SELF-ASSESSMENT OF PEDAGOGICAL LEADERSHIP: A LEARNING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE AT SCHOOL [1]

AUTOEVALUACIÓN DEL LIDERAZGO PEDAGÓGICO: UNA EXPERIENCIA DE APRENDIZAJE Y DESARROLLO PROFESIONAL EN LA ESCUELA

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the self-assessment experience of pedagogical leadership developed by a management team belonging to a chilean subsidized private school in the commune of Loncoche, as a strategy to promote learning and professional development. The research is part of a case study of mixed methodology with a sequential-explanatory design. The participants were nine school principals that belonged to the management team. To collect information, the Spanish adaptation of the Vanderbilt Leadership in Education questionnaire (VAL-ED) was applied, as well as discussion groups and analysis of records of the improvement process. The results of the diagnosis allowed the management team to identify their implications of practices in students and teachers learning. It is concluded that there is a need to move towards permanent processes of formative self-evaluation of leadership as a reflective and collaborative strategy and a situated professional approach.

Keywords: Leadership; self-assessment; learning; school; educational management team.

Resumen

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The Este artículo tiene como objetivo describir la experiencia de autoevaluación del liderazgo pedagógico desarrollado por un equipo de gestión perteneciente a un centro escolar particular subvencionado chileno de la comuna de Loncoche, como estrategia para favorecer el aprendizaje y desarrollo profesional. La investigación se enmarca en un estudio de caso de metodología mixta con diseño secuencial-explicativo. Los participantes fueron nueve directivos escolares pertenecientes al equipo de gestión de la escuela. Para la recolección de información se aplicó el cuestionario de Vanderbilt de Liderazgo en Educación (VAL-ED) además de grupos de discusión y análisis de registros del proceso de mejoramiento. Los resultados del diagnóstico permitieron al equipo de gestión replantear sus prácticas para gestionar el aprendizaje de estudiantes y profesorado. Se concluye sobre la relevancia de incentivar procesos permanentes de autoevaluación del liderazgo que propicien la reflexión crítica y colaborativa de la práctica desde un enfoque formativo y situado.

Palabras clave: Liderazgo; autoevaluación; aprendizaje; escuela; equipo de gestión.

1. Introduction

Several international studies describe leadership as a key factor in school improvement processes, only surpassed by the practices made by teachers in the classroom (Fullan 2020; Grissom, Egalite & Lindsay, 2021; Leithwood, 2019; Robinson & Gray, 2019). From this perspective, the analysis of pedagogical leadership practices of management teams is essential to foster sustained processes of learning and school improvement (Ministry of Education of Chile [Mineduc, in spanish], 2015, 2021; Organisation for economic cooperation and development [OECD], 2019; Rincón-Gallardo, 2019). The focus of these policies ends up being particularly relevant, since there are still prevailing leadership approaches that center on administrative and bureaucratic aspects that neglect the management of a pertinent and challenging curriculum.

Based on this need, pedagogical leadership evaluation practices represent an alternative for school leaders to analyze from a situated and contextual perspective, critical performances to improve their schools (Bolívar, 2019; Chiguay & Villagra, 2016; Fullan, 2020; Santos-Guerra, 2019). According to Villagra and Fritz (2017) evaluation can contribute to the self-regulation of practices from questioning and becoming aware of the beliefs they are based on. In other words, evaluation can be assumed as a situated formative practice for the professional development of school leaders, if it is seen as an authentic learning opportunity to make better decisions supported on the understanding of practice problems.

Despite the benefits of evaluation, Bolívar (2019) proposes that it is still an undervalued practice when the analysis object is pedagogical leadership, and therefore it requires moving towards the assessment of the criteria linked to effective practices that offer feedback and contribute to leadership professional development in a formative way. In this sense, the Chilean Ministry of Education, in collaboration with the Pontifical Catholic University of Valparaíso and the Diego Portales University (2018), advises that any leadership performance evaluation system must invite school leaders to look at their own practice from a critical perspective that contributes to shape a renewed learning culture in school. Therefore, the re-signification of evaluation processes is essential for deep learning, especially is self-assessment helps to create awareness of the professional needs and challenges.

If learning and evaluation were seen as a single process, it would be an ethical and political practice, because it would demand coherent decision-making from school leadership in accordance with the educational purposes (Ballangrud & Aas, 2022; Santos-Guerra, 2014, 2022). Therefore, evaluation must not be understood as an action developed only at a given

moment, but a career-long reflective and dialogic practice that allows to, beyond judging the quality of the practice, gain in-depth understanding of problems and how to address them.

