



## **New Approaches to Evaluating Teacher Performance**

**Florinda TARUSHA<sup>1</sup>**

**Ema KRISTO<sup>2</sup>**

---

Received: 19 July 2022 / Accepted: 10 August 2022 / Published: 24 November 2022

© 2022 Florinda Tarusha & Ema Kristo<sup>3</sup>

**Doi: 10.5281/zenodo.8159272**

---

### ***Abstract***

*In recent years, in the framework of educational reform, the reform of the teaching profession has been undertaken. Education reform has focused on four areas: legal, administrative, curricular, teaching technology and human resources. Human resource reform aims to improve the quality of education sector staff, in particular improving the quality of teachers. The competency-based approach developed within the professional training of teachers has led to a significant modification of the assessment system. Education continues to face issues such as evaluation of teacher performance. The teacher's performance is regulated by a set of legal documents and administrative instructions. In this context, the evaluation of teachers' performance will be discussed in the light of new modalities, which will allow us in this paper to compare and evaluate the complexity of this process. The paper undertakes to answer the research question: New approaches to assessment place teachers in active and professional roles. Is this really happening? Methodology used in the realization of this paper includes reviews of published documents and research on the situation of teacher performance evaluation; interviews and surveys with teachers, principals and education specialists; analysis of professional development and teacher evaluation models in the world in order to identify the most successful models that can be used or adapted in Albania. Objectives of the research paper are as following: to analyze teacher evaluation practices from a comparative perspective; to describe teacher performance evaluation practices, the extent to which these practices promote this process; and to identify the strengths and weaknesses of*

---

<sup>1</sup> University "Aleksander Xhuvani", Elbasan, Email: florinda.tarusha@uniel.edu.al

<sup>2</sup> University of Tirana, Email: Ema.kristo@unitir.edu.al

<sup>3</sup> This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, adaptation, and reproduction in any medium, provided that the

original work is properly cited.



*current practices for evaluating teacher performance as well as the effect of these practices. One of the main findings of the paper is that evaluating teacher performance should take into consideration the fact that teacher effectiveness and developmental needs may change over the years, and this view is conveyed to school leaders that they should be responsible for helping their teachers to grow professionally. School leaders cultivate a performance-focused culture, and this is achieved through the constant observation of teachers. Another finding of the paper is that in teacher evaluations the main emphasis should be placed on improving the quality of teaching, precisely on those evaluation methods that have the potential to improve the quality of teaching. The paper brings recommendations to influence the improvement of the teacher performance evaluation system based on the best experiences.*

**Keywords:** *Performance evaluation, teaching quality, evaluation methods*

## **I. Introduction**

Teacher performance evaluation plays a key role in educational reforms. In the past, performance evaluation has been more focused on how tasks are accomplished, thus neglecting contextual performance.

From the perspective of information gathering, there are three dominant types of teacher evaluation, they are:

- Assessment of the teacher's competence;
- Evaluation of the teacher's performance;
- Evaluating the effectiveness of the teacher (Wulf, 2020, p.267).

Assessment of the teacher's competence - used to assess the knowledge that the teacher possesses. This is usually measured by a written test. The results of this assessment serve for teacher licensing or certification purposes. It is usually used to evaluate the results of teacher competency training. Teacher performance evaluation - used to evaluate the teacher's performance, i.e. his behavior, and to collect information about the quality of the teacher's work. This is a subjective assessment, which can be done by supervisors or superiors, colleagues or students.

Evaluation of teacher effectiveness - serves to evaluate the effect of teaching on students or to evaluate the influence of the teacher on the progress of students towards important educational goals. These three evaluations are closely related to each other. These are important elements in teaching and learning processes. They are the essential currency all schools have to

improve teachers and performance as well as the students' learning, but schools often spend this currency unwisely. Too often, evaluations are a source of tension and conflict especially when teachers' performance is evaluated only in terms of students' achievements and scores, with ignorance to the fact that teachers' evaluation is a mean of teachers' professional development towards better learning environment and thus better student achievement.

The traditional evaluation is based on limited or competing conceptions of teaching, and is often characterized by inaccuracy, lack of support and insufficient training. Teacher evaluation has frequently been used to weed out the poorest performing teachers rather than to hold all teachers accountable or to improve the performance of all teachers. Because of these traditional limits on scope and efficacy, teacher evaluation has had a limited impact on teacher performance and thus on the learning process. Nowadays all teachers wish for an evaluation process that focuses on improvement, instead of just uncovering shortcomings and weaknesses. The evaluation process should be directly tied to both the individual goals of teachers and the school's goals.

