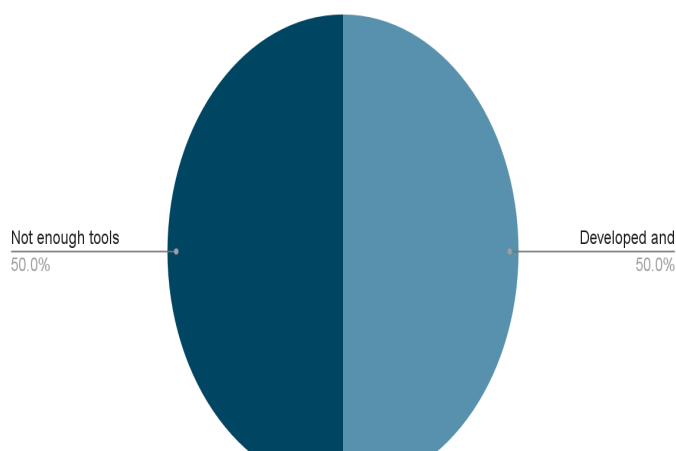
- How do you find the educational system today?
- What was the most challenging thing to face while teaching or in your teaching career?
- What things need improvement, development?

4.1.1 Responses from the teachers at the primary school Bratstvo Migjeni

Ten educators were questioned at the Bratstvo Migjeni primary school. They are classroom teachers in Year 1,2,3,4 and 5. Most of them have been at the school for a long time and only a few are new staff who started working a year or two ago. There were 5% negative responses to

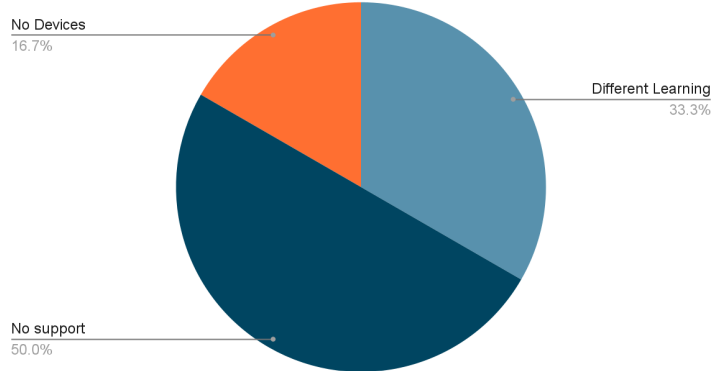
the topic of how you feel about the school system today, and the other half were positive. Many of the teachers stated that education has improved and developed in recent years, and that they are now able to take independent actions and participate in numerous activities outside of the classroom by using the internet and other resources. They have a curriculum that guides them, but they also have the opportunity to think outside the box and prepare things on their own. The negative responses were based on not having enough material and tools to create all the things they want by themselves.

Points scored



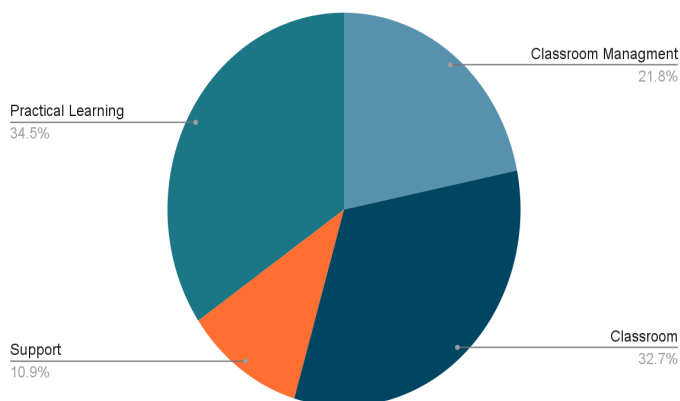
When asked what the most difficult issue that teachers encounter on a daily basis, the majority of them answered that having no support in class and defirashed worksheets for pupils of various abilities can be difficult. Some students require more attention to perform a task, while others do not; in these cases, extra support and assistance should be provided in the classroom so that kids can receive the assistance they require. Having no technology such as laptops, iPads, or other electronic devices is a barrier for a small minority of teachers.

