

APROXIMACIÓN A LA EVALUACIÓN DE LA PRÁCTICA DOCENTE EN LA NORMATIVA DE INSPECCIÓN DE MADRID, CASTILLA-LA MANCHA Y EXTREMADURA

APPROACH TO THE EVALUATION OF TEACHING PRACTICE IN THE INSPECTION REGULATIONS OF MADRID, CASTILLA-LA MANCHA AND EXTREMADURA

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Resumen

La inspección educativa desempeña un papel importante en la evaluación de los docentes. Su función principal es supervisar y garantizar la calidad de la educación en las instituciones escolares. En el contexto de la evaluación de los docentes, la inspección educativa puede tener diferentes responsabilidades y tareas, que pueden variar según las políticas de cada comunidad autónoma. Las funciones de la inspección educativa en la evaluación de los docentes incluyen la observación y evaluación de la práctica docente, la revisión de documentos institucionales y didácticos, el apoyo y asesoramiento y el seguimiento del cumplimiento de la normativa vigente en aspectos como la implementación de los planes de estudio, el

respeto a los derechos de los estudiantes y el cumplimiento de las políticas de inclusión educativa. En esta aproximación analizaremos cómo se plasma esa evaluación en la normativa de Inspección de tres comunidades autónomas: Extremadura, Castilla-La Mancha y Madrid.

Palabras clave: Inspección Educativa, evaluación docente, planes de evaluación, comunidad autónoma.

Abstract

The Education Inspectorate plays an important role in the evaluation of teachers. Its main function is to supervise and guarantee the quality of education in educational institutions. In the context of the evaluation of teachers, the Education Inspectorate may have different responsibilities and tasks, which may vary according to the policies of each autonomous community. The functions of the Education Inspectorate in the evaluation of teachers include the observation and evaluation of teaching practice, the review of institutional and didactic documents, support and advice, and monitoring of compliance with current regulations in aspects such as the implementation of the study plans, respect for student rights and compliance with educational inclusion policies. In this approximation we will analyze how this evaluation is reflected in the Inspection regulations of three autonomous communities: Extremadura, Castilla-La Mancha and Madrid

Keywords: Education Inspectorate, teacher evaluation, evaluation plans, autonomous community.

INTRODUCTION

In Spain, the Education Inspectorate plays an important role in the evaluation and supervision of teachers. It is a specialized body composed of education inspectors whose main function is to ensure the quality of education and compliance with educational laws and regulations throughout the education system.

As Sir Ken Robinson (2013) rightly points out "There is no system in the world or school in the country that is better than its teachers. Teachers are the lifeblood of successful schools", and previously the OECD (2009): "Improving the effectiveness and equity of schooling depends, to a large extent, on being able to ensure that teachers are competent, that their teaching is of high quality and that all students have access to excellent quality teaching". From these quotes we can affirm that there is no doubt that variations in student learning depend significantly on the quality of teachers.

This relationship between the quality of teachers, as one of the elements to be evaluated, due to their unquestionable contribution to the quality of an educational system, and the functions and attributions of educational inspection, has been reflected in recent educational regulations since 1970. The so-called Villar Palasí or Law 14/1970, of August 4, 1970, General Education and Financing of the Educational Reform, in its Title Five, referring to the Educational Administration, Chapter II on the bodies of the Educational Administration, establishes the existence, within the Ministry of Education and Science, of a "Technical Inspection Service of Education, and determines as one of its functions "To evaluate the educational performance of the schools and teachers of its respective area or of the specialty in its charge..." (letter d). More precisely, the Organic Law 1/1990, of October 3, on the General Organization of the Educational System, in its article 61.1 letter b, defines, as a function entrusted to the Education Inspectorate, "To participate in the evaluation of the educational system" and in article 62.1, to indicate that

"The evaluation of the educational system [...] will be applied to students, teachers, centers, educational processes and the administration itself". The Organic Law 9/1995, of November 20, 1995, includes the term "evaluation" in its own denomination, and in its article. 1 as one of its principles of action the "public authorities", attributing to the Inspectorate among its functions, article 36, "Collaborate in the improvement of teaching practice and the operation of the centers, as well as in the processes of educational reform and pedagogical renewal". Finally, before addressing the current regulatory framework, the Organic Law 10/2002, of December 23, 2002, on the Quality of Education indicates in article 60. 1 "In order to improve the teaching work of teachers, the educational administrations, within the scope of their competences, will elaborate plans for the assessment of the public teaching function, with the participation of the teaching staff, including novelties such as the repercussion of such assessment on the professional career or the "Voluntary assessment" defined in article 62.1 and attributing to the educational inspection the function of "Participating in the assessment of the educational system".

