



## Teacher Performance Assessment: A Necessary Evil or an Indispensable Asset? The Portuguese Experience

### Öğretmen Performans Değerlendirmesi: Gerekli Bir Kötülük mü? Yoksa Kaçınılmaz Bir Kazanç mı?

José Reis-Jorge<sup>a\*</sup>

*<sup>a</sup>Instituto Superior de Educação e Ciências/ISEC, Lisbon, Portugal*

---

#### Abstract

The assessment of teacher performance has been a controversial issue in Portugal since the introduction of a new model in 2007. Not only has the discussion involved those directly concerned, that is, teachers themselves, but it has also extended to society in general, with a number of implications on the ethos of the schools and the public opinion about teachers as professionals. In this paper I will discuss the new model of assessment of teacher performance within the tradition of teacher assessment in Portugal, in the light of what I consider to be the most critical aspects of the model, and possible ways to build a more consensual model that combines the accountability and the professional development dimensions in a compatible way.

*Keywords:* Assessment of teacher performance, accountability, professional development.

#### Öz

2007 yılında yeni bir modelin tanıtılmasından bu yana, Portekiz'de, öğretmen performans değerlendirme tartışmalı bir konu olmuştur. Tartışmada hem konuyla doğrudan ilintili öğretmenleri dahil edilmiş hem de okulların değer sistemi ve meslek olarak öğretmenliğe ilişkin kamu görüşü üzerine pek çok çıkarımlar yoluyla topluma genellenmiştir. Bu makalede, Portekiz öğretmen değerlendirme geleneği çerçevesinde yeni bir öğretmen değerlendirme modeli tartışılacaktır. Bu kapsamda, modelin en kritik boyutları olan hesap verebilirlik ve mesleki gelişim boyutlarını uyumlu bir şekilde birleştiren daha uzlaşmalı bir model oluşturmanın yolları tartışılacaktır.

*Anahtar Kelimeler:* Öğretmen performans değerlendirme, hesap verebilirlik, mesleki gelişim.

© 2015 Başkent University Press, Başkent University Journal of Education. All rights reserved.

---

#### 1. Introduction

In the last decades teacher evaluation has attracted growing attention from educational authorities, experts, teachers, and society in general at an international level. Teacher performance assessment (TPA) has been a controversial issue in many countries, and Portugal has not been an exception, especially since the introduction of a new model in 2007. Not only has the discussion involved those directly concerned, that is, teachers themselves, but

---

\*ADDRESS FOR CORRESPONDENCE: José Reis-Jorge, Dean of the School of Education, Instituto Superior de Educação e Ciências/ISEC, Lisbon, Portugal, E-mail address: reisjorge@isec.universitas.pt / Tel: +351 21 7541310 - 312

it has also extended to society in general, with a number of implications on the ethos of the schools and the public opinion about teachers as professionals.

The introduction of the new model was crucial to generate a general feeling of acceptance of assessment as a means of improving the quality of instruction. However, it has also been a painstaking process that engenders feelings of discomfort on the part of teachers in terms of professional autonomy and social recognition.

Nowadays teachers` work is far from being confined to the classroom setting. It involves a multitude of tasks, covering different areas of intervention as a result of changes in the managerial structure of schools and their social and instructional roles as organizations. Given the multidimensional nature of the teaching profession, TPA is a difficult process to design and implement. By and large, TPA encompasses two main perspectives: accountability and professional development (Stronge, 2006). Assessment for accountability purposes is essentially summative in nature. This type of evaluation is particularly suitable to inform the decision-making process about administrative and career issues such as salary, tenure, personnel assignments, rewards or dismissals. It is primarily concerned with monitoring the quality of teaching through the quantification of teacher competence and effectiveness, following criteria of selection and reward.

Assessment for professional development, in turn, is essentially formative in nature. It is aimed at improving the work of teachers in various dimensions. This form of assessment is intrinsic to teachers` performance and the daily dynamics of the school, and it must be a negotiated compromise without punitive implications. This is the kind of assessment that must be intimately related to autonomy, reflection, and lifelong learning, and requires teachers to be receptive to change and improvement (Day, 1999).

These two purposes – accountability and professional development – have been often described as mutually exclusive (Stronge, 2010). However, in order for teacher assessment to be really effective, both perspectives are required. As McGreal (1988) has posited, the various purposes of teacher assessment can co-exist in a single model that aims at developing the mission and the objectives of the school as an organization. In Portugal the attempt to address both purposes in one single model represented a challenging yet problematic process.

In this paper I will discuss the new approaches to TPA within the tradition of teacher assessment in Portugal, and in the light of what I consider to be the most critical aspects that account for teachers` reactions towards the new models, and the effects of such reactions on teachers` public image and social recognition. This will provide the context for a critical appreciation of the current situation and the attempts to establish a more consensual, effective model likely to combine the summative and the formative dimensions in a compatible way.

It must be noticed that the new TPA model applies to all levels of teaching (from pre-school to secondary education) without substantial distinctions between different levels, and it relates exclusively to the state school sector. Teacher evaluation in the private sector runs independently with different formats to those adopted by the state sector.

**2. The evolution of teacher assessment in Portugal**

As depicted in Figure 1, the assessment of teacher performance in Portugal may be considered as having developed in five main periods.