Considering this background, the objective of this next article is to describe the experience of self-evaluation of pedagogical leadership practices of a Chilean management team in the city of Loncoche, located in the region of La Araucanía. The study seeks to contribute to the field of educational leadership knowledge through the processes of self-assessment of professional practices as a situated professional development strategy.

2. Literature review

The various challenges of the educational system at a global level encourage processes of reviewing and reflecting about teaching and learning practices in school to review the essence of pedagogical leadership (Elmore, 2010; Rincón-Gallardo, 2020; Robinson & Gray, 2019). According to Bolívar (2019), pedagogical leadership encompasses all the perspectives on how leadership is at the service of educational improvement, particularly on school learning. Likewise, this leadership manages the curriculum by permanently focusing on the effects that the practices of school leaders have on students (Robinson, 2019; Robinson & Gray, 2019). In other words, a leader is a person who manages to influence indirectly, but intentionally, the "pedagogical nucleus", defined as the basic unit where learning takes place through the relationship and interaction between the teacher and the students in the presence of the content (Elmore, 2010).

The challenge of progressing towards pedagogical leadership requires deep reflection on leadership practices and their implications on learning, which requires understanding the formative meaning of evaluation for professional development and school improvement (Josep & Grandolfi, 2022; Mineduc et al., 2018; Santos-Guerra, 2019). Self-assessment of educational practices represents a formative strategy that can contribute to the development of individual and collective learning (Calatayud, 2022; Santos-Guerra, 2014; Villagra & Fritz, 2017). From this perspective, self-assessment is experienced as an opportunity to learn and understand where we are and what we need to improve as an educational community.

According to Martínez-Izaguirre, Yániz-Álvarez de Eulate & Villardón-Gallego (2018) self-assessment processes of practices must tend to develop professional autonomy of teams in decision-making. The information provided by shared evaluation should contribute to management teams taking distance from their own practice as a way of favoring their questioning and problematization (Bolívar, 2019; Berríos, Aravena, García-Carmona & Martín-Briss, 2020). In this sense, leadership assessment requires models that are based on

pedagogical principles that guide critical reflection about leadership practices and their consequences in learning and integral development of students. It is important to clarify that evaluation is not restricted to a checklist or verification of certain expected criteria, but it considers the awareness caused by such comparison.

For Berríos et al. (2020) leadership self-evaluation processes can contribute to generate participative diagnoses and promote collaboration for decision-making. On the same line, evaluation as a collegial discussion contributes to the construction of shared understandings about educational purposes, strengthening the commitment and sense of belonging to a community (Sasson, Grinshtain, Ayali & Yehuda, 2022). The analysis of one's own practices will have a positive effect on the professionalism and the sense of co-responsibility, as long as it is developed in contexts of collaboration and reflection among teachers during their daily pedagogical work (Bolívar, 2019; Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2020; Vaillant, 2019). Therefore, self-evaluation is a constitutive practice of professional development because it allows teachers to learn intentionally in their own context, based on their interests and needs (Calatayud, 2022; Mineduc, 2021).

As a matter of fact, Duran (2019) proposes that teacher learning occurs mainly within the context in which the professional activity is developed, which implies developing a self-critical vision for practice improvement. In that regard, several authors explain that professional learning is built ordinarily as part of the usual schoolwork and its directly related to the way in which we do things (Fullan, 2020; Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2020). In other words, if teachers learn during their pedagogical work, the evaluation understood as learning, they should develop authentically on these very professional scenarios.

Understanding the school as a professional development scenario requires a critical-reflective approach, based on collaborative learning among teachers and their management teams, who assume a permanent role of an "apprentice" (Elmore, 2010; Kools, Stoll, George, Steijn, Bekkers & Gouëdard, 2020; Rincón-Gallardo, 2019; Robinson, 2022). To encourage reflection among peers, several studies suggest the accompaniment of "critic friends" who assume a mediator role through making questions and honest comments that challenge the assumptions and reasoning of their peers (Stoll, 2019; Villagra, Mellado, Leiva & Sepúlveda, 2022), providing other perspectives that stimulate the re-signification of their professional work (Mellado, Chaucono & Villagra, 2017; Rincón-Gallardo, 2019).

In summary, the best evaluative processes are collective, they do not focus on the individual performance of a professional, and they are sustained by a learning dialogue. Hence, feedback is a professional learning strategy when it occurs in a reciprocal and constant way (Drago-

Severson & Blum-DeStefano, 2018). Finally, self-evaluation as learning, developed from a critical perspective, allows awareness of the perceptions and beliefs that sustain educational practices (Robinson, 2022). In other words, leadership evaluation contributes to managerial teacher professional learning and development.