Finally, in this brief diachronic journey, the Organic Law 2/2006, of May 3, on Education, modified by the Organic Law 3/2020, of December 29, in its article 1, highlights the teaching function as an essential factor in the quality of education and in its article 151 continues to emphasize evaluation among the functions entrusted to the educational inspection corps.

After this brief regulatory approach, the next step will be to glimpse what type of teaching evaluation exists and in which the educational inspectorate intervenes to a greater or lesser extent, as we will see below.

In most EU countries there is some teacher evaluation system (Eurydice Report, 2013), but not uniform, as there is a great difference between mechanisms, methods, criteria, standards, and objectives (TALIS, 2009). Similarly, it happens between autonomous communities within Spain.

There are many purposes for which to evaluate teachers, in the

hiring process, as compensation for good teachers, as a sanction for less competent teachers, such purposes require different forms and ways of evaluating teaching practice (TALIS, 2009). Therefore, it is important to clarify the aims and objectives of the evaluation at the beginning of the process since they provide information not only on who is being evaluated, but also on the use that will be made of the results (TALIS, 2009).

Based on these objectives, we would start from three terms "teaching competence", "teaching performance" and "teaching effectiveness" (Medley and Shannon, 1994; Tucker and Stronge, 2006), understanding teaching competence with the qualifications and experience of each teacher, teaching performance with the behaviors and actions of teachers inside and outside the classroom, and teaching effectiveness with the results of teaching, which are generally demonstrated through student achievement. In other words, we are talking about a triple purpose of teacher evaluation:

- a) Formative, in that it aims to contribute to improving professional teaching practice.
- b) Professional recognition, since the assessment obtained in the evaluation process can be credited as a merit or requirement in the processes that establish it.
- c) For the determination of teaching suitability or competence since it may be used in the assessment of the internship phase of the selection processes and in the evaluation of the professional practice to recognize or deny such teaching competence.

And it is undeniable that, to conduct any evaluation in these terms, educational inspection is an essential element, as external observers who will use an evaluation tool that forms the basis for the evaluation of teaching practice and that can be adapted, as we shall see, according to national and regional circumstances and contexts.

The proximity to schools and their frequent contact with them

means that the Educational Inspection Services can provide data that allow, in the exercise of their functions and attributions, the teaching evaluations to identify the variables that have an impact on the development of the teaching-learning process, and thus adopt the necessary educational measures depending on the results obtained.

The evaluation processes of educational inspection should be understood as systematic processes of obtaining information on educational actions, as a prior step to decision making.

In the context of teacher evaluation, educational inspection has the responsibility to assess teaching practice primarily through classroom visits and observations. Education inspectors can conduct regular visits to educational institutions to observe classes, interact with teachers, and assess their performance. During these visits, they can verify curriculum compliance, evaluate the teaching methodologies employed by teachers, review educational materials, and provide feedback and guidance to teachers.

In addition to classroom visits, educational inspection also plays a role in teacher evaluation through document review. Educational inspection may also be involved in teacher assessment through participation in accreditation and professional promotion processes. They can assess teachers' ongoing training, their involvement in professional development activities, and their updates in the latest methodologies and pedagogical approaches. It's important to note that teacher evaluation in Spain is not solely the responsibility of educational inspection. In most autonomous communities, specific evaluation and monitoring systems are implemented by regional education authorities. These systems may involve the participation of school principals, educational guidance teams, and other education professionals in the evaluation of teachers.

As we can see in the proposed comparison of these three autonomous communities, in Spain, educational inspection, as a state body but dependent hierarchically and functionally on each autonomous

community, is responsible for “supervising teaching practice, school leadership, and collaborating in their continuous improvement” and for “participating in the evaluation of the education system and its components”. This is stated in all the regional inspection regulations analyzed in this comparison. Additionally, in the case of Castilla-La Mancha, it is mentioned that educational inspection conducts teacher evaluations with the aim of collaborating in the improvement and refinement of the teaching staff. Castilla-La Mancha and Extremadura state that these visits are conducted to directly assess teaching practice, as they consider them the basic tool for evaluating teaching processes and activities. Finally, in this first section of this work, it is also noted that neither Extremadura nor the Community of Madrid has published a plan for the evaluation of teaching function.

In the three autonomous communities under analysis, we observe that those responsible for evaluation in the three autonomous communities are the education inspectors who carry out their evaluation on the basis of areas, dimensions and indicators designed by the administration, although as will be seen below, only in two of the three communities analyzed, Castilla-La Mancha and Madrid, does the education inspectorate have these areas, dimensions and indicators for teacher evaluation.

Therefore, our approach will be to look for the reflection of this teacher evaluation in the main regulations of organization and operation of the Inspectorate in the three autonomous communities, trying to answer the questions that refer to the basic dimensions of evaluation, applied in this case to the evaluation of teachers: what to evaluate, how to evaluate, after evaluating what, and who to evaluate, and to verify, or not, how they reflect this teacher evaluation in the autonomous regulations of organization and operation of the Inspectorate.