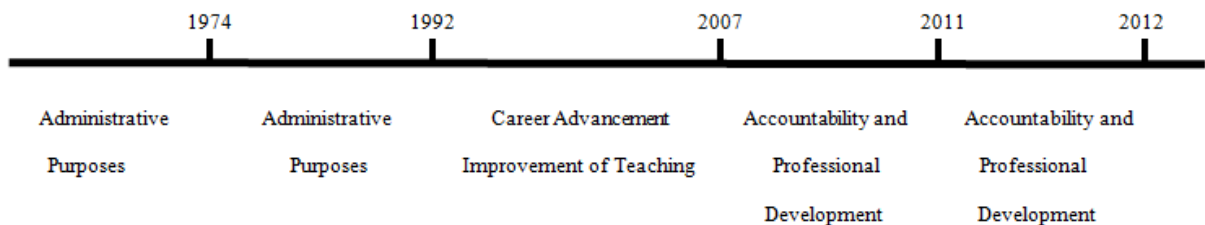


Figure 1 Evolution of TPA in Portugal

The first two periods were dominated by an administrative interest of a bureaucratic nature. Seniority was the only criteria for career advancement. The third period can be considered the genesis of a model-based approach to TPA. The first real attempt to implement a model of teacher assessment aimed at making teachers accountable for their

work and with impact on their professional development took place in 2007, the year that marked the beginning of what I will call the new generation of model-based approaches to TPA.

### *2.1. The administrative tradition of teacher assessment (up to 1974 and 1974-1990)*

The establishment of the democratic regime in Portugal in 1974 marked the end of a period during which teacher evaluation was based on the control of schools and teachers by the Ministry of Education. Teacher evaluation was conducted by the Inspectorate with the support of Heads and Rectors for administrative purposes (Chagas, 2010).

In the period that followed the 1974 Revolution, the democratization of education became top priority (Teodoro, 2003). In the post-revolution period the evaluation of teachers was not the concern of both schools and educational authorities, given its association with the control approach characteristic of the totalitarian regime (Chagas, 2010). The possession of a diploma from a higher education institution and the acquisition of qualified teacher status were enough to be considered a “good” teacher, except in cases of disciplinary procedure. The classification of teachers was the responsibility of the Head Administrator of the school, which reinforced the administrative nature of the process.

Although some authors refer to these early periods in terms of models of teacher assessment, it is perhaps more accurate to talk in terms of administrative traditions of teacher assessment than in terms of TPA models. Models are commonly described as abstractions of reality that are useful to explain the elements and the dynamics of a system (Birnbaum, 1988). In the particular case of TPA models, there are a number of structural elements that need to be taken into consideration such as the role, power and statute of the evaluators, the methodology of evaluation, and the relationship between evaluators and those evaluated (Fernandes, 2008). The structural elements of a model started to be incorporated in teacher assessment, and became evident in the new TPA schemes that followed.

### *2.2. The beginning of a model-based approach to TPA (1990-2007)*

In 1986, under the new Educational System Law (Decree-Law no. 46/86), teacher evaluation re-emerged in the political agenda in connection with teachers’ professional development and career advancement. However, it was not until 1992 that teacher evaluation was officially recognized as a means to improving teaching practice and enhancing teachers’ individual development (Regulatory Decree no. 14/1992). In this context the successful completion of short duration in-service training courses, and the production of a self-assessment reflective report were the main requirements for career progression. In the particular case of progression from stage 7 to stage 8 of the career scale, teachers were required to undergo an evaluation process that involved the production of a written assignment on a pedagogical topic of their own choice, appreciation of the candidate’s CV, and an individual interview.

A revision of the Teaching Career Statute was published in 1998 (Decree-Law no. 1/98), which sought to combine the enhancement of the teaching profession with greater accountability through providing greater accessibility to in-service training, and establishing evaluation mechanisms of differentiation relating to professional performance. Despite the emphasis on the formative dimension, in practical terms the process remained more or less unchanged, with the teachers’ main concerns placed on the summative dimension for career progression purposes.

### *2.3. The first generation of TPA models (2007-2012)*

In the last three or four decades, there have been major changes in the roles of the State as an employer and provider of public services. These changes are associated with the new public management paradigm, according to which private management systems are more functional than traditional systems of public governance, therefore public and private sector organizations should be managed according to similar principles. The new policy guidelines in favor of the adoption of market principles to public administration have extended to the public education sector.

Following this tendency, in Portugal, the new Teaching Career Statute published in 2007 (Decree-Law no. 15/2007) introduced major changes in the structure of the career, the organization of teachers’ work, and the system of teacher assessment. This represented a landmark in the history of the teacher profession for at least two main reasons: in conceptual and methodological terms it was the first real attempt to produce an evaluation system based on a model combining accountability and professional development.

### 2.3.1. The first TPA cycle - 2007/2009

As depicted in Table 1, the new TPA model (Decreto Regulamentar/Regulatory Decree no. 2/2008) was oriented towards accountability and professional development objectives, and was structured according to four dimensions: professional and ethical, the development of teaching and learning, involvement in school life and relationship with the community, and on-going professional development.