Points scored



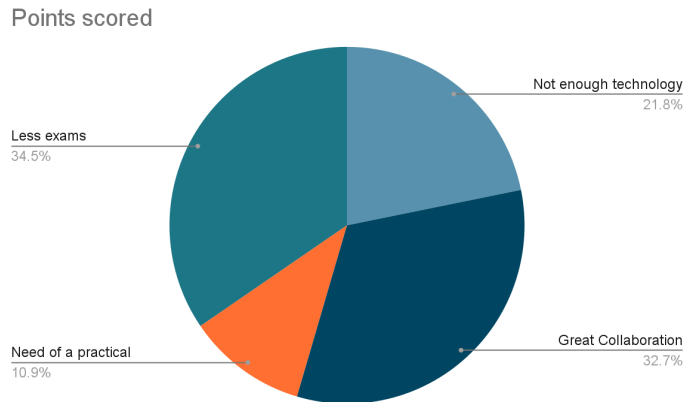
To the question: What do you think needs to be improved or developed? The majority of teachers had responded that classroom management, environment, assistance, and practical learning need to be improved. To further explain their responses, they indicated that classroom management entailed smaller classroom sizes and having more teachers/teaching assistants on hand to assist students during the learning process. Parental support is crucial and more open collaboration with parents is needed. In addition, rather than only having theoretical learning and exams, practical learning is preferred and needed.

Points scored



Ten teachers from the upper primary school were interviewed, all of whom have extensive expertise in the field of education. Teachers were teaching in Year 6, 7, 8 and 9. Teachers explained that the most difficult issue is that there isn't enough technology in the classroom to perform research, so kids learn to find things on their own. They also stated that kids would

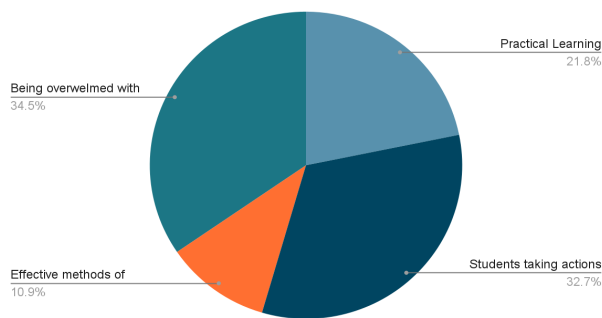
benefit from more practical lessons rather than theoretical learning in order to be better prepared for their future learning adventure, which they described as high school.



4.1.2. Responses from the teachers at the primary school Asker International School

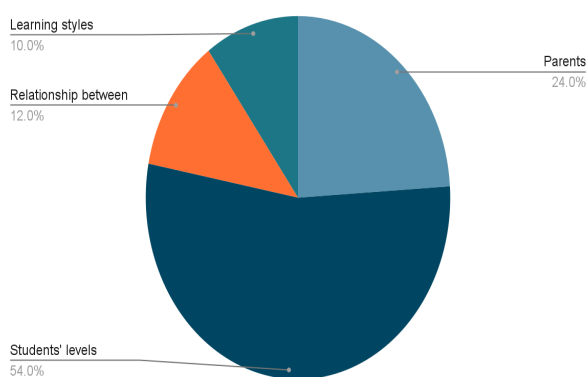
Teachers at Asker International School responded to the same questions in a variety of ways. From Year 1 through Year 5, twenty teachers were questioned. The majority of them are recent hires with 5 to 10 years of work experience before. I noticed that most of the teachers at Asker International School appear to be satisfied with how the educational system is currently operating. They are happy with the development of learning, with the opportunity to implement more practical time, with the opportunity to use resources and tools to understand the learning material and to be able to reflect on what they have learned in response to the first question about what they think of the current educational system. They indicated that they are mostly overwhelmed by the planning time and that they are expected to work long hours every day. They need to spend more time preparing and performing research to gather ideas in order to make the learning process exciting and fun.