### **Assessment of teachers' performance in the past and how it should be today**

Performance management is the best way to hold teaching staff accountable for the performance of tasks and the results achieved. Its purpose is the all-round formation of students, through the improvement of teachers' professional competences, dedication to duty, building self-confidence and self-respect.

<b>In the past</b>	<b>Nowadays</b>
The teaching staff was evaluated for their achievements/failures based on 2-3 data (mainly average grade, lesson observations) and only aims to evaluate the work	<b>The competences and achievements</b> of the teaching staff are evaluated despite the teacher's job description and plan, based on his <b>professional standards</b> . This assessment is intended to help every teacher improve.
Teacher evaluation does not had a certain philosophy, it was simply a conclusion of several indicators.	Performance evaluation should be based on the philosophy designed for this purpose. It is an opportunity, for both parties, to talk, to decide for everyone what needs to be done, to face challenges and obstacles, to give the necessary help and encouragement, for a better performance.

Teaching staff are not encouraged to self-evaluate during the school year, they only wait for the end of the year to receive the principal's evaluation.	All staff should have their own performance expectations, the fulfilment of which can be progressively assessed in the middle or at the end of the school year. (Self-esteem)
Assessments in most cases are carried out and signed only by the principal and the teacher is simply informed about it at the end of the school year.	Assessments must be documented and signed by both parties (teacher and principal)
Since there is no clear description of the teacher's job, job evaluation is more of a manager's perception and a general description, rather than based on specific issues of the teacher's job or based on standards.	Assessments must be carried out on the basis of the performance agreement agreed and signed by the principal and the teacher (teacher's job description).
When improvement is necessary, the teacher is given disciplinary measures, and when failures are repeated, the teacher is referred for termination of employment.	When improvement is needed, staff should be offered support and guidance, while repeated failures to meet targets should be taken seriously.
Performance evaluation is based on the head's perceptions, on the basis of teachers' or parents' opinions, and the only data possessed by the head (classroom observation, documentation observation) are not (in most cases) taken into consideration in the evaluation yearly.	Teacher performance evaluation must be done according to the teacher's standards, based on data collected and documented throughout the year, and not based on the principal's perceptions.
The performance evaluation may not be done every year, but only when superiors (in some cases managers) request it.	Teacher performance evaluation is an obligation for the principal and is done every school year.

Based on the comparative table above, that's why there is a need to have another look to the current teacher evaluation systems, tools and methods.

The purpose of this study was to find new tools and methods to evaluate teachers' performance rather than the traditional tools and methods used recently and may not be satisfy and fair to the teachers' efforts in their contribution and teaching.

Because of the traditional limits in Albania teacher evaluation has had a limited impact on teacher performance and thus on the learning process.

- The existing evaluation procedures that focus on complying with regimented sets of behaviors do not encourage teachers' involvement in their own self-development or in the development of collaborative school cultures. Therefore, all teachers wish for an evaluation process that focuses on improvement, instead of just uncovering shortcomings and weaknesses. The evaluation process should be directly tied to both the individual goals of teachers and the school's goals.
- There is a must to create new evaluation tools and methods that help teachers address the angles of their weakness in the educational practices and performance so as to help in improving and developing their professional skills in order to be able to meet the educational goals, school goals and teachers' own goals of improving themselves.

## **II. Literature Review**

A review of the literature was done on effective teacher evaluation practices, models used to assess teacher practices, and teachers' perceptions of evaluation systems. A review of literature was also done on why teacher perceptions of evaluation programs matter and should be considered. Based on the literature, the researcher derived the following definition of teacher evaluation: a function of an educational organization assumed as a part of teacher supervision, designed to make judgments concerning teacher performance and competence for the purposes of personnel tenure and continued employment decisions (Darling, 1983, p. 286). The process as a whole can lead to improvements in teacher performance.