What to evaluate?

As we can see in the decrees of organization and operation and the

orders that develop them, in all the decrees of the three autonomous communities there appears among the functions of the Inspectorate the reference to the basic regulations (article 151 and 146.2 of the Organic Law 2/2006, of May 3, on Education) that refers to evaluation as one of the main functions of this body ("To participate in the evaluation of the educational system and of the elements that comprise it"), but already here we begin to appreciate nuances that will be fundamental for the following sections.

- Castilla-La Mancha, in the Order of development of its Decree, indicates in article 13.3 that "It also corresponds to the Education Inspectorate the evaluation of teachers in the exercise of their tasks, the managerial function and the professional teaching work, through objective procedures and known by the interested parties".
- Extremadura indicates in article 3.4 of its Decree that "the evaluation of the directive function of centers, services and programs will be carried out by the Corps of Education Inspectors and will be part of its competencies, as established in article 146. 2 of the Organic Law 2/2006, of May 3, on Education", that is, it does not mention the evaluation of teachers, but curiously the current Order (awaiting its forthcoming repeal), which developed Decree 34/2019, currently repealed, does indicate that the inspection visit is intended to "Participate in the external evaluation of educational centers, in the evaluation of the management function and of teachers, in the evaluation of programs and services, and in the internal evaluation processes of the centers".
- In Madrid, according to its decree's development order, the Subdirector General of Educational Inspection is specifically assigned the role of coordinating the technical aspects of evaluations that need to be conducted concerning the organization, functioning,

and outcomes of educational institutions, services, educational programs, and activities, as well as the performance of school leadership and teaching functions.

As we can see, all three autonomous communities include teachers among the elements to be evaluated, although Extremadura does not include them directly as an element to be evaluated but as a result of the Inspection visit.

How to evaluate?

This is where the most significant differences between the analyzed autonomous communities become evident, as mentioned in the previous section.

- Castilla-La Mancha has developed specific regulations and official documents to evaluate the teaching staff in accordance with defined purposes, procedures, timing, resources and those responsible for the evaluation, and groups these indicators into two major dimensions: the performance of the tasks of their position or job and the development of professional practice, which Madrid also mentions. It establishes two areas of evaluation, that of Participation in organizational tasks and the general functioning of the center or service proper to the job position and that of Programming and development of the professional teaching practice in their specific tasks.
- Madrid specifies different indicators for the Educational Guidance specialty.
- Extremadura has no specific regulations or documents for teacher evaluation.

Additionally, Castilla-La Mancha establishes plans for the evaluation of the

teaching function, which serve as instruments for measuring the education system. These plans make public the domains and indicators for the evaluation of the teaching function and establish the procedure for evaluation, which will be described later.

Regarding the nature of the evaluation, it can be voluntary or compulsory, both carried out by the educational administration. Voluntary evaluation is conducted in Castilla-La Mancha and Madrid. Teachers can voluntarily opt out of voluntary evaluation at any time before its completion. In Madrid, it is also voluntary for teachers participating in the procedure for access to the ranks of professors. In Extremadura, there is no developed regulation for teacher evaluation, except in the recent call for the competition for access to professorship, which includes, among the criteria for evaluation, a positive assessment of teaching activities conducted by educational inspection. Furthermore, in Castilla-La Mancha, the evaluation may be initiated ex officio by the Administration to determine the level of suitability for teaching of career and interim civil servants.

Regarding the instrument for the evaluation of teachers, to a greater or lesser extent, the three autonomous communities coincide in considering the visits to the centers as the evaluation instrument. Once again, the community with more regulatory detail is Castilla-La Mancha, describing the evaluation procedure, which includes an interview to evaluate a self-assessment report of the teacher to be evaluated, which will be sent to the inspector responsible for the evaluation process, and, in addition, possible interviews with the management team, with the persons responsible for the coordination of the corresponding cycle, level or department, with the person responsible for guidance or representatives of the teaching staff, students and families. And it will conclude with the visit of the education inspector to the classroom or classrooms where the applicant provides services or, if applicable, to a work session with contents specific to the position.

After evaluating what?

Regarding the validity of the certificates or reports issued by those responsible for the evaluation, in Castilla-La Mancha, the inspector issues an evaluation report containing the positive and negative aspects that allow to comply with the formative nature of the process and a certificate accrediting the final score, stating the six-year validity period. If the evaluation is positive, the certificate may be included as a merit or requirement for certain calls for applications and transfer competitions. If the evaluation is negative, the report includes those aspects of the practice that the teacher must correct and, if necessary, the specific training that he/she must receive. After a period of six months, the teacher will undergo a new evaluation process focused on the aforementioned aspects, and if the result is negative again, a disciplinary procedure may be initiated ex officio.