3. Methodology

3.1. Design

This educational research is framed within a single case study (Martín, 2016) that seeks to contribute to the solution of problems affecting leadership and management of learning in educational centers (Bisquerra, 2006). This study is based on a sequential explanatory design that uses qualitative findings to explain quantitative results (Creswell, 2008) that allows the integration of data in the interpretation, which focus on the explanation of the found relationships (Creswell & Plano, 2017). The quantitative phase consisted of the self-assessment of a management team's leadership practices (pre-post application). The qualitative stage delved into the self-assessment experience of school leaders to inquire how this process helped their professional learning and situated professional development. Both stages were mediated by an external "critic friend", whose role was to guide dialogue and reflection during the self-assessment process in the context of a research project developed by a Chilean university.

3.2. Participants

The participants of these study were nine members from a management team at a subsidized school in the city of Loncoche, located in the region of La Araucanía in Chile. The team was comprised by a school principal, a technological-pedagogical unit chief (UTP, in Spanish), a school climate coordinator, four female and two male cycle coordinators and two management support teachers. The method used for participant selection was non-probabilistic, using the convenience criteria (Otzen & Manterola, 2017), referring to the inclusion of each member of the management team that are part of the center's organization. The age of the participants fluctuates between 26 and 58 years, with an average experience of 3.4 years performing in managerial positions. In addition, a critic friend participated, who formed herself in this role at the Center for Educational Leadership (CEDLE) in 2019, and who has a postgraduate degree in management and leadership, aside from experience in school management. This professional accompanied the management team for one year, meeting weekly and participating in relevant pedagogical leadership activities.

3.3. Data collection instruments and techniques

The study considered the use of three techniques for collecting information. During the quantitative stage, a self-assessment questionnaire on pedagogical leadership was applied (pre and post test application). For the qualitative stage, a discussion group was set to delve into the self-assessment experience of the management team, together with the review of primary sources, particularly those related to the self-evaluation process and the improvement plans developed at the school. The following is the description of the data collection instruments linked to each stage:

a) Pedagogical leadership questionnaire: this corresponds to a Likert-type scale that was adapted to the Spanish language and context by Bolívar, López, Pérez and García (2017) from the original Vanderbilt Assessment of Leadership in Education instrument by Porter, Murphy, Goldring and Elliott (2008). The instrument evaluates the practices of school leaders that have greater influence in teacher practice and student learning. Regarding its structure, the questionnaire has six dimensions that define learning-centered leadership (Table 1). In turn, each dimension has 12 items presented as affirmations, where participants, as members of the management team, had to position themselves according to the degree of value of their own leadership practices, according to the following scale: 1=ineffective 2=somewhat effective; 3=Effective; 4=Fairly Effective; 5=Very Effective. Finally, average scores were obtained to analyze and compare between the pedagogical leadership dimensions of a pre and post-test.

Table 1

Dimensions of the pedagogical leadership questionnaire

Dimensions	Description	Items
Challenging Learning Outcomes	The leader is concerned for and makes sure that there are individual, team and school objectives so that students achieve quality learning both in the academic and social aspects.	1 to 12
Rigorous Curriculum	Ambitious academic content for the student body in different fields or subjects.	13 to 24
Quality of Teaching	It is necessary to have quality teaching that includes effective teaching practices that result in good academic and social learning in students.	25 to 36

Professional learning and work culture	An environment of teacher collaborative work with an emphasis on improving social and academic learning opportunities for students.	37 to 48
Links to the Community	Relationship with families and other institutions from the community to work towards the improvement of academic and social learning.	49 to 60
Responsibility for the results	The leadership is committed to achieve high levels of academic and social learning in students. It supposes an individual and collective responsibility of teachers and students.	61 to 72

Source: Prepared by author based on Bolívar et al. (2017).

The scale (VAL-ED) has substantial psychometric evidence on its validity and reliability. It measures those leadership practices related to learning (validity) and ensures that the measure is accurate (reliability $\alpha=0.95$). The use of the questionnaire in the Chilean context, implied the sociocultural adaptation of some items, for which three academic experts were requested to develop adjustments to ensure their level of conceptual and semantic equivalence (Salinas, Chandía & Rojas, 2017). The experts made minor adjustments to some items, replacing nouns from the Spanish context with synonyms used in the Chilean context, ensuring that the meaning of the item didn't change. Subsequently, a pilot study was carried out with eight principals of municipal and public schools, which allowed to demonstrate the adequate understanding of the instrument.

b) Analysis of primary sources: the records of the monitoring process developed by the critic friend were analyzed with the purpose of revealing the transformations promoted by the self-evaluation process. In this way, the gathering and analysis of documents related to the object of study favors the knowledge of the phenomenon (Valles, 1999).

c) Discussion group: a script with questions was created to inquire about the constructed learnings that participants assign to the experience of self-assessing their leadership practices. The set of questions was built using the six dimensions of the self-assessment questionnaire, which were validated in terms of content by five scholar judges that are experts in the area of educational leadership, according to the criteria of clarity, relevance and pertinence.