Scriven (1967), one of the first scholars to explore the purpose of teacher evaluation, defined it as a "methodological activity which is essentially similar whether we are trying to evaluate coffee machines or teaching machines, plans for a house or plans for a curriculum". Scriven<sup>4</sup> argued that the specific roles and activities of evaluation can become a barrier to accomplishing the goal of evaluation if that goal is not clearly articulated and communicated. Scholars have postulated four basic purposes of teacher evaluation and framed them in a matrix (Scriven, 1967, p.40 & Wise, 1984, p.245). One side was labeled with level, and the other side was labeled with purpose. The purposes were based on whether the evaluation was assessing for improvement or

accountability (purpose) and whether the results would be applied to the individual or the organization (level). Wise et al. (1985) noted that individual and collective teacher improvement was the primary goal, and the processes and methods determined the purpose of the evaluation system. Conceptualizations developed since the 1990s simplify the purposes of teacher evaluation to two main purposes: hold teachers accountable by measuring teacher performance to make personnel decisions and promote teacher growth and support teacher development (Beerens, 2000; Daley & Kim, 2010; Danielson, 2012; Duke, 1990; Gordon, 2006; Hallinger et al., 2014; Looney, 2011; Marzano, 2012; Marzano & Toth, 2013; Stronge, 2006; Young et al., 2015). While the terminology used to describe each purpose may differ from author to author the concepts are consistent (Wulf, 2020, p.233).

### **III. Methodology**

**The main research questions of this study are:**

1. What are the current methods used in evaluating teachers' performance in Albania?
2. How can teachers help in creating new methods and tools of evaluation with regards to some chosen areas for improving?
3. How is teacher evaluation linked to teachers' professional development?

Methodology used in the realization of this paper based on Interviews and surveys with teachers, principals and education specialists. The two main methods used of data collection are: Focus Groups and Interviews, interviews are conducted in the written form, and the answers to the questions are presented in this study, the focus group conducted with the principals, supervisors and teachers. 10 supervisors, 10 principals and 40 teachers participate in this study. The limitations of his study are:

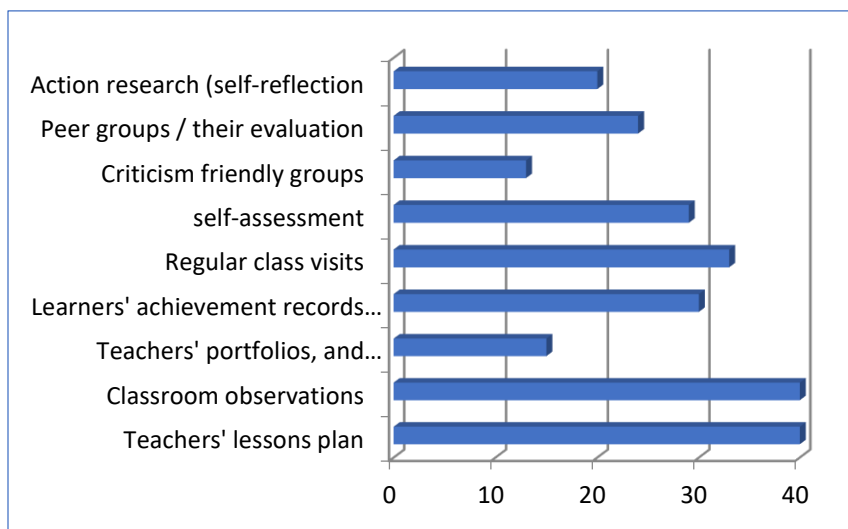
- 1- The study is restricted to Albanian schools during the academic year 2020 / 2021. (Secondary school)
- 2- The study is restricted to Albanian schools' principals, supervisors and teachers.

#### **Interview results with the teachers**

- Current Evaluation Methods

All of the participant teachers gave the same tools that are the base of the evaluating system of teachers in Albanian schools. Teachers are being evaluated based on several criteria that depend on the following:

- ◆ Teachers' lessons plan.
- ◆ Classroom observations.
- ◆ Teachers' portfolios, and students' work samples.
- ◆ Learners' achievement records and data.
- ◆ Regular class visits
- ◆ self-assessment
- ◆ Criticism friendly groups
- ◆ Peer groups / their evaluation
- ◆ Action research (self-reflection)

