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Kosovo's first Pisa-Test Interpretation and Presentation

Christian Füller, GIZ-Workshop Nov 2016



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What is the best school in Kosovo?

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What criteria for good school do we have?

- the brightest students attend this school
- I've heard that this school is the best
- I attended this school myself
- the school is the most beautiful / was on TV / is close to my flat
- the richest / most valueable / powerful parents send their kids
- the school has the most successful graduates
- the school is in the best neighborhood

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Good school before and after Pisa

- Until now, we had only the anecdote, the rumor or the feeling of what is a good or the best school. Some said - as with a restaurant - if the toilette is clean, then the school is good
- Pisa provides us with reliable indicators to tell when a school is good:
- Ranking, Performance, Comparison and Background Data

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What does „Pisa“ mean, and why does the world look at it?

- Pisa is a **test of 15-year-old** students from all over the world
- Pisa measures **competencies in reading, maths & science** - and compares it
- **72 states participate**, 34 OECD-Members and 38 other states
- The school achievements of the 15-year-olds are displayed on an international table: **Pisa is a Champions League**
- Since 2000, Pisa has been **held every three years**
- For the first time Pisa is in 2015 not raised with pencil and paper, but **written on the computer**.

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„The leaning Tower of Pisa goes astray at the bottom“

The special thing about Pisa is not the ranking. Pisa provides information on the extent to which pupils are able to solve life-world problems that are equated with the rest of the world. Pisa says something about the ability of young people to assess and discuss practical life issues.

With Pisa you can show, how large the groups of pupils are, and which students reach certain competences. Above all, a group is of concern, which was known before, but which could not be described in more detail: the so-called risk students or underperformers.

These are the students who can read the task text but do not really understand it. They can not reproduce the information which a texts contain. They can not discuss this information, and can not question it critically.

By linking students' performance with social structural data, one can make statements about what factors affect performance, e.g. how girls or boys or certain social groups perform.

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Key Pisa Factors

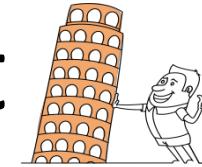
Ranking

Performance

Comparison

Background Information, correlation,
connections

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Ranking

- The power of the Pisa school performance test comes from its ranking and its comparison
- No country wants to see itself in the back. This ensures international and national attention
- Pisa is a kind of student's Olympics
- In the Pisa Olympics, however, not always USA, Russia or China win
- but Finland, Korea and Singapore, also Japan or Canada
- And there are loser nations like Germany or France that are deeply affected by their defeats

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Performance means...

- the students perform well
- the number of students who do not reach a **minimum standard** is low
- the **distance between the best and worst** students is small
- the performance difference between schools is small
- the school or the teachers succeed especially in bringing students to good performances, which **have social or cultural disadvantages**

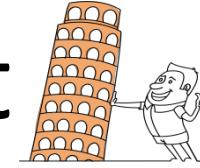
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Comparison

- If we measure the performance, then we can form groups. We can now say that in this school there are so many good and bad students
- This is the basis for a reliable comparison
- Let us take the number of students with bad performances
- In Germany they are called risk students or functional illiterates in
- A school has 30 percent risk students. Is this a good or a bad value?
- We only know this when we compare these values with other schools and other countries

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Background data, connections

- When we measure the performance and form groups, we have a reliable comparison (Examples on Handout 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3)
- If, however, we are able to link these groups to factors, then we have a strong instrument in our hands to understand our school from within. What social and cultural composition does it have? Are social factors associated with benefits?
- Pisa gathers extensive data on students' social background, how they approach learning and the characteristics of their schools

And the old question of justice: Is school success dependent on social origin?

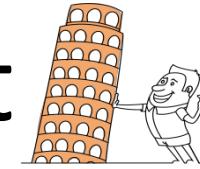
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Important keywords

- the method of Pisa: performance and comparison
- competencies instead of knowledge, literacy vs curriculum
- Output- vs. Input control

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Literacy

- Why is it possible, to compare different countries with different languages and school cultures?
- It would not be possible to compare the textbook knowledge of 72 countries
- Therefore, questions are asked from the daily life that the students have to answer
- In albanian, mathematics and science (problem solving, financial knowledge)
- A notional mean performance value is defined at score 500
- then the students are placed - according to their results - above or below
- Literacy concept means that is not asked the knowledge from national curricula and textbooks

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Politics and evidence based controlling (The good, the bad, and the ugly: What Society and Politicians do with Pisa)

- The exact causes of the students results and the distributions of performance remain open. Correlation is not a causal link. This makes it easy for policy makers **not** to lead debates or to **avoid** certain reforms.
- This is where the role of journalists comes into play. How do we translate the results of Pisa, in how far we are able to read and present the results?
- How can we skillfully link the ranking of Pisa with the deeper testimony of the test.