Table 1

*The first new TPA model (Regulatory Decree no. 2/2008)*

<b>General objectives</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvement of students` achievement and the quality of education</li> <li>• Provision of guidelines for teachers` personal and professional development</li> </ul>
<b>Dimensions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Professional and ethical</li> <li>• Development of teaching and learning</li> <li>• Involvement in school life and relationship with the community</li> <li>• On-going professional development</li> </ul>
<b>Evaluators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinator/Head of Department</li> <li>• School Head/Director</li> <li>• School Commission for the Coordination of TPA</li> </ul>
<b>Periodicity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every two years</li> </ul>
<b>Referential/Indicators</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Objectives and targets set in the school educational project and annual plan of activities</li> <li>• Teacher`s individual objectives related to: students` achievement; reduction of dropout; compliance with the teaching duties assigned; provision of educational support; participation in, and promotion of various activities (curricular, extracurricular, school management tasks)</li> <li>• Classroom observations (3 lessons per school year)</li> </ul>
<b>Criteria</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assiduity</li> <li>• Participation in school projects and activities</li> <li>• Performance of coordination and supervision tasks</li> <li>• Assessment by parents or guardians (subject to approval of the school and the teachers concerned)</li> <li>• Relationship with students</li> <li>• Students` results</li> </ul>
<b>Instruments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• self-assessment form</li> <li>• classroom observation grids</li> <li>• assessment forms for the different dimensions under assessment</li> </ul>
<b>Grades (on a 1-10 point scale)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent = 9-10 points</li> <li>• Very good = 8-8,9 points</li> <li>• Good = 7-7,9 points</li> <li>• Satisfactory = 5-6,9 points</li> <li>• Unsatisfactory = 1-4,9 points</li> </ul>

It was predominantly an internal, peer-assessment-based model. Assessments by the Head of Department focused on the pedagogical dimension, namely the teacher`s scientific (subject matter) knowledge and pedagogical competencies, whereas the assessment by the School Head/Director focused on the administrative dimension. Assessment instruments were developed and approved by the pedagogical commission of the school, taking into account the official recommendations by the CCAP- Conselho Científico para a Avaliação de Professores (Scientific Council for the Assessment of Teachers).

The evaluation process comprised the following sequential steps: filling in a self-evaluation form, completion of evaluation forms by the evaluators, validation of proposed classifications by the school commission for the TPA coordination, individual interviews, and joint meetings of evaluators for the assignment of final classifications.

### 2.3.2. The second TPA cycle – 2009/2011

The implementation of the new evaluation model was not peaceful. The general feelings of rejection by the teachers (including peer evaluators and school Heads) as well as the criticism by some experts and official institutions created an unprecedented climate of instability in schools. In the attempt to simplify the process and correct some inconsistencies, the educational authorities decided to introduce some changes to the model (Decreto Regulamentar/Regulatory Decree no. 2/2010) in line with the recommendations of a few studies, especially that carried out by OECD (Santiago, Roseveare, van Amelsvoort, Manzi & Matthews, 2009).

The main changes aimed to:

- (a) ensure that teachers were assessed by peers of the same subject area positioned in a higher stage of the career ladder;
- (b) abolish students' achievement as assessment criteria, as recommended by the CCAP (Scientific Council for Teacher Assessment);
- (c) revise and simplify the evaluation and self-evaluation forms and instruments;
- (d) abolish the meetings of assessors and assessed in case of tacit agreement on individual objectives and final classification;
- (e) make classroom observations optional, except for obtaining the final grades of very good and excellent
- (f) reduce the number of classroom observations (from 3 to 2 observations per school year).

The assessment became the responsibility of a jury comprised of the members of the School Commission for the Coordination of TPA and the rapporteur (the new designation of the peer evaluator), appointed by the Head of Department. The rapporteur had to belong to the same subject area as the assessed, hold an equal or higher qualification as the assessed, and preferably have some specialized training in supervision or performance assessment.

The rapporteur was supervised by the Head of Department and was responsible for monitoring and assessing the whole process through permanent interaction with the assessed. It was the rapporteur's task to provide necessary support with the definition of individual objectives and the identification of training needs; to carry out classroom observations where applicable and share the results with the assessed; appreciate self-assessment reports; conduct an individual interview with the assessed whenever required; and produce and submit to the jury an evaluation report with the proposal for final classification.

### 3. Critical issues to the new TPA model

This was a mixed model that had both a formative purpose (emphasis on self-assessment, improvement of teachers' skills, and improvement of students' achievement) and a summative purpose (focus on the development of teachers' competencies and the fulfillment of duties guided by a sense of accountability and effectiveness).

In conceptual terms, this new model was based on an internal logic supported by the principles of professional regulation, consolidation of autonomy (of teachers and schools), parity (of evaluators), contextualization (of objectives and results), and endogeneity (of elements of reference and instruments), constituting the main positive attributes of the model.

In practice, however, the model raised a number of difficulties related mainly to the legitimacy of the evaluators, the induction of entropy in the school as an organization, the inconsequence of the evaluation process, and an overemphasis on the technical and quantitative dimensions of assessment.

#### 3.1. The mismatch between the formative and summative dimensions of assessment

One problematic issue of the new TPA model resided in the difficulty of combining the two main purposes of assessment – professional development and accountability - in one single model. Whereas, in accounting for the introduction of the new model, the official rhetoric attempted to set teachers' professional development as the top priority, in practice there was a general feeling that the assessment process was implemented essentially around the summative dimension. There is some empirical evidence to suggest that the new TPA model fell short of accomplishing its formative aims. According to some studies based on teachers' personal accounts, the process had no relevant contributions to their own professional development and no positive impact on the improvement of teaching and learning (Chagas, 2010; Gomes, 2010; Marques, 2011; Queiroz, 2012).