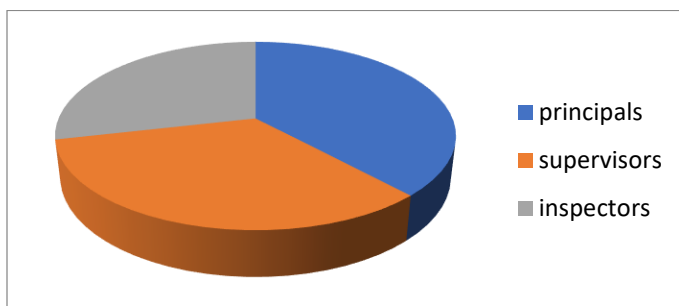


As we see the most commonly used tools for evaluating teachers are lesson plans and classroom observation. Lessons' plans are an important aspect of teaching and learning as it is attached to student learning. That is because students' learning is affected by the level of planning that links the learning objectives to the teaching activities. Classroom observations do serve to capture a good background and collect some information about teacher's instructional practices in the classroom, and can be used to track the teacher's growth and level of improvement, and also can identify the professional development areas needed for each teacher.

- Evaluators

The parties involved in the process of improving teachers' performance are: (a) Teachers. – everyone should have evidence of teaching, through portfolio and lesson monitoring, and a self-evaluation report. (b) principals – who must analyze the self-assessment report and interview the teachers before he/she completes the report form. According to the need, the school director can be accompanied by the related educational directorate with his/her representative, or be replaced by one of them. (c) The Directorate of Education - makes the decision on the level of performance according to the evaluation report. This can be done through a special commission. (d) Supervisors – it must be that the realization process is realized successfully.

Teachers were asked about who are the best ones to evaluate teachers' performance from their point of view. The most common evaluators are the principals, supervisors and inspectors from the directorate of education as the teachers answered. Teachers mentioned that the principal engaged in evaluating teacher's performance must have a background or knowledge of the curriculum or the subject being taught. The evaluator who have good knowledge of the subject, its curriculum and content, can give professional advice and comments to improve the performance.

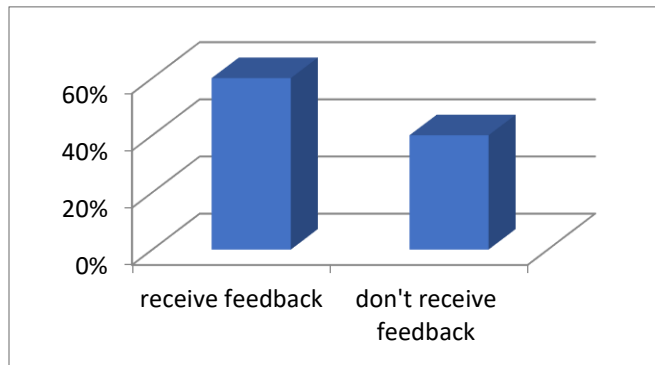


- Frequencies of Evaluation

All teachers said that they are evaluated once every year. New teachers have been evaluated annually too. These teacher evaluations should serve as important tools for rewarding good teachers, helping average teachers improve and holding weak teachers accountable for poor performance. All the teachers agreed that the number of times the teacher is evaluated is a chance for a better evaluation and a good chance to track the progress and improvement in



teachers' performance in several areas of teaching. It is important that teachers are observed and receive feedback early in the school year. 60% of the teachers interviewed stated that they receive feedback from the evaluation that has been done, while 40% of them emphasized the fact that they do not receive any feedback from the evaluators.



- **Teacher's Evaluation and Professional Development**

Most of the teachers ensured that the main target and goal of the teacher evaluation is to improve teachers' teaching performance and to identify the problems and weaknesses of the teacher as well as to offer him the appropriate advice and training. Some of the evaluators think that evaluating teacher is just to look for the wrong practices of teachers, addressing them and write them in the report. That is the wrong way.