In Madrid, the Education Inspectorate issues a reasoned report stating whether the evaluation is positive or negative. The inspector's report includes the score obtained by the evaluated teacher. As for the incentives that a positive evaluation provides, they are as follows:

- In Castilla-La Mancha, the professional recognition in those cases where it can be used as a merit or requirement in some processes in Castilla-La Mancha.
- In Extremadura, in the merit competition for access to the body of professors, those who consider requesting, on a voluntary basis, the evaluation of their teaching activity, will be applied, depending on their profile, teaching or guidance, some assessment criteria will be applied. In order to obtain a positive evaluation it will be necessary to reach, at least, fifty percent of the assigned score in each of the established evaluation areas up to a maximum score of 2.5 points out of a total of 10 of the scale.
- In Madrid, in the calls for access to the Corps of Professors of

Secondary Education and Official Language Schools, it is a merit that contributes points to the scale in Madrid (up to one point).

Who can be evaluated?

Career civil servant teachers belonging to the teaching corps established in the Organic Law 2/2006, of May 3, 2006, on Education and integrated in the payroll of the corresponding educational administration, in Castilla-La Mancha; and, in Madrid and Extremadura for access to professorships, who can accredit the requirement of 8 years of seniority in the corps, can undergo these evaluation processes.

Having outlined the teacher evaluation processes in the three Autonomous Communities analyzed, which carry them out more or less systematically, we will now look at the repercussions of this teacher evaluation, if any, on their action plans.

- Castilla-La Mancha includes among its objectives for the 2022-2023 academic year the following: "e) Promote evaluation processes: developing the evaluation of the ethical competence of the Inspection Services themselves, as well as redefining internal school assessment and teacher evaluation". It also includes among the functional actions in provincial planning the evaluation of officials involved in the probationary phase. Furthermore, among the specific areas of work, it includes Area 2: "Evaluation, Participation, and School Organization", which states that "the evaluation of teaching practice facilitates the update of methodologies while allowing for the detection of weaknesses and their quicker correction, as well as fostering the recognition of families in the existence of common criteria shared by all". Finally, it outlines the activities of regional working groups, which will include teacher evaluation as one of the topics to be addressed.
- In Extremadura, the Master Plan 2020-2023 includes among the

usual actions of the Inspectorate, the evaluation of the management and teaching functions. It adds that the supervision of the teaching function will be a regular practice of the educational inspection for the improvement of the educational system. In particular, the evaluation of trainee teachers will be carried out, the teaching practice will be supervised in those cases in which it is demanded and it will participate in the processes of teacher evaluation processes determined by the Educational Administration. The Annual General Plan for the 22-23 academic year establishes among the objectives "To promote the evaluation processes, effectively developing the evaluation procedure for trainee teachers".

- In Madrid, the Annual General Action Plan for the period 2021-2025 includes among its objectives "Evaluating teaching practice for improvement". This plan establishes specialized teams to promote expertise in the work of educational inspection, and one of these areas is evaluation, with evaluation teams for the teaching function in various stages. It also includes a specific section titled "Supervision of Teaching Practice", which describes how "The supervision of teaching practice is a specific function of educational inspection. Annual Action Plans may include actions for supervising and evaluating teaching practice, with criteria that must correspond to the functions of teachers established in article 91 of Law 2/2006, of May 3, on Education, and with the rights and duties of public employees established in Title III of Royal Legislative Decree 5/2015, of October 30, approving the consolidated text of the Law on the Basic Statute of Public Employees". The General Plan for the 2022-2023 academic year includes among its fields of action the provision of information, support, and collaboration with Territorial Area Directorates and others, and within this field, it includes actions related to "Participation in the evaluation of teachers". Finally, it includes a course on teacher

function evaluation as a training activity.

CONCLUSIONS

The Education Inspectorate should adopt a more proactive role in the instruments and models of supervision of student evaluation processes and should play a relevant role in the evaluation of teachers through classroom visits, document review and participation in accreditation and professional promotion processes. However, it is important to emphasize that teacher evaluation in Spain is a broader process and usually involves multiple actors in the educational field and, among these actors, the Education Inspectorate is configured as the agent, if not exclusive, primordial in carrying it out; but it is no less true that it is the administrations themselves who must not only believe in this role of the Education Inspectorate but, and much more importantly, provide it with regulatory tools that allow it to carry out this task of teacher evaluation. In this approach we have been able to verify the great difference in regulatory terms that exists between three autonomous communities. If this analysis were extrapolated to more autonomous communities, these differences would be even more conclusive. Perhaps it would be more than a utopia to consider a homogeneous state regulation, designed to benefit the evaluated teachers.

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