The development of the discussion group took place in the final stage of the support process and consisted of three one-hour sessions. The content analysis technique was used to make

inferences from the texts coming from the discussion groups (Valles, 1999). Each dimension of
the questionnaire was constituted as a pre-established category that guided the analysis with
the intention of delving into the participants' subjectivities.

3.4. Procedures

- Meeting of the research team with the management team to explain the objective of
the experience of self-evaluation of leadership practices and the modality of
accompaniment of the critic friend. Also made to request the consent of the
participants, ensure guarantees and ethical safeguards of the study, and take
knowledge through the signing of informed consent agreements.
- Applying of the pedagogical leadership self-assessment questionnaire to the members
of the management team (pretest).
- Supporting of the management team by a critic friend to deepen in the reflection and
improvement of pedagogical leadership practices that arise from critical knots or
problems of practices identified in the self-evaluation (pretest). Thus, along with the
critic friend, the management team defines and develops new pedagogical leadership
practices that arise from the process of re-signification and learning.
- Applying of the pedagogical leadership self-assessment questionnaire to the members
of the management team (postest).
- Gathering of written records referring to the self-evaluation process and development
of pedagogical leadership improvement practices during the on-site accompaniment
of the critic friend at the school center.
- Development of three discussion groups with the management team to gather their
perceptions of the professional learnings built in the process of evaluation of
pedagogical leadership.

4. Results

First, there is a comparison of the averages obtained in the pedagogical leadership evaluation
questionnaire application (pre and post test). Figure 1 shows the change in self-assessment of
pedagogical leadership practices by the management team members, whom after a year of
support mediated by the critic friend, were able to direct deliberated improvements to their
practices to impact or influence teacher professional development and student learning.
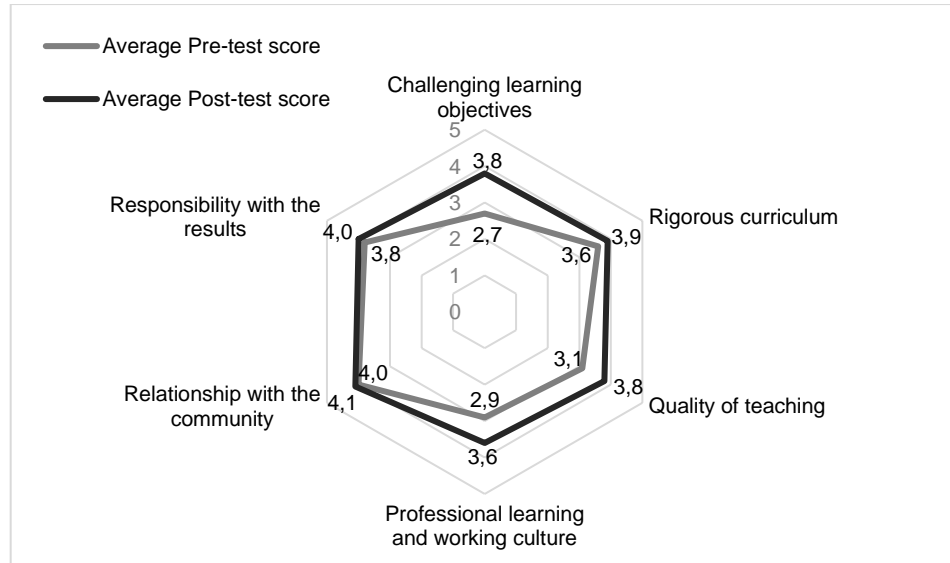
Figure 1: Pre and post-test results of pedagogical leadership evaluation

Figure 1 shows that the dimensions of pedagogical leadership self-assessed by the management team that reached a lower average in the pretest results were "Challenging learning objectives" (2.7), "Quality of teaching" (3.1) and "Culture of learning and professional work (2.9). It is worth mentioning that the 6 dimensions of pedagogical leadership increased their averages in the posttest after a year of reflection on managerial practices, along with the implementation of intentional changes in the three components of the pedagogical nucleus (teacher-student-content).