The perceived gap between the legal discourse and the appropriation of discursive practices was complicated by other factors of conceptual, administrative, and methodological nature.

### 3.2. *The emphasis on the individual*

In public administration the new models of performance assessment tend to replace the rigid salary scales associated with seniority with a system that pays prizes and awards according to the "good" or "bad" performance of the teacher. In terms of model design, there are three types of trends in the international arena (Harvey-Beavis, 2003): remuneration based on merit, an individual compensation based on school attainment and classroom observation; and remuneration based on knowledge and training, which results in an increase in financial compensation based on the skills and professional development of teachers; and compensation of collective performance, which in most cases means financial compensation for groups of teachers or schools, based on students' attainment, progress in results over a period of time, or whole school evaluation.

Whereas the first reform strategies of the 1980s tended to focus more on the compensation of teachers' individual performance, the most recent evaluation strategies favor either the group or skills and professional training. Some studies have pointed to a number of advantages of assessment models associated with individual merit in terms of improving the management and governance of schools (Hoerr, 1998; Kelley, 1999); increasing the motivation of teachers (Tomlinson, 2000; Odden and Kelley, 2002); fostering collegiality among teachers (Solomon and Podgursky, 2001; Firestone and Pennell, 1993); improving educational outcomes of students (Odden, 2001; Solomon and Podgursky, 2001); and fostering support for education by society in general (Solomon e Podgursky, 2001).

However, there are also references in the literature to a number of disadvantages of the adoption of assessment models based on individual merit -- namely the difficulty in making fair and accurate evaluations (Storey, 2000); greater emphasis on the hierarchical structure of school administration (Cutler and Waive, 2000); the failure of incentive systems to motivate teachers (Ramirez, 2001; Chamberlin et. al., 2002); perverse effects on cooperation and collegiality generated by competition among teachers (Chamberlin et. al., 2002); difficulties in the political and financial support for incentive mechanisms (Hoerr, 1998; Holt, 2001, Chamberlin et. al., 2002); and the inappropriateness of the "market" approach as applied to the teaching profession (Malen, 1999; Holt, 2001).

Although there is no general agreement as to the efficacy of one single model, there is some evidence to suggest that there are more benefits in collective models of teacher assessment than in more individualized ones (Lavy, 2002; OECD, 2005).

Given the control on teachers predicated in summative evaluation and the concern with accountability purposes, assessment for accountability purposes has been questioned on the grounds that: (i) it should more adequately be directed to school evaluation, since individual teachers do not act in isolation but rather as part of a complex system (Brandt, 1995; Darling-Hammond, 2007; De Ketele, 2010); (ii) it does not encourage an atmosphere conducive to good performance and improvement of practice, having more negative effects than positive effects on teachers' performance and professional development (De Ketele, 2010;); (iii) it does not represent an added value, given the low correlation that has been found to exist between this type of assessment and the improvement of students' learning and teachers' professional development (Danielson and McGreal, 2000; Simões, 2000); (iv) it is based on measurement instruments and data sources - such as students' grades and standard tests - which may be questionable in terms of validity and do not address the particularities of the local contexts (Darling-Hammond, 2007).

Some of these considerations are also present in the results of some studies revealing the teachers' negative opinions about the impact of TPA in promoting peer communication and collaborative work, with group sessions and meetings focusing on general matters of the school to the detriment of pedagogical issues, exchange of experiences and reflection (Chagas, 2010; Gomes, 2010; Marques, 2011; Queiroz, 2012).

Once again the essence of the official rhetoric was in contradiction to the method and mechanism of the model. The general objectives of teacher assessment for the improvement of education and the dignity of teaching as a profession were supported by a mechanism of assessment directed essentially at the individual teacher.

In order for any assessment initiative to impact on the quality of teaching it is necessary to reconcile the development of the teacher with the development of the school (Day, 1999). In this respect, the new model served to emphasize the work of the individual teacher rather than addressing teachers' performance within the wider context of the school as an organization.

### 3.3. The legitimacy and preparation of the evaluators

The legitimacy of evaluators is a critical issue to any process of evaluation. Evaluators have to be recognized and accepted for their competence, professional and hierarchical status. Peer assessment was a central theme to the TPA model in Portugal. It was adopted on the account that peers are in the best position to assess colleagues' performance. Working together in the same school on a daily basis means that teachers are familiar with the local context of work, know one another well, and have a better understanding of the difficulties faced and how such difficulties impede success. However, this close relationship turned out to promote feelings of suspicion and insecurity on the part of the teachers. The lack of formal training in the areas of supervision and assessment raised doubts about the competence of peers as evaluators.

