



Self-Assessment of Schools as a Process Generator of Educational Change: a Case Study

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As the demands towards education and schools increase, there is a need to improve schooling and their functioning aiming to respond to current needs and meet requirements set for education. This led to the evaluation of educational institution performed by external experts, but also, to the self-assessment of schools as autonomous and self-sufficient organisms [1]. In Portugal this is a legally demanded procedure, though schools are still getting used to perform self-assessment and feel this as a complex and somehow complicated process.

The understanding that evaluation and self-assessment should be an empowering process for schools, capable of promoting positive changes [1], [2] aiming to inform and frame schools improvements [3] is well established in literature, but is not shared by educational actors and schools that face difficulties and present needs in performing self-assessment processes, as show by the research here presented.

This presentation is focused on a case study about the process of a school's self-assessment as generator of changes in school, by following and advising an self-assessment team, understanding their dynamics and unravelling issues that promoted or constrained the process implementation.

The case study was developed by observation, documental analysis and consulting to the evaluation team, in a personalized and qualitative approach on the subject.

By the end of this process, findings indicated that: a) schools and actors need to update their conception of education; b) schools and actors find the self-assessment process unknown, unclear and complex; c) schools are in need of expert orientation and aid; d) the presence of an expert facilitates the actors' adaptation and performance in the self-assessment process.

In sum, the study showed that the self-assessment as generator of educational improvement needs to rely on systematic work processes developed by small teams involving all educational actors, in an interactive professionalism [4].