

SELF-EVALUATION AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT: THE ISSEMOD MODEL TO DEVELOP THE QUALITY OF SCHOOL PROCESSES AND OUTCOMES

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Abstract

Recent European and North American government policies, implementing new systems of evaluation and accountability, have highlighted the use of performance data to inform judgments about schools and stimulate school improvement. This has led to the implementation of school self-evaluation considered as an effective means to increase school quality and effectiveness. Decentralization of education systems, which is the official policy in many European countries, has evoked increased interest in accountability, responsiveness and self-improvement of schools. This trend has promoted, on the one hand a broadening of educational evaluation methodologies and, on the other, a conceptualization of theoretical approaches and research in the field of school effectiveness and improvement. A viable working definition, also used in this research, is that school self-evaluation concerns a type of educational evaluation that is initiated at school level and, at least partially, controlled by the school itself.

This study presents a self-evaluation model, called the *ISSEMod*, thought to improve school accountability, applicable in different countries, combining central control managed by public authorities (external control) and the autonomy reserved for schools related to pedagogical, instructional and organizational practices (internal control). Using a sample of 58 Tuscan schools, an empirical and evidence-based model of school self-evaluation focused on a flexible system of areas and indicators to investigate and analyze school quality, is proposed here.

Keywords: self-evaluation, school effectiveness, quality assurance, accountability, learning organizations