The climate of suspicion and insecurity was further complicated by administrative issues related to the selection of the peer evaluators and the conditions of career promotion. Under the Teaching Career Statute published in 1998 (Decreto-Lei/Decree-Law no. 1/98) the teaching career was structured into two categories: teacher and senior teacher. Apart from coordination and supervision duties, the assessment tasks became exclusive to senior teachers. Access to the senior teacher position depended on a quota system and was reserved to teachers with tenure with at least 18 years in the profession. The selection criteria was established at a national level and focused on a short period of the career path - the latest 7 years in the profession - with an overemphasis on aspects of the professional background such as appointment to managerial and supervision positions to the detriment of effective teaching practice in the classroom setting. This was highly contested by teachers, who believed that the new system resulted in the depreciation of experiential knowledge and good teaching practice.

As a result of such administrative procedures many peer evaluators were much younger and less experienced than the colleagues they were supposed to evaluate. In these circumstances the legitimacy of the peers as evaluators was questioned in terms of competence and professional status: in many cases not only were older and more experienced teachers being assessed by younger, less experienced counterparts, but also by peers who were from different subject areas.

This was complicated by the lack of training in supervision, in general, and teacher assessment in particular that was perceived by peer evaluators themselves (Gomes, 2010; Marques, 2011; Queiroz, 2012). The Ministry of Education implemented a cascade training scheme whereby teachers who received suitable training were expected to spread the word to colleagues in their local schools. Apparently this was a good way to prepare teachers for the task as evaluators in a relatively short time. However, this fell short of meeting the desired goals. On the one hand, the training was felt by participants as inadequate for their needs (Lourenço, 2008; Mota, 2009; Gomes, 2010; Marques, 2011; Queiroz, 2012). On the other hand, the adoption of a strict top-down approach to training denied participants the opportunity to express their own views and forced them to reproduce the official TPA mechanism (Mota, 2009). All these aspects were particularly critical in a model where peer assessment was essentially concerned with the pedagogical dimension of teachers' work and the analysis of formative needs.

The introduction of a quota system for the top grades of the assessment scale (very good and excellent) was challenge to the new model of assessment: this administrative procedure was perceived by teachers as a means to prevent them ascending the career ladder regardless of the results of the evaluation, and as a cause of cleavages and injustice in the evaluation process likely to promote division and competition among professionals (Gomes, 2010; Queiroz, 2012).

Peer assessment is perhaps best suited for formative purposes, especially in collaborative environments where the practice of peer assessment is regarded as a developmental activity involving a reciprocal process of professional growth, without the decision-making burden for administrative purposes. In this respect it is interesting to note that in a study published by the Eurydice European Unit (2008), a comparative analysis of the systems of assessment of teachers in the 27 European member states revealed that only in four countries (Portugal included) was individual assessment by peers used in conjunction with other methods.

### 3.4. Methodological issues

The creation of performance indicators and instruments is a key issue in assessment models. If they are to cooperate with an assessment model, teachers must be assured of the validity and reliability of instruments and sources of information (Richardson, 1999). The initial emphasis on the students' results and dropout rates as well as the assessment of teachers by parents and guardians as performance indicators was strongly contested by the teachers.

The new TPA model aimed to improve the accountability of teachers on school attainment and the quality of education. However, student success is not correlated solely with teachers' skills and the quality of education. It depends on a wide range of social, economic, cultural and political factors that go beyond teacher control. Furthermore a two-year-cycle assessment scheme hardly allows accurate conclusions about student progression. The position of the students in relation to the whole population, i.e. the difference between the expected and the actual performance can be more appropriately taken as a performance indicator over a reasonably long period of time within a framework that allows the formulation of fair judgments about the effectiveness of instruction (Grisay, 1990). Moreover making teacher assessment dependent on students' scores may distort the TPA process and become a harmful element to the teaching and learning process, as teachers may feel tempted to evaluate their students in a way that is suitable to their own evaluation.

The involvement of parents and guardians is also critical to the extent that students' grades are the most important link between families and schools, which makes communication between these two institutions poor (Perrenoud, 1995). Parents and guardians, as well as educational authorities tend to be more product-oriented than process-oriented, that is, they tend to be more interested in a rating system that links teacher performance (instruction) with its effectiveness (the results of students) rather than the learning process. Thus in order for parents and guardians to have a fair say in TPA it is necessary for the establishment of a relationship of trust and mutual interest which, in turn, requires permanent dialogue between the family and the school.

The bureaucratic aspect of the model was another cause of contention on the part of teachers, especially in the first cycle of the new model (Gomes, 2010; Marques, 2011; Queiroz, 2012). Filling in a large number of evaluation documents represented an excessive overload which took considerable time that teachers felt would be better used for lesson planning and preparation.

This issue is clearly illustrated by the recommendations by the CCAP (Scientific Commission for Teacher Evaluation) where reference was made to the risk that TPA might become irrelevant to the professional development of teachers and the improvement of student achievement (CCAP, 2008). This situation was addressed in the second cycle of assessment with the reduction in the number of instruments. However, the issue of validity remained. The schools were given the autonomy to adapt official instruments or design their own. Nevertheless there was no guarantee that the instruments had been tested for validity and reliability or that the evaluators had received any kind of training in the use of such instruments. This is particularly important in cases where assessment involves high inference variables, as is often the case with teaching. Another problem resides in the nature of the instruments, as the tendency has been to produce descriptive instruments that fail to address the analytical dimension of the observations. As Gonçalves (2010) has noticed, all the countless instruments available show concern about "what happens", but only a few, if any, show concern about the reasons for the actions.