Points scored

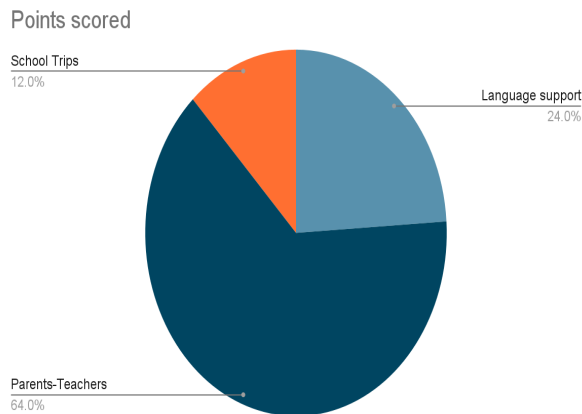


The most tricky challenge, according to the majority of teachers, is finding the proper material for the right pupil. Because each kid is unique and has a unique learning style, teachers must be able to select the appropriate level worksheet. Some stated they enjoy dealing with parents as much as they enjoy working with their children, while others said they enjoy building relationships with pupils.

Points scored



Organizing more school trips, having more Norwegian Lessons support for students who had just come and arrived from various countries where Norwegian was not their first language, and also ESL lessons for children whose English was not developed were the answers to the final question of what should be improved or developed. Because parent-teacher conferences aren't held on a regular basis, some of them have answered more parent-teacher conferences. As a result, parents have a lot of concerns and are concerned about a variety of issues.



4.1.3. Findings from the interviews

In order to get the material for this research I had to collect the data that was needed. It was a long process of conducting interviews, meeting and preparing surveys. The process of collecting data was around three months long and it included two schools in two different countries. There were 60 participants who willingly participated in my study. For the aim of the study I needed to set objectives and lead myself according to these objectives. Long observations took place in both school and the following findings were highlighted :

Year 1 teachers at Asker International School said they like the class sizes and the teaching assistance that is required in Year 1. Teachers must be prepared to handle a variety of obstacles when new students arrive. Because some parents do not promptly inform the administration and the teachers of their children's learning skills, it is crucial to have more than one educator in the classroom at the beginning. In grade one, the learning goal is to form positive relationships with classmates and to adjust to the new environment. It is important to learn how to follow instructions and control one's behavior. The major goal in Year 1 is to learn all of the letters and their sounds, as well as to begin writing and reading. The biggest challenge is getting the young students who have just finished kindergarten to follow instructions, stay still, not talk when not needed, and put their hands up when they want to say something. Teachers find it challenging but at the same time rewarding.

Year 1 teachers at Bratstvo Migjeni School said that they do not like the class sizes because there are too many students coming to school for the first time. Teachers find it difficult to set a balance between studying and playing as the students had just come out of kindergarten. They

explain that it would have been better if they had another educator in the classroom helping the learning process and maintaining the class environment.

To my question : What is the goal of your school, and what improvements do you want to see in the future? - The coordinator at the primary school Bratstvo Migjeni had said that the goal is to provide a positive environment to everyone, including students and staff. Also Nebojsa said : „ It is nice to involve more technology into our lesson and have more of a ICT teaching method. The use of technology is very common everyday in our life and can simplify our teaching and learning time. It is convenient to use virtual platforms for meetings, presentations and even collaboration between the students. If the technology is used properly, there can be many benefits. The goal of the school is to include more technology in teaching and get a more positive attitude from the students towards the school.,,