Table 2 shows the results of the non-parametric Wilcoxon W test that allowed establishing the mean differences between the pre- and post- test, regarding the process of self-evaluation of their pedagogical leadership practices. The results show significant differences (p<0.05) between the pre- and post- test in the three most descended dimensions.

Table 2

Differences of total averages between pre-test and post- test of the pedagogical leadership self-assessment

Questionnaire Dimensions	Pretest		Postest		Wilcoxon W	
	M	DT	M	DT	Z	p
Challenging learning objectives	2,7	,54	3,7	,89	-2,201	,007*
Rigorous curriculum	3,6	,32	3,9	,27	-1,962	,051
Quality of teaching	3,1	,58	3,7	,43	-2,524	,012*
Professional learning and working culture	2,9	,73	3,6	,25	-2,073	,038*

Relationship with the community	3,9	,29	4,0	,31	-1,841	,066
Responsibility with the results	3,7	,37	3,9	,29	-1,424	,154

Source: Prepared by authors.   *$p < 0,05$

Secondly, the process of improvement of pedagogical leadership practices associated with the dimensions of Challenging Learning Objectives, Quality of Teaching and Culture of Learning and Professional Work, which presented unfavorable results in the pre-test during the self-evaluation of the management team, is described in order to understand in greater depth the significant results achieved after the process of accompaniment of the critic friend to the management team during one year (Table 2). In this sense, a detailed systematization of only the dimensions with the lowest average in the pedagogical leadership questionnaire is presented (Tables 3, 4 and 5). For each practice, the critical nodes or practice problems detected by the members of the management team are identified and their corresponding improvement practices implemented during the critic friend's accompaniment are described. Likewise, it also presents the theoretical interpretation of the process of improvement of pedagogical leadership practices.

In general, the process of self-evaluation and accompaniment of the critic friend on the process of reflection and collaboration on the pedagogical leadership practices is carried out from a formative perspective of evaluation. In in other words, the critic friend deliberatively intended to collaboratively unveil the beliefs that underpinned the leadership practices of the management team. For this purpose, literature and experiences on effective schools were consulted to initiate a process of building shared understandings about their role as pedagogical leaders (Bolívar, 2019; Elmore, 2010; Fullan, 2020; Leithwood, 2019; Quinn, McEachen, Fullan, Gardner & Grummy, 2021). In this sense, the evaluation instrument used in this study acted as a guiding reference that helped to visualize the critical nodes that affect school learning (Robinson, 2022; Villagra & Fritz, 2017) to address practice problems and actions for school improvement.

Table 3

Dimension: Challenging learning objectives: Unfavorable practices according to the management team's self-assessment

Decreased practices questionnaire	Practice problems	Pedagogical leadership improvement practices	Theoric interpretation
Plans objectives	- The management team has little	- The Management team	The management

that teachers will carry out to improve the students's learnings.	involvement in the design of learning activities. - Teachers carry out planning in isolation; there is an absence of pedagogical principles that guide the design of learning activities.	and the teachers, with the support of a critic friend, define pedagogical principles that guide the design of the learning process. - The management team forms a Professional Learning Community among teachers and principals to design and implement collaborative classroom projects according to the pedagogical principles. - Principles of learning and evaluation are analyzed within the learning community.	team becomes aware that there is a challenge to rethink class designs together with the teachers based on pedagogical principles that improve teaching practice; it was necessary to build a shared vision of learning and to understand the formative meaning of evaluation for professional development and school improvement (Josep & Grandolfi, 2022; Mineduc et al., 2018; Santos-Guerra, 2019; Vaillant, 2019).
Establishes agreements among teachers to promote a high level of learning.	- The management team has different understandings and approaches of learning. - The management team holds certain beliefs about learning and evaluation associated with memorization and reproduction of content in written tests with close-ended questions.	- The management team and teachers reflect on learning and evaluation constructs and on to what extent there is a shared sense of what, how and for what purpose students learn and are evaluated at the school. - The management team and teachers analyze how to achieve a high level of learning. They agree to improve the quality of the learning that students develop and its coherence with the school curriculum.	- The critic friend challenged the management team and teachers about their assumptions of learning and evaluation. She helped to re-signify this construct among them; thus they carefully planned a thorough analysis of the practice and deep conversations of learning and assessment approach (Stoll, 2019). - The critic friend suggested reflections between directors and teachers on the role of the student in the classroom and