The use of locally devised instruments may be appropriate for formative purposes. However, in terms of summative evaluation, given that the placement of teachers in public schools is a process conducted by the Ministry of Education at a national level, the use of different instruments is questionable in terms of the preparation of staff to develop reliable and valid instruments and in ensuring equity and fairness to the administrative process.

The failure to use precise mechanisms of relative weighting of the different variables, most of which are in themselves difficult to quantify, makes teachers skeptical, especially when too much responsibility is ascribed to their performance in the school results.

#### **4. The second generation of TPA model - the current situation**

Under the new government elected in June 2011 another revision of the Statute of the Teaching Career was published (Decreto-Lei/Decree-Law no. 41/2012) which introduced some significant changes, namely the abolishment of the division of the teaching career into two categories (teacher and senior teacher), and set the basis for a new TPA model (Decreto Regulamentar/Regulatory Decree no. 26/2012).

This recent model represents an attempt to address some of the most controversial issues, namely the introduction of an external dimension of evaluation and the simplification of the process in terms of bureaucratic procedures.

The internal evaluators are appointed by the school authorities and are usually the Heads/Coordinators of Department. The external evaluators are appointed by the central educational authorities. The appointment of both internal and external evaluators must meet the following requirements: (a) being positioned in a higher stage of the career than the evaluated; (b) belong to the same subject area as the evaluated; and (c) hold adequate training in assessment of performance or pedagogical supervision, or alternatively have professional experience in pedagogical supervision within teacher training contexts.



Given the recent introduction of this new model it is not yet possible to make informed judgments about its effectiveness. It must be recognized that the changes introduced to the new model represent an attempt to combine the accountability and professional development purposes in one mixed model, while reducing the bureaucratic load of the previous experiences. There is also an apparent effort to reinforce the legitimacy of the evaluators and ensure greater fairness and transparency to the process. However, from the outset, there are a number of aspects that appear questionable.

In conceptual terms, despite the emphasis placed on the school educational project and the parameters established by the school and the central authorities as elements of reference to the evaluation process, the new model continues to focus on the individual teacher, thus favoring the individual dimension of teaching as a profession in detriment of the role of practitioners' collaborative work to the development of schools as organizations.

Furthermore, the compulsory nature of classroom observation raises the question of how effective it will be in terms of ensuring the improvement of the quality of teaching in an on-going, systematic manner, especially for normative purposes. If external evaluation is supposed to serve mainly accountability purposes, then this principle should be applicable to all teachers regardless of the stage of the career, particularly in a centralized system that is controlled by the education authorities. The existence of a quota system and the low frequency of external assessment appear to be contradictory in nature, and can be best explained, as in many other instances, by economic reasons rather than by any kind of theoretical principles.

In terms of internal assessment, the optional nature of the teacher's individual project seems also questionable, to the extent that it weakens the relevance of this element of assessment and calls its usefulness into question.

In methodological terms, it is the task of the members of the School Commission for the Coordination of TPA to design the instruments of assessment of the teachers' activities. Once again, the question of the validity and reliability of the instruments remains.

## **5. Concluding remarks**

The introduction of a new TPA model represented a significant progress in the assessment of teachers in Portugal. The former systems of teacher evaluation served essentially administrative purposes and were unfocused (teachers were assessed on the basis of superficial judgments about behaviors and practices), undifferentiated (based on a pass/fail system whereby nearly 100% of teachers earned the "satisfactory" rating), unhelpful (teachers were not provided with useful feedback on their performance), and inconsequential (the results of the evaluations were not used to make important decisions about professional development).

The new model aimed to put an end to the administrative tradition in ways that proved themselves questionable and inadequate in terms of timing and methodological approach. The strong belief in peer assessment as the basis of a model without ensuring the legitimacy of the peer evaluators in terms of training and professional status led to a general feeling of rejection and resentment by all the parties involved. The urge to implement the new model in a very short period of time without wide discussion and clarification within the profession was another pitfall. Teachers need clear information about how assessment systems work and how they can suggest improvements. There are no immaculate models. Even the most elegantly designed systems need to be evaluated and improved over time. In this respect teachers should have a voice and be regularly surveyed about their degree of confidence in the fairness and consistency of the evaluation process as well as the extent to which they feel the schools set clear expectations for them and help them meet those expectations.

An evaluation system should not be limited to some rating assigned at the end of an assessment cycle. Educational authorities, school leaders, supervisors and teachers alike should strive to cultivate a performance-focused culture by conducting formative observation practice, holding regular discussions, and sharing insights on overall classroom performance and student progress, professional goals, and developmental needs. Given, above all, its focus on the individual teacher, the most recent TPA model may fall short of contributing to the establishment of a truly developmental performance-focused culture of assessment of performance.

One common characteristic to the new TPA models is the fact that they apply to all levels of schooling without substantial differentiation between levels. Given the many specificities of the different levels, especially the pre-school and primary education when compared to middle and secondary education, the adoption of different approaches to the different levels of schooling appear to be a relevant issue to take into account in future TPA initiatives.