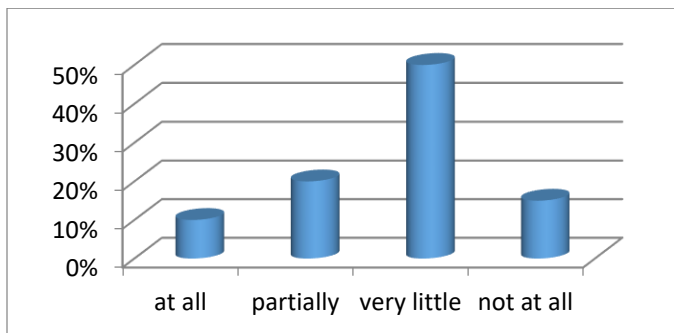
Content of professional development should focus on concrete tasks of teaching rather than abstract discussions of teaching, on specific pedagogical skills, and on how to teach specific kinds of content to learners. Processes of professional development should be designed to according to how teachers learn. Particularly effective processes include modeling, constructing opportunities for practice, and reflection on new practices. Continuous dialog in professional community and examination of teaching practice and student performance can also be effective in developing and enacting more effective practices. 3. Professional development is most effective if it is a coherent part of a larger school improvement effort. Curriculum, student assessments, standards, and teacher professional development should be linked into a coherent system of learning and improvement. These professional community contexts exist both within the school and beyond it.

Another complain from the teachers is that the results of the evaluations are not really used to further teacher development. For many teachers, the evaluation process can frustrate them and disappoint them.

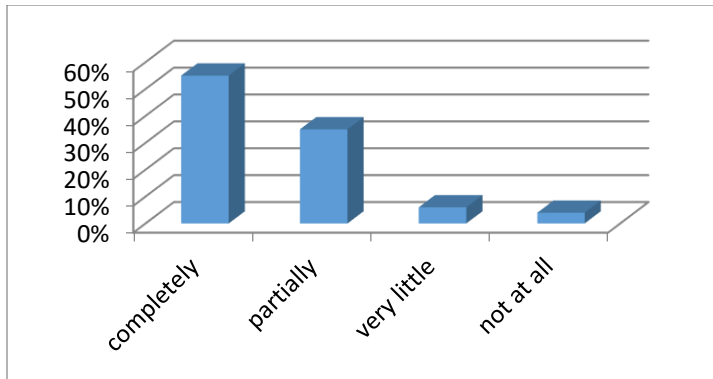
The supervisor is responsible for providing adequate support to the teachers for the development of their learning requirements and ensuring that appropriate training opportunities are made available to acquire the necessary competencies. Through a regular appraisal process the educational supervisor should also ensure that the teacher follows a program which meets the educational objectives.

- Subjectivity during the performance evaluation process

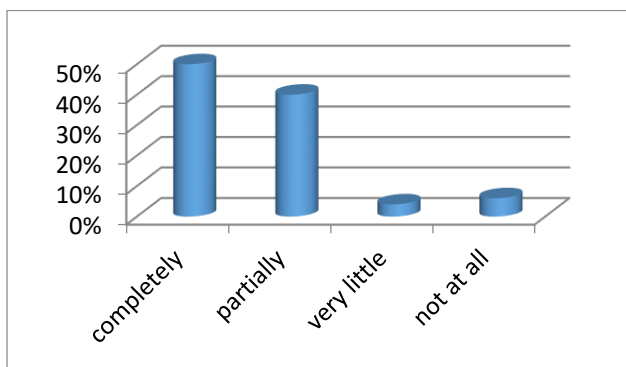
Question: How much do you think there is subjectivity (non-real assessment) during the evaluation of performance process? From the data of the graph, we find that teachers have different perceptions. As can be seen from the results, 10% think that there is subjectivity during the evaluation process, 25% partially, 50% very little, 15% not at all.



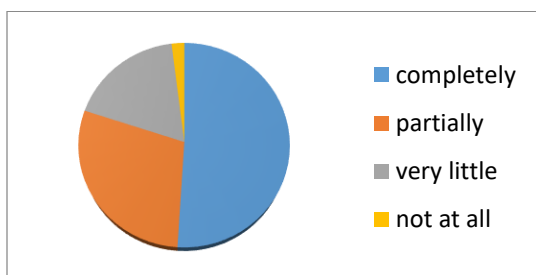
Question: How much does evaluation affect your dedication to your profession and work with students? The data of graph show how much the assessment affects the teachers' commitment to their profession and work with students, from the teachers' statements, 55% think it affects completely, 35% partially, 6% very little, 4 not at all.



