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Scientific articles

Impacto de la carga administrativa en la asesoría y acompañamiento de la supervisión en preescolar: Revisión sistemática

*Impact of the administrative workload in the counselling and
accompaniment of supervision in preschool: Systematic review*

*Impacto da carga administrativa na supervisão, aconselhamento e apoio
pré-escolar: revisão sistemática*

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Resumen

La tarea del supervisor escolar de educación básica en México ha evolucionado a lo largo del tiempo, su conceptualización ha transitado entre los conceptos de inspección y supervisión. En preescolar, tiene ciertas particularidades debido a las características del nivel educativo y su proceso de desarrollo en la sociedad mexicana. En este contexto, el presente estudio teórico tiene como objetivo analizar el impacto de la carga administrativa en la asesoría y acompañamiento que la supervisión escolar brinda a los directivos de preescolar. Uno de los principales hallazgos de esta revisión sistemática de información confirma que, si bien la función sustantiva de la supervisión es el acompañamiento pedagógico, la atención a más de veinte escuelas puede dificultar esta tarea. La presentación de discusiones permite afirmar que las actividades administrativas rebasan las acciones académicas ejercidas por la figura supervisora. Por ello, la finalidad del trabajo es contribuir a la formulación de nuevas propuestas organizativas que fortalezcan el liderazgo directivo y permitan a cada actor impulsar una transformación educativa desde su ámbito de intervención.

Palabras clave: Supervisora escolar, director escolar, liderazgo, consejo técnico escolar.



Abstract

The task of the school supervisor of basic education in Mexico has evolved over time, its conceptualization has moved between the concepts of inspection and supervision. In preschool, it has certain particularities due to the characteristics of the educational level and its development within Mexican society. In this context, the objective of this theoretical study is to analyze the impact of the administrative workload in the counselling and accompaniment that school supervision provides to preschool principal. One of the main findings of this systematic review of information confirms that, although the substantive function of supervision is instructional support, attention to more than twenty schools can make this task difficult. The presentation of discussions allows us to affirm that administrative activities exceed the academic actions exercised by the supervisor figure. Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to contribute to the formulation of new organizational proposals that strengthen managerial leadership and allow each actor to promote an educational transformation within their area of intervention.

Keywords: School supervisor, Principal, Leadership, School Technical Council.

Resumo

A tarefa do supervisor escolar de educação básica no México evoluiu ao longo do tempo, sua conceituação transitou entre os conceitos de inspeção e supervisão. Na pré-escola, há certas particularidades devido às características do nível educacional e seu processo de desenvolvimento na sociedade mexicana. Neste contexto, o presente estudo teórico tem como objetivo analisar o impacto da carga administrativa na orientação e no apoio que a supervisão escolar presta aos diretores de pré-escola. Uma das principais descobertas desta revisão sistemática de informações confirma que, embora a função substantiva da supervisão seja o apoio pedagógico, atender mais de vinte escolas pode dificultar essa tarefa. A apresentação das discussões permite afirmar que as atividades administrativas vão além das ações acadêmicas exercidas pela figura supervisora. Portanto, o objetivo deste trabalho é contribuir para a formulação de novas propostas organizacionais que fortaleçam a liderança gerencial e permitam que cada ator promova a transformação educacional a partir de sua área de intervenção.

Palavras-chave: Supervisor escolar, diretor escolar, liderança, conselho técnico escolar.

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Introduction

Preschool education in Mexico has evolved over the years. Its importance in the academic training of girls, boys and adolescents is increasingly recognized. But even with the mandatory nature of the level, established in the Political Constitution of the United Mexican States, it is still not possible to serve the entire child population of the country. According to data from the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI, 2023), 40% of children between 3 and 6 years old are enrolled in preschool in the country, while in the state of Chihuahua the percentage rises to 45%.

The causes of this situation are diverse, among which the lack of social recognition stands out. In addition to the impact on students, another educational figure affected is the staff with supervisory functions, in this case, by educational policies. According to the National Commission for the Continuous Improvement of Education (MEJOREDUC, 2023), the preschool level concentrates the largest number of schools per area, which generates a greater administrative burden, given the breadth of its tasks and responsibilities.

The duties of a school supervisor are divided into two main categories: academic and administrative. Academic activities include counselling teaching and management staff, accompanying visits to schools, monitoring students' academic performance, liaising with parents, ongoing staff training, organizing academic, sporting and cultural events, as well as liaising with the different departments in the Ministry of Education.

On the other hand, administrative tasks include the reception and delivery of documentation, the monitoring and incorporation of private institutions, the review of income and expenses of the schools, attention to problems in the schools, the liaison with the different administrative areas of the Secretariat to follow up on payments, disabilities and permits of the staff, among other procedures to be carried out daily from the supervision offices.