The combination of accountability and professional development purposes in a mixed model is a complex yet desirable task. In this respect, it is likely that assessment for accountability purposes is best suited to take place at

the end of a more or less long cycle of evaluation, focusing preferably on “teacher effectiveness”(Midley 1982, 1987; Slater, 2000) given that this encompasses competencies and performance and is more amenable to quantification and to general patterns and standards of assessment. In order to accomplish its developmental purposes, formative evaluation, in turn, needs to be regarded as an ongoing process that facilitates teachers` reflections (Schön, 1983, 1987)and thereby challenges the repetitive nature of everyday practice and exposes their own theoretical constructs to demonstration or refutation (Author, 2007, 2008).

In this respect the recent, broader concept of performance management (Salaman, Storey & Billsberry, 2005; Aguinis, 2009) may be helpful if applied to the educational context. Performance management has been described as a suitable, complete approach for monitoring the performance of employees. This includes planning, monitoring and evaluating in order to stimulate the achievement of organizational goals and the promotion of human resources development. Planning is oriented to wards the identification of the objectives to be achieved, based on the mission, vision, and analysis of the internal and external contexts of the organization. Monitoring aims to verify that the work is consistent with the established goals; identify discrepancies between the actual and expected results; and provide the necessary training and development programs. This process culminates in the evaluation of performance for accountability and career progression purposes, which meets Figari`s (1994) and Hadji`s (1993, 1994) differentiation between formative and summative evaluation in terms of timing and sequential process of implementation.

The Portuguese experience has confirmed the complexity of the process and the difficulty in devising and implementing a TPA model that reaches general consensus while satisfying the accountability and professional development purposes that it is supposed to fulfill. The Portuguese experience has also served to confirm a well-documented fact: like any other process of change, successful implementation of a TPA scheme depends, among other things, on the adherence of those directly involved, that is, teachers. This usually requires a genuine change in attitude, which cannot be achieved by legislation. Teachers need to understand the need for, and the value of any process of change and innovation. TPA need not be a necessary evil; it can and must be an indispensable asset.

## References

- Aguinis, H. (2009). *Performance management*(2nd ed).Noida: Dorling Kindersley India Pvt. Ltd.
- Alarcão, I. & Tavares, J. (2003). *Supervisão da prática pedagógica. Uma perspectiva de desenvolvimento e aprendizagem*. Coimbra: Almedina.
- Author (2007). [details removed for blind peer review].
- Author (2008).[details removed for blind peer review].
- Ball, S. R. (2003). The teacher`s soul and the terrors of performativity. *Journal of Education Policy*, 18(2), 215-228.
- Birnbaum, R. (1988). *How colleges work*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Bonniol, J.-J. & Vial, M. (2001). *Modelos de avaliação: Textos fundamentais*. Porto Alegre: Artmed.
- Brandt, R. M. (1995). Teacher evaluation for career ladder and incentive pay programs. In D. L. Duke (Ed.), *Teacher evaluation policy: From accountability to professional development*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- CCAP/Conselho Científico para a Avaliação de Professores (2008). *Princípios orientadores sobre a organização do processo de avaliação do desempenho docente.Recomendações N.º 2/CCAP/2008*. Lisboa: Ministério da Educação.
- Chagas, C. (2010). *A avaliação de desempenho dos professores no quadro da regulação da educação: Um estudo de caso numa escola secundária*. Lisboa: Universidade de Lisboa, Instituto de Educação (unpublished master dissertation).
- Curado, A. P. (2002). *Política de avaliação de professores em Portugal: Um estudo de implementação*. Lisboa: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian.
- Danielson, C. & McGreal, T. (2000). *Teacher evaluation to enhance professional practice*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2007).Recognizing and enhancing teacher effectiveness: A policymaker`s guide. In L. Darling-Hammond & C. D. Prince (Eds.).*Strengthening teacher quality in high-need schools: Policy and practice*. Washington, DC: The Council of Chief State School Officers.
- Day, C. (1999). *Developing teachers: The challenges of lifelong learning*. London: Falmer Press.

De Ketele, J-M. (2010). A avaliação do desenvolvimento profissional dos professores: postura de controlo ou postura de reconhecimento. In M. Alves & E. Machado (Eds.), *O pólo de excelência: Caminhos para a avaliação de desempenho docente* (pp. 13-31). Porto: Areal Editores.

Eurydice (2008). *Levels of autonomy and responsibilities of teachers in Europe*. Brussels: Eurydice European Unit.

Fernandes, D. (2008). *Avaliação do desempenho docente: Desafios, problemas e oportunidades*. Cacém: Texto Editores.

Figari, G. (1994). *Evaluer: Quel référentielle?* Bruxelles: De Boeck Université.

Gomes, M. C. (2010). *Avaliação do desempenho docente : Objectivos e controversias*. Lisboa: Universidade Lusófona de Humanidades e Tecnologias. (Unpublished Master dissertation).

Gonçalves, F. R. (2010). Da observação de aulas à avaliação do desempenho docente: cinco princípios, um corolário e uma proposta. O primado da legitimidade explícita ou as implicações da infra-ecologia. In M. P. Alves & E. A. Machado (Eds.), *O pólo de excelência: Caminhos para a avaliação do desempenho docente*(pp. 54-88). Porto: Areal Editores.

Grisay, A. (1990). Des indicateurs d'efficacité pour les établissements, *Education et Formations*, 22, 31-46.

Guba, E. G. & Lincoln, Y. S. (1989). *Fourth generation evaluation*. Newbury Park: Sage Publications.