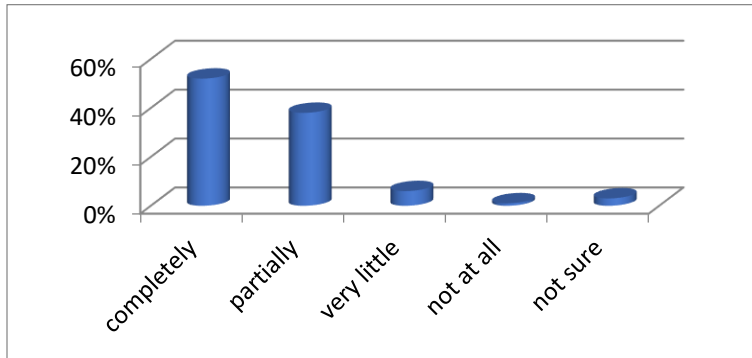
To the question of how much the evaluation affects taking initiatives for professional development and advancement, 50% of the teachers answered "completely", 40% partially, 4% very little, 6% I am not sure. From the results, we can say that the majority of teachers think that evaluation affects taking initiatives for professional development and advancement.



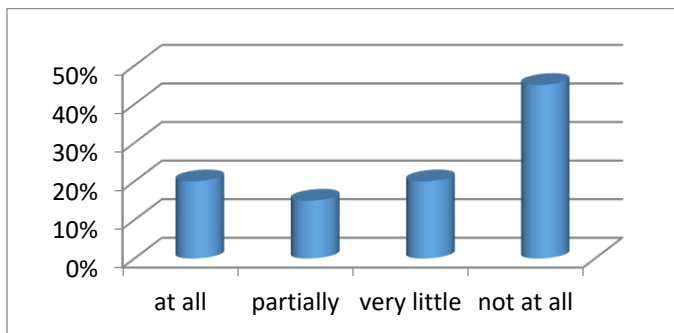
The question of how much the assessment affects the use of new strategies in teaching? In the next question, regarding how much the assessment affects the use of new strategies in teaching, we have the following responses from the teachers: 51% of the teachers affirm "completely", 29% partially, 18% very little and 2% not at all. It is clearly observed that the majority of teachers declare that evaluation affects the use of new strategies in teaching.



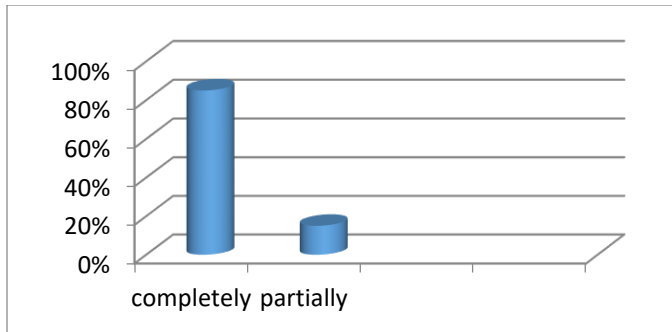
To the question how much do you think it is necessary for a professional teacher to participate in the assessment together with the monitor (principal or inspector), 52% answered completely it is necessary, 38% partially, 6% very little, 1% not at all and 3% I'm not sure. As a conclusion, it turns out that during the evaluation process it is necessary to participate together with the monitor (principal or inspector) a professional teacher too.



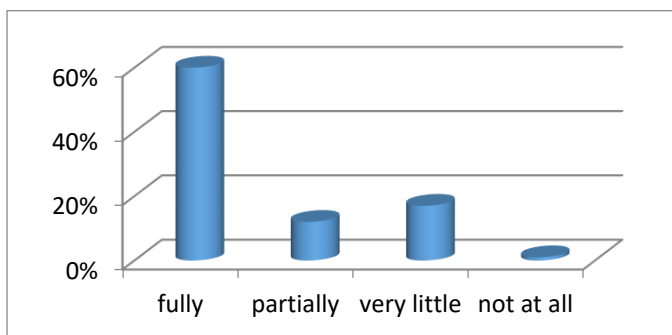
Question: Have you participated in professional development activities in the last 2 years? Regarding to this question, from the chart we have this data: 20% of teachers declare fully, 15% partially, 20% very little and 45% not at all.