To the same question the coordinator Angjela at Asker International School had provided the following answer: „We like to see more staff getting involved in outdoor learning and providing it to the student where possible. Being outside can positively affect a child's mental health and development. At the same time children are having a fun time being outside, in non traditional classrooms without walls being surrounded by nature , and learning. The goal for our school is to expand more in the future and give a safe, comfortable environment to all students. It is very important for us as a community to provide students an equal opportunity to take a part in our school and get the knowledge they need for future learning. At Asker International School we get them ready not just for the day but as well for what follows after, in the future.,,

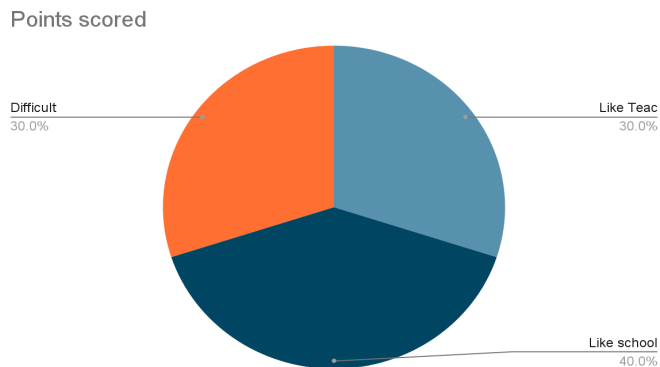
4.1.4. Finding based on comparison between the two systems

I have provided the data collected from the teachers perspective about the schooling system in these two countries. In order to understand more about the positive and negative sides of the primary schools in North Macedonia and Norway I have talked with the students as well. There were 10 individual students from both schools filling in surveys and being interviewed on the following questions:

- How do you find the educational system today?
- What was the most challenging thing to face while learning at the school throughout the years?
- What things need improvement, development?

4.2. Responses from the students at the primary school Bratstvo Migjeni

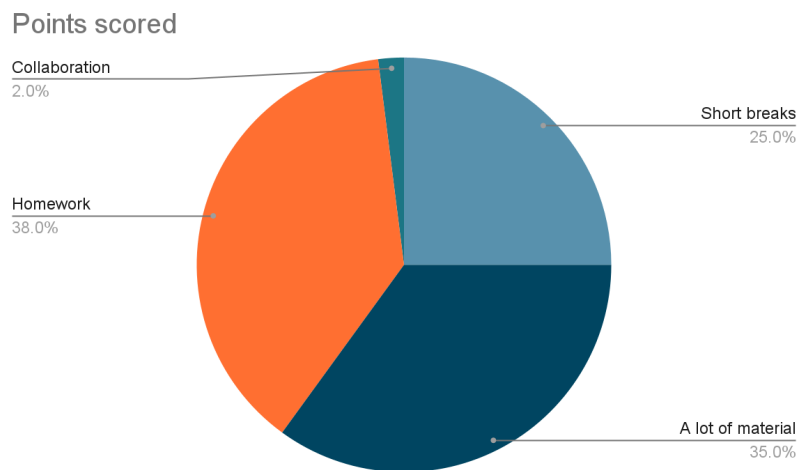
To the question: How do you find the educational system today? There were different answers provided. There were 10 students answering this question where 1 of them was a student in year 2, two of them were students in year 3, two of them were students in year 5, two of them were students in year 7 and the last two were students in year 9. According to their age, and thinking they prioritized different things.



Most of them said that they find it fun and interesting. They like to challenge themselves and learn new things. 40 % of the students said that they like going to school everyday because they learn many new things and like spending some time with their friends. 30 % said that it is difficult to learn so much and have many subjects at school. The other 30 % had said that it is fun coming to school and that they like their teachers.