			sought reviews of the quality of the tasks performed by students in relation to the curricular challenges (Villagra et al., 2022).
Stimulates students to successfully achieve learning objectives.	- The management team supervises the classroom while focusing on the teacher's performance over the quality of the learning task, without addressing the role of the student. - The management team has little clarity about the conditions that stimulate the learning and development of life skills.	- The management team accompanies the classroom and focuses on the pedagogical relationship, the quality of the learning tasks and the role of the student. - Referents are used to guide the developing of deep learning and the reflection on pedagogical practices for the development of life skills. - The management team and the teachers involve themselves on leaning projects with the students	The decision of the management team to create better conditions to share knowledge and practices is key. As Kools et al. (2020) states, the schools that learn are the ones with the conditions to promote innovations.
Supervises the student's learning to reach high achievement levels.	- Monitor's the learning based on standardized test results. - Analyzes learning results indirectly by using reports from teachers and other professionals.	- Focuses on making the student's learning visible and accompannies the implementation of the curriculum in the classroom. - The management team and the teachers analyze evidence of student learning and make pedagogical decisions.	The constant reflection on the practices that the critic friend provoked allowed the progress towards learning and the improvement of educational processes (Mellado, Rincón-Gallardo, Aravena & Villagra, 2020).

Source: Prepared by authors.

As it can be observed in Table 3, the main critical nodes detected by the management team in relation to promoting challenging learning objectives in school, lie on a superficial

understanding of learning, which is translated into practices aimed towards supervising teacher performance from the compliance of administrative aspects and ensuring that students replicate content in written tests. Likewise, the associated causes to these practice problems are related to the little involvement of the management team in learning, especially in terms of their participation in teacher professional development and student learning activities.

Regarding these tensions, the management team, in collaboration with the critic friend, initiated a process of practice re-signification. For this, changes were implemented in pedagogical leadership that consisted of a set of coordinated actions that sought to transform the pedagogical nucleolus. During collaborative work sessions, the management team together with teachers analyzed the learning evidence they had collected during class observation visits and defined pedagogical principles that sought to guide the design of learning scenarios. In summary, the new practice is coherent with current proposals regarding how teachers learn, and therefore they are supported while developing pedagogical activities pertaining to their role and in its own performance context (Duran, 2019; Fullan, 2020; Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2020).

Thirdly, the results of professional learning constructed in the self-evaluation process as stated by the management team in the discussion group are presented.

The following is a description and interpretation of the impressions regarding the contribution of the self-evaluation process as situated professional learning of members of the management team in their pedagogical leadership practices.

Considering the learnings of the *Challenging Learning Objectives* dimension, the management team declared the following learnings:

> *Leader 2: I think that the process of self-assessing our leadership practices allowed us to critically question our work as a management team. Through dialogue we realized that some of us were unaware of what and how our students are learning and what we were doing as leaders to help our teachers improve their classroom practices.*

> *Leader 5: One of the aspects that we changed was to agree with teachers about what we understood by challenging learning objective, in connection to the tasks students develop. This process allowed us to make students and the conditions for learning much more visible.*

As evidenced by the stories, pedagogical leadership self-assessment encouraged reflective process (Santos Guerra, 2014) regarding the opportunities students and teachers have, to build deep learning. It also can be observed that school leaders have become aware, through permanent self-assessment, of the implications of their practices in the transformation of the pedagogical nucleus (Elmore, 2010; Rincón-Gallardo, 2019). Therefore, critical and formative evaluation of leadership work is a process that has allowed to rethink professional development in school, related to its coherence with student formative needs.

Table 4

Dimension: Quality of teaching: Unfavorable practices according to self-assessment by the management team

Decreased practices questionnaire	Practice problems	Pedagogical leadership improvement practices	Theoric interpretation
Coordinates efforts to improve teaching in all classes	- The management team gives priority to the support of SIMCE evaluated subjects. - The management team favors the partial teaching of the curriculum according to the subjects, while providing occasional feedback about the teaching practice.	- The management team manages times to provide feedback on the teachers practices and encourages pedagogical feedback among peers. - They learn to design interdisciplinary classroom projects that favor collaborative learning between teachers and students.	The critic friend promotes involvement of school leaders in the teachers professional development as a practice that positively affects student learning (Leithwood, 2019; Robinson & Gray, 2019). Likewise, Elmore (2010) asserts that educational outcomes can be improved by increasing teaching skills.
Supports collaboration between teachers in order to improve the teaching that increases student learning.	The management team gives priority to the development of ideas of administrative nature instead of the design of opportunities for the development for the situated professional	- The management team investigates teacher's professional development needs according to aspects to be improved in the teaching and learning	Concern for managing the curriculum is observed, focusing on the consequences that school leaders' practices have on student learning