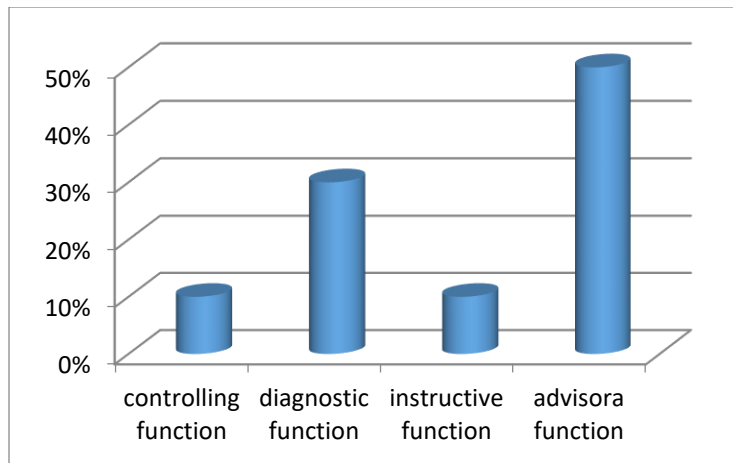
Question: How much do you rate your performance and do you make efforts to improve the level of teaching and educational work through appropriate professional development? Based on the results presented, over 85% of teachers declare "completely" and 15% partially. From the statements of the teachers and the results of the research, we understand that they value their performance and make efforts to improve the level of teaching and educational work, through appropriate professional development.



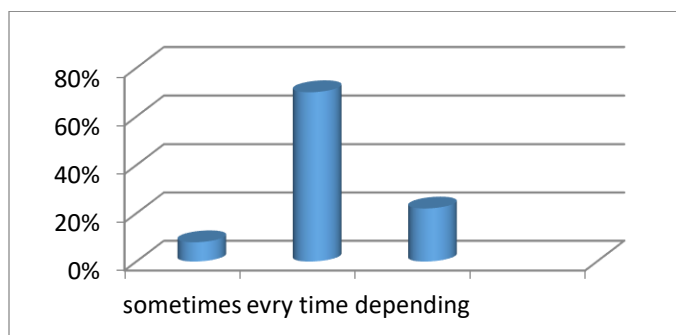
The question. Do you self-assess your professional performance? From the data of chart we understand that teachers do self-evaluation of professional performance, where 60% fully declare that they do self-evaluation, 12% partially, 17% very little and 1% not at all. As a conclusion, from the data analysis, we can understand that the majority of teachers do self-evaluation of their professional performance, while the remaining percentage do not do self-evaluation at all.



Question: In your opinion, which of these functions are most important during the monitoring/evaluation process? Asked about the issue, in your opinion, which of these functions are the most important during the monitoring/evaluation process, as can be seen from the results in the graph, more than 10% of the respondents affirm that during the evaluation process the most important function is "controlling function", 30% diagnostic function, 10% instructive function and 50% advisory function.



The question. Are teachers notified of the time of monitoring and evaluation in lessons? Regarding this question, we have the following answers: 8% say "sometimes", 70% every time and 22% depending on the purpose.



## **Conclusion**

Some of the main findings of the study are as following:

The quality of evaluation is the factor that is perceived as having considerable weight and among the most important factors is the increase in the performance of teachers, in their professional development, as well as in the improvement of the quality of teaching. This finding has been accepted by all evaluation actors including teachers, school principals and educational inspection officials. The level of monitoring and evaluation is related to the process, purpose, planning, classroom observations as well as the feedback that teachers receive as a result of the evaluation. According to the attitude of the teachers, the findings show that over 70% of the

teachers have partial knowledge on the evaluation of the teacher's performance. As can be seen from the data, teachers with longer experience in education and with a qualification level with faculties have more knowledge about evaluation of performance than those with less experience in education. So, longer experience in education and higher level in education are factors that influence teachers to have more knowledge on teacher performance evaluation.

Little knowledge of teachers about standards, criteria, areas and all aspects related to evaluation and performance, not only affect the lower evaluation of the external evaluation, but above all negatively affect the professional development of teachers, improvements expected in the implementation of the curricula and the fulfillment of the school's objectives.

Based on the statements of the teachers, the findings of the study show that some school principals do not have the proper skills to make an objective evaluation, due to the fact that there is no knowledge of the standards, criteria and methods of how performance evaluation is done. The lack of knowledge on the part of directors consequently creates dissatisfaction and unnecessary tensions.

Based on teachers' attitudes regarding the impact of feedback on their work, the findings show that over 79.43% of teachers think that feedback affects their work. The findings of the study show that teachers do not always receive feedback from the school principal or another person. The data also show that teachers and inspectors value feedback as very important for the development of teachers.