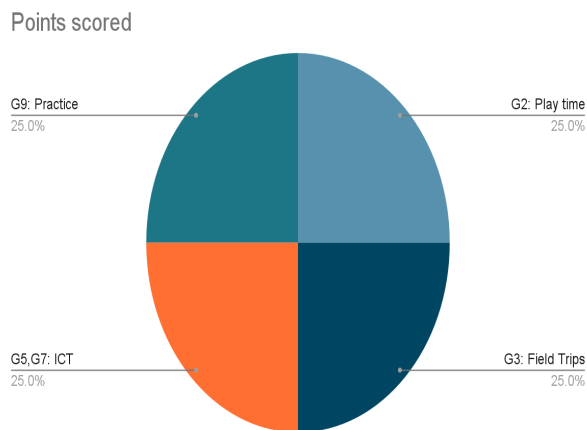
To the question : What was the most challenging thing to face while learning at the school throughout the years? The students at Bratstvo Migjeni had been given various challenges. 25 % of the students had short breaks but long learning hours. „A short break of 15 minutes is not long enough to buy lunch and eat it at the same time,, - Maja student in year 5 at Bratstvo Migjeni. 35% had stated that having so much things to learn is stressful, some of the students think that they are learning unnecessary things that they won't need them in high school or further in life. The other 38% said that the most challenging thing is to keep up with all the homework at home after school. During holiday time, summer or winter vacation we get so much homework that it is difficult to catch up with friends and family. There is not enough time for everything. We already have a lot of learning time at school, it would be nice if we could actually have a break during our vacations.,, - Stefan , student in year 7. 2% of the students had said that there is not

something in particular that is challenging, just collaborating with the rest of the class can be sometimes difficult.



To the question of what things need improvement and development students had listed different things. Students from different class levels have different priorities and therefore the list was long. Students in G2 have said that they need more outdoor activities, more free play time and even outdoor learning sounds fun for them. Students in G3 say that they miss field trips, and exploring stuff outside the classroom, so it would be nice to have that opportunity. Students in G5 and G7 mostly want to have more ICT lessons and technology development in the school. They say that having technology teaching methods would make the learning time more interesting and easier for all of them. Students from G9 mostly like development in practical teaching. They feel like not enough knowledge has been passed on to them when it comes to practical activities.

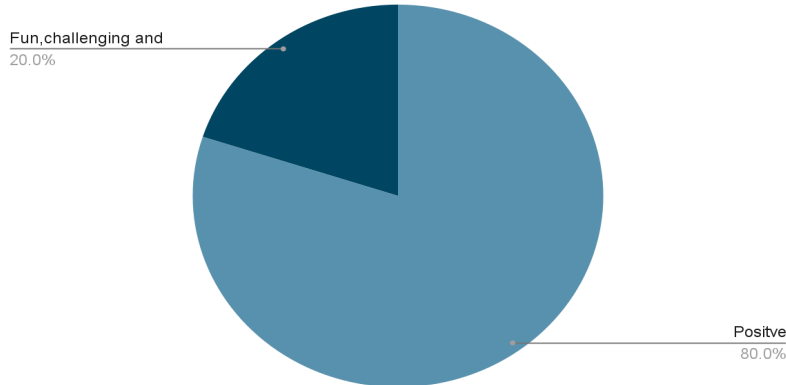
They would like to have more practice so they could be ready for high school/college etc.



4.2.1 Responses from the students at the primary school Asker International School

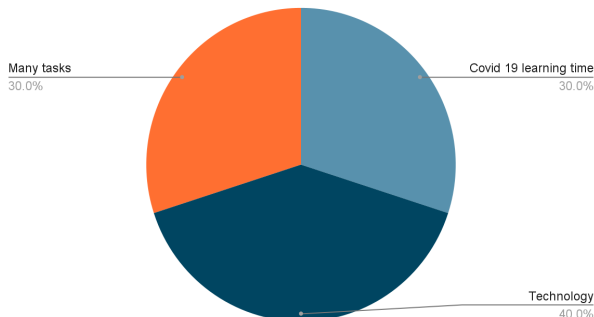
Students in G2, 3, 5, 7, and 9 at Asker International School were answered the identical questions. Two students from each grade were given the questions. To the following questions: How do you feel about today's educational system? Students provided positive responses and attitudes, such as, "I enjoy coming to school every day." During the school day, we have a variety of organized organizations, including the ski club, which is my personal favorite. We go skiing every Thursday. Mondays are also my favorite days since we have forest school on Mondays.,, Ingrid G2 student. Students in G3 have stated that they have begun a lot of research during this grade and hence find the educational system enjoyable. Both pupils came to the same conclusion.80% of the students like how the school is organized and like to come to school every day.