	development, in an individual work culture.	process. - Student learning results are analyzed as a whole, focusing on the most diminished indicators.	(Robinson, 2019; Robinson & Gray, 2019).
Creates opportunities for teachers to improve their educational practice.	The management team understands teacher professional development as a process that occurs outside the school or that must be mediated by external experts.	- The management team highlights good practices and promotes new leadership, conditions and opportunities for team building and collaborative learning - Formal conditions and timeframes were set for these teams to reflect on good practices with their peers in different formative settings, contributing to teacher professional development.	- Professional learning is constructed on a daily basis as part of regular school work and is directly related to the way we do things (Fullan, 2020; Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2020). - Understanding professionalization based on courses or trainings is "cascading training" (Vaillant, 2016).
Addresses the analysis of teaching practices in teacher meetings.	The practice was supervised, and indications were provided as to how to improve. There was no joint inquiry about the practice problem.	- The management team reflects on the beliefs that underpin classroom supervision focused on teacher evaluation. - A system of pedagogical accompaniment is collectively constructed as a strategy for teacher professional development.	This self-evaluation process stimulated collaborative professionalism (Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2020), based on trust and collective responsibility for learning (Quinn et al., 2021).

Source: Prepared by author.

Table 4 describes the problems referred on the *Quality of teaching* dimension. The management team is aware of the relevance they attribute to improving SIMCE scores as academic achievement. On the other hand, teacher accompaniment and feedback is a practice that lacks systematization, possibly linked to the conception of learning understood as teaching done by an expert and developed outside the school. This idea of professionalization based on courses or training is referred to by Vaillant (2016) as "cascade training".

Regarding the reflections of the management team members in relation to the contribution of the process of formative self-assessment to their practices, the following narrations were extracted from the discussion groups:

> *Leader 3: This experience of self-assessment caused us to reflect on the professional learning activities we were offering to our teachers. We realized our teacher meetings were not challenging enough, since the reflection about classroom practices was absent, we much less created a dialogue to address the essential aspects of teacher performance.*

> *Leader 6: As a school leader, my focus was on teaching, on the teacher as transmitter of knowledge...from my role I really valued "covering content". Thanks to the process of self-assessment of our practices, I realized that all members of the management team understood learning differently. From this reality, we began to have discussions, to study the focus of the curriculum and agree with teachers on what kind of learnings our students should develop.*

These texts account for the shift in focus that school leaders experience during the process of self-assessing their pedagogical leadership, because just as proposed by Villagra and Fritz (2017) self-assessment as reflection favors teacher professional development. In short, the management team questions its pedagogical beliefs and identifies problems in its own practice related to learning and collaboration scenarios that are generated in the school.

Table 5

Dimension: Learning and teamwork culture and professional work: Unfavorable practices according to management team self-assessment

Decreased practices questionnaire	Practice problems	Pedagogical leadership improvement practices	Theoric interpretation

Plans a favorable environment in which the student's learning is the central focus.	There is an evaluation approach centered on measurement to check results and certify promotion. An individual and hierarchical environment that is unfavorable for learning is assumed.	- The management team participates in professional training that can redefine the approach to learning and evaluation for the transformation of the practices of managers and teachers. - The management team focuses on building learning environments based on democratic, collaborative and relevant pedagogical principles.	The analysis of one's own practices in a context of reflection and collaboration among peers, guided by thought-provoking questions from the critic friend, apparently produced a positive effect on the team's professionalism and sense of co-responsibility among teachers during their work (Bolívar, 2019; Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2020; Vaillant, 2019).
Provides resources to build a culture centered on student learning.	Focus on administrative processes and scarce determination of the needs of professional resources and materials required in a learning organization.	The management team self-evaluates the educational improvement project according to the resources required; and reorient their actions to improve student learning.	Self-evaluation as learning helped the team to become more aware of the professional needs of a learning organization; its results guide critical reflection on the beliefs that support the educational practices and its consequences on student learning and integral development (Robinson, 2022; Villagra et al., 2022).
Supports teamwork to improve teaching.	Existence of an individualistic work culture focused on administrative aspects.	A learning community is formed to reflect on pedagogical practices and accompaniments that assume professional collaboration as key to deepen student and professional learning.	Awareness was raised about isolated practices that affect the culture of collaborative learning among teachers. Precisely, Duran (2019) proposes that educational learning requires of a situated analysis and a self-critical vision to improve the practices.