The evaluation process depends entirely on quality, so the overall quality of the teacher evaluation process is considered a weighty factor in raising the performance of teachers, in their professional development, as well as in improving the quality of teaching. The teacher evaluation process in most of Albania schools still follow the traditional teacher evaluation methods with no creativity, or initiatives by the evaluators to improve it to be aligned with the new trends and concepts of education reforms and improvements. It is obvious that the evaluation system being adapted in Albania schools is not encouraging and not linking teacher evaluation process to teachers' professional development. Not to mention the need to more efforts from the educational authority to organize and make these professional development opportunities available for teachers. As well as giving more authority to the principals, supervisors, evaluators

and teachers to come up with a well-planned evaluation process that takes into consideration the teachers' professional development needs. The participants agree that the following describe the recent evaluation system:

- Evaluations done only once or at best circumstances twice a year for each teacher.
- The most common evaluation method adapted in evaluating teachers in Albania schools is the classroom observation
- Teachers are evaluated in terms of teaching styles, the ability to deliver the content of the lesson, lessons' plans, and classroom management skills.
- Most of the evaluators' reports are not valid and not reliable from the point of view of teachers, and that's because of some factors like the evaluation frequencies, evaluators' background of the subject and the techniques of teaching it, short evaluation time, and not giving the teachers the chance to or the opportunity to give their input regarding the evaluation methods and tools, to identify what is the best method and tool to be used as an evaluation tool so the results would be more reliable and valid.

This leads us to the fact of the need to come up or design new evaluation system with new policies that serve the real purpose of the process of teacher evaluation, and thus serves teachers, students and schools at the same time. The following recommendations can help policymakers:

- Define the standards of qualified teachers. To define the academic standards for what a qualified teacher needs to have in terms of qualifications, skills and knowledge to be considered as a qualified teacher.
- The evaluation system should focus mainly on improving teaching practice. This means that evaluation should be viewed as an informational tool to help evaluators and principals to identify teachers who need additional or specialized assistance and to help individual teachers improve their instructional practices.
- Evaluators should be trained in order to conduct more accurate and effective evaluation of teachers.



- Teachers and principals should have a good understanding to the evaluation system and regulations before implementing it. This will guarantee confidence and evaluation system's long- term sustainability.
- Teacher evaluation should be linked to teacher professional development. Teachers should receive professional development.

## **References**

- Raport Zhvillimi profesional dhe vlerësimi në Shqipëri (Janar, 2015).
- Inspektimi dhe vlerësimi i brendshëm i shkollës (Udhëzues për inspektimin e plotë të shkollës përgatitur nga IKAP), 2011.
- Allan, O. (2001). New Directions in Teacher Evaluation and Compensation, presentation at the Second Annual Consortium for Policy Research in Education (CPRE), <http://www.edu/cpre/conference/Nov01/allan.asp>
- Brandt, R. (1996). A New Direction for Teacher Evaluation. *Educational Leadership*, 53(6), 30-33. EJ 519 774.
- Darling-Hammond, L., and others. "Teacher Evaluation in the Organizational Context: A Review of the Literature." *Review of Educational Research* 53, 3 (Fall 1983): 285-328.
- Peterson, K. D., & Chenoweth, T. (1992). School teachers' control and involvement in their own evaluation. *Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education*, 6(2).
- Scriven, M. (1973). Handbook for model training program in qualitative educational evaluation. Berkeley, CA: University of California.
- Scriven, M. (1981). Duty-based teacher evaluation. *Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education*, 6(4), 214-221.
- Scriven, M. (1972). Die Methodologie der Evaluation Wulf, Christoph [Hrsg.]: Evaluation. Beschreibung und Bewertung von Unterricht, Curricula und Schulversuchen. München: R. Piper & Co. Verlag 1972, S. 60-91. - (Erziehung in Wissenschaft und Praxis; 18).
- Wise, A. E., Darling-Hammond, L., McLaughlin, M. W., & Bernstein, H. T. (1984). Case Studies for Teacher Evaluation. Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corp. ED 251 952.

Wulf, C. (2020). Evaluation - Beschreibung und Bewertung von Unterricht, Curricula und Schulversuchen (Evaluation - The Description and Assessment of Teaching, Curricula and Educational Experiments), Piper & Co. Verlag.