Hadji, C. (1993). L'evaluation des enseignants :Des lignes directrices pour une demarche pertinente? In AFIRSE/AIPELF, *Avaliação em educação. Actas do III Colóquio*. Lisboa: Faculdade de Psicologia e de Ciências da Educação.

Hadji, C. (1995). A avaliação dos professores: Linhas directivas para uma metodologia pertinente. In A. Estrela & P. Rodrigues (Coord.). *Para uma fundamentação da avaliação em educação*. Lisboa: Edições Colibri.

Hargreaves, A. (1994). *Changing teachers, changing times: Teachers' work and culture in a postmodern age*. New York: Columbia University, Teachers College Press.

Joyce, B. & Weil, M. (1980). *Models of teaching*(2nd ed.).Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Lourenço, D. (2008). *A avaliação do desempenho docente: Necessidades de formação percebidas pelos professores avaliadores: Um contributo para a definição de um plano de formação*. Lisboa: Faculdade de Psicologia e Ciências da Educação, Universidade de Lisboa (unpublished master dissertation).

Marques, R. (2011). *Percepções de docentes sobre as dimensões da avaliação do desempenho docente: Supervisão e colaboração na cultura docente*. Lisboa: Universidade Católica Portuguesa (unpublished master dissertation).

Mota, V. (2009). *O novo modelo de avaliação do desempenho docente: Formação e percepções dos agentes avaliativos*. Coimbra: Faculdade de Psicologia e Ciências da Educação, Universidade de Coimbra (unpublished master dissertation).

Perrenoud, Ph. (1995). *La fabrication de l'excellence scolaire : Du curriculum aux pratiques d'évaluation. Vers une analyse de la réussite, de l'échec et des inégalités comme réalités construites par le système scolaire*. 2<sup>e</sup> édition. Genève: Droz.

Queiroz, E. (2012). *Contributo da avaliação do desempenho docente para o desenvolvimento pessoal e profissional: Um estudo exploratório*. Lisboa: Instituto Superior de Educação e Ciências (unpublished master dissertation).

Richardson, R. (1999). *Performance related pay in schools: An assessment of the green papers* (a report prepared for the National Union of Teachers by the London School of Economics and Political Science). London: London School of Economics.

Rodrigues, P. (2001). A formação no contexto da avaliação de professores. In J. Silva e J. Pacheco (orgs.). *(Re)pensar a formação contínua na construção da profissão docente*. Guimarães: Centro de Formação Francisco de Holanda, pp. 34-52.

Rodrigues, A. & Peralta, H. (2008). *Algumas considerações a propósito da avaliação do desempenho dos professores*. Lisboa: Ministério da Educação, Direção-Geral dos Recursos Humanos.

Salaman, G., Storey, J., & Billsberry, J. (2005). *Strategic human resource management: Theory and practice*. 2nd Edition. London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Santiago, P., Roseveare, D., van Amelsvoort, G., Manzi, J., & Matthews, P. (2009). *Teacher evaluation in Portugal. OECD Review*. OECD.

Schön D. A. (1983). *The reflective practitioner: How professionals think in action*. London: Temple Smith.

Schön, D. A. (1987). *Educating the reflective practitioner*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Scriven, M. (1967). The methodology of evaluation. In R. W. Tyler (Ed.), *Perspectives of curriculum evaluation*, Area Monograph on Curriculum Evaluation, 1. Chicago: Rand McNally.

Simões, G. (2000). *A avaliação do desempenho docente*. Lisboa: Texto Editores.

Shinkfield, A., & Stufflebeam, D. (1995). *Teacher evaluation: Guide to effective practice*. MA: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

Stronge, J. H. (2006). *Evaluating teaching: A guide to current thinking and best practice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Stronge, J. H. (2010). O que funciona, de facto, na avaliação de professores: breves considerações. In M. A. Flores (org.), *A avaliação de professores numa perspectiva internacional: Sentidos e implicações* (pp. 23-43). Porto: Areal Editores.

Teodoro, A. (2003). *Globalização e educação: Políticas educacionais e novos modos de governação*. Porto: Edições Afrontamento.

Winter, R. (1989). Problems in teacher appraisal - an action-research solution. In J. Elliott and H. Simons (eds), *Rethinking appraisal and assessment*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Wise, A., Darling-Hammond, L., McLaughlin, M., & Bernstein, H. (1984). *Teacher evaluation: A study of effective practice*. June: Rand Corporation.

### **Legal Documents**

- Decreto-Lei/Decree-Law no. 46/86 (the basis of the educational system in Portugal)
- DecretoRegulamentar/Regulatory Decree no. 14/92 (system of teacher evaluation)
- Decreto-Lei/Decree-Law no. 1/98 (revision of the Teacher Career Statute)
- Decreto-Lei/Decree-Law no. 240/2001 (teacher performance profile)
- Decreto-Lei/Decree-Law no. 15/2007 (revision of the Teacher Career Statute)
- Decreto Regulamentar/Regulatory Decree no. 2/2008 (system of teacher performance assessment)
- Decreto Regulamentar/Regulatory Decree no. 2/2010(system of teacher performance assessment)
- Decreto-Lei/Decree-Law no. 41/2012(revision of the Teacher Career Statute)
- Decreto Regulamentar/Regulatory Decree no. 26/2012(system of teacher performance assessment)