Commitment to a learning culture that respects student diversity.	There are beliefs that learning is always done in the same way, without considering the social and cultural diversity and particularities of the students.	The management team and the teachers jointly design diversified learning experiences based on the principles of the Universal Design for Learning (UDL).	The management team reflected on pedagogical leadership with ethical sense. Right now, challenges to build a comprehensive learning culture that addresses student diversity for educational improvement are faced (Ballangrud & Aas, 2022).

Source: Prepared by author.

Table 5, referred to the *Learning and teamwork culture and professional work*, shows the systematization of the reflections of school leaders regarding the tensions around their practices. It is evident that their main difficulties are referred to the culture of individual and bureaucratic work that prevails in the management team, which causes disarticulation and a restricted view of learning in school organization. To address these challenges, the team makes purposeful changes to guide teacher learning, in connection to what is proposed by Vaillant (2019), who explains the need to involve teachers in the design, implementation and evaluation of practices oriented towards improving educational processes in the classroom.

During discussion groups, members of the management team recognize the opportunity that the self-assessment of their own leadership represents to broaden their understanding about what it means to learn collaboratively and the principles that support a culture of professional learning, as the following stories illustrate:

> *Leader 1: The main change is that we stopped understanding teacher professional development as the exclusive responsibility of the management team, and we involved teachers to take on a protagonist role in their own learning. As school leaders we learned to collaborate, and work based con common goals to improve classroom teaching and learning. Although we collaborated many times, we mainly did it to finish the administrative tasks, but we didn't reflect frequently about classroom practices, trying to learn evaluation and what to do to improve them.*

> *Leader 4: Regarding collaboration, as a management team we began to work according to the shared improvement goals together with teachers, which promoted the development of trust and horizontal dialogue. One of the main*

focuses was the diversification of classroom evaluation, because during the diagnosis we identified that we were not focusing on the classroom diversity. We didn't count with analysis scenarios to discuss or practice direct observation of the way in which pedagogical practice responded to the specific needs of students.

In the selected stories, one can interpret that, from the diagnosis of directive practices, school leaders valued collaboration with teachers as a strategy that allowed them to think collectively about their student's learning process through symmetrical dialogues. In this sense, the self-assessment process stimulated collaborative professionalism (Hargreaves & O'Connor, 2020), based on trust and collective responsibility for learning (Quinn et al., 2021).

5. Conclusions

This self-assessment study of pedagogical leadership practices of a management team allowed participants to become aware of their influence in teacher professional development and student learning at school. Self-assessment stands out as a learning strategy that helped members of the management team to make their pedagogical beliefs explicit, through honest dialogue, mediated by a critic friend, that favored the review of the different leadership approaches that are present in school (Robinson, 2019; Vaillant, 2019). From this perspective, self- assessment is a process of permanent reflection, feedback and learning of practices that contributes to the building of a shared vision of education. In other words, evaluation must not be understood as a fragmented or bureaucratic process.

Therefore, a key aspect of the leadership self-evaluation process lies in the possibility of having instruments with dimensions and criteria that guide the dialogue and reflection on those key performances, keeping in mind the importance of deepening the individual and collective understanding of the expected performances during the evaluation process. In other words, self-evaluation is one of the many practices of pedagogical leadership that favor awareness of the influence of educational practices in the transformation of the learning culture. This made from a democratic conception of management that implies the authentic participation of each member of the school community in decision-making. Thus, the challenge of deploying institutional self-evaluation processes that involve and make people responsible for their role in the organization is projected.

A central component of self-evaluation is the intermediation that can be exercised by an external agent through on-site guidance that orients reflection "in" and "on" practice. The role of the critic friend facilitates questioning and conscious action in real time, allowing the

tensioning of discourse and practice, making visible the beliefs, assumptions, and contradictions of the practice. The incorporation of critic friends during self-evaluation processes is recommended as a strategy for situated professional development, while the participants themselves gradually assume this role as part of their professional work.

Regarding pedagogical leadership as an object of evaluation, it enables dialogue about its meaning and implications in practice. This becomes especially relevant, considering that the leadership as a learning approach is still in development, as recent studies have shown (Bolívar, 2019; Fullan, 2020; Robinson & Gray, 2019). Consequently, there is a need to broaden the discussion of school leadership in pedagogical terms, particularly on what, how and for what purpose students and teachers learn in school.

Finally, for future studies the suggestion is to develop pedagogical leadership evaluation experiences with teachers, students, and parent participation, with a participative and dialogic focus. Likewise, the recommendation is to carry out in-depth research that considers the records of formative support to management teams that show mobilization of pedagogical beliefs on learning and evaluation of school leaders, as an opportunity for schools to manage their own improvement and professional development trajectories.

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