Points scored



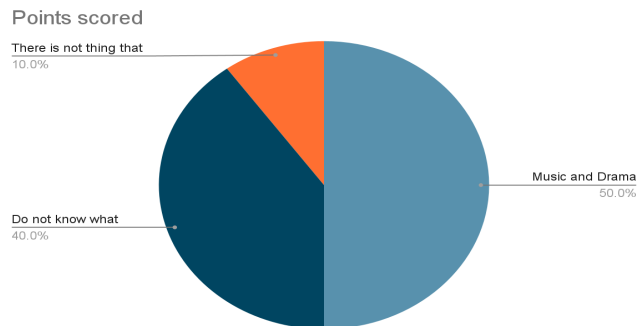
To the question : What was the most challenging thing to face while learning at the school throughout the years Students have many points of view. Covid and how things were organized during covid time were mentioned by 30% of them. At all times, students had to be separated and keep a safe distance. School remained open despite the fact that everything else was closed and not functional. Many students found it difficult to strike a balance between going to school and then having everything shut down after school. According to the statistics gathered, 40% of the students believe that technology is both enjoyable and challenging. They find it difficult to learn about and use a new application. Thirty percent of kids find it challenging to do activities after school. They believe that their energy is spent during school hours, making it harder to complete tasks after. „Having a full day of activities and tasks can be challenging and tiring.,, - Mark student at G7 at AIS.

Points scored



To the question: what things need improvement,development? Many of the children expressed an interest in having more music and theater courses. They believe they place a greater emphasis

on science, math, and language arts, but less on music and drama. According to the data gathered for my study, 40% of respondents claimed they don't know what needs to be improved or developed, and 10% said nothing needs to be improved.



I gathered data from both schools for the objective of this study in order to compare and contrast the ideas and viewpoints of kids in North Macedonia and Norway. I found that the majority of their desires are similar. Even though it can be difficult at times, all pupils want more ICT courses. Playtime, more outdoor time, and even learning outside are all things that students appreciate. When it comes to what may be enhanced and developed further, they have different preferences. Few of them want to take more music and drama classes, and few want to take more technical classes.

5. Conclusion and recommendations

The purpose of this research study was to compare and contrast the two educational systems in terms of primary education in North Macedonia and Norway. I could see many positive and negative features in several parts of teaching and learning based on quantitative and qualitative study. According to my results, the Norwegian educational system is centered on a student-teacher method, whereas in North Macedonia, the opposite occurs, with teachers leading classes and applying a teacher-student approach. I've outlined the differences in terms of how much time pupils spend outside and how that relates to their learning effectiveness. Teachers in North Macedonia prefer to hold classes indoors rather than outside. The findings show that school days in North Macedonia are shorter, providing productive learning opportunities for all children. My thesis reveals that teaching a language with a direct method is far more effective with younger pupils than with older ones, based on an analysis of how the first and second languages are taught in both countries. This study raises the topic of what changes should be

welcomed in order to improve teaching and create a more proactive learning environment for all students. Based on these findings, I recommend that practitioners in North Macedonia explore implementing more outdoor education, exploration, and play so that children's emotional, behavioral, and intellectual development can be fostered. Teachers should consider classes based on practice rather than theory more regularly so that students become more interested in the learning process, asking questions on their own, reflecting on their learning, and becoming thinkers. Practitioners should utilize more inventive techniques in their courses to better comprehend the significance of this research and the outcomes of it, making their lessons more fascinating and fun.

Finally, the findings demonstrate how primary education systems can differ and be distinct. Each country has its unique educational system and methods, but everyone should be open to suggestions and improvements that will benefit pupils.

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