In this line of analysis, the activities assigned to a school supervisor have been little explored and only those who assume this role are able to understand the magnitude of their responsibility. Therefore, this study aims to offer an overview of the scope of the work field of personnel with supervisory functions, focusing on identifying the impact of the administrative load on academic tasks, especially in pedagogical advice and follow-up visits.

It is important to note that there are few national studies on school supervision in preschool. Furthermore, of those found, only a small part corresponds to recent publications,



as can be verified by consulting academic databases, such as *Google Scholar*. Therefore, it is essential to analyze the conditions under which this educational function is developed.

The theoretical research that guided the construction of this article presented as a general objective to analyze the impact of the administrative load on the counselling and accompaniment that school supervision provides to preschool directors.

Current knowledge

Over time, supervision has been understood from different perspectives. Its concept has ranged from the conception of this instance as inspection, to being currently recognized as supervision. These terms have been treated as both synonyms and antonyms in different contexts.

Tapia and Zorrilla (2008, as cited in MEJORED, 2022) make a historical comparison between the definitions of inspection and supervision. Inspection refers to control that regulates from below and within, while supervision controls by providing support from above and inwards.

According to the authors, the inspector carries out administrative control, verifying what has been planned and carried out, assesses general administration (legality, financial area, teaching) based on efficiency criteria. The supervisor advises management and teaching practices, reviews and supports the achievement of educational objectives, offers alternatives in the use of materials and teaching methodology. The supervisor appears as a companion for the principals in seeking innovation, educational quality and improvement of learning.

The term supervision is made up of two words, both of which come from Latin. The first is “visus”, which means to examine an instrument and give it the go-ahead; and the second is “super”, which refers to preeminence or, well, privilege, preference, merit or advantage. The definition of the concept indicates the observation of a certain action by a person with authority or capacity to do so.

According to the Secretariat of Public Education (SEP, 2017), in basic education, which includes the initial, preschool, primary and secondary levels, the teacher performs technical-pedagogical and administrative functions, with a priority focus on academic matters and putting administrative matters in the background. The teacher is an educational authority that accompanies, advises and evaluates.

In conclusion, supervision is the body responsible for leading, accompanying, analyzing, monitoring and advising the work of educational figures in schools.



For his part, the school supervisor is the authority in charge of ensuring that the normative and technical provisions are complied with in the schools under his responsibility. His work includes counselling and accompaniment school groups to promote educational excellence, as well as the necessary conditions for the proper operation of the institutions under his charge, the good performance of teachers, and the fulfillment of the purposes of education (DOF, 2024).

Currently, the supervisor's powers and duties are established in the Framework for Excellence in Teaching and School Management in Basic Education, which defines the profiles of educational figures, such as supervisors, technical pedagogical advisors (ATP), managers, teachers and teaching technicians.

This document specifies that the professional profile is the set of characteristics, requirements or qualities necessary for the performance of the function. While the criteria and indicators are the normative instruments that mark what they need to know and be able to do to promote the well-being and learning of students, they are organized into domains and are the reference for assessing their professional practice (Unit for the Career System of Teachers, 2022).

The professional profile of personnel with supervisory functions includes four domains: assuming their professional duties in accordance with the philosophical, ethical and legal principles of Mexican education; knowing the prevailing culture in schools, to guide educational improvement; promoting the transformation of teaching and management practices from their area of responsibility, to achieve excellence in education; and linking with educational authorities, communities, families and various bodies, to contribute to the improvement of education (USICAMM, 2022).

When comparing the concept of inspection and supervision proposed by Tapia and Zorrilla (2008) with the domains established for the profile of the school supervisor, it is observed that the functions have been combined, since they include both administrative tasks and technical pedagogical advisor, which will be analyzed below.

Materials and methods

Study design

This article is a theoretical research report focused on the educational field, specifically on the work of the school supervisor, with emphasis on the counselling and accompaniment provided to principals.

The information for this study was obtained from the analysis of scientific articles, research reports and theses published in journals indexed in *Dialnet*, *Redalyc* and *SciELO*, as well as official documents, reports and materials issued by various educational systems, mainly in Mexico.

The scope of the study was descriptive, as it sought to identify and configure the main functions of the school supervisor. To delimit the analysis, the performance of this educational figure at the preschool level in Mexico was addressed, with a particular focus on the information corresponding to the state of Chihuahua.

Procedure

For the design of this article, scientific publications and official documents from different agencies of the Ministry of Public Education in Mexico were used. The period between 2016 and 2024 was considered. It should be noted that the opening in the seniority of the bibliography refers to the most recent educational models in the country.

The review of academic literature was carried out through consultation on the digital portal of the Ministry of Public Education (SEP), the Unit for the Career System of Teachers (USICAMM), and the National Commission for the Continuous Improvement of Education (MEJOREDU). Likewise, the search was complemented in specialized databases of *Google Scholar*.

After gathering the literature support, the collected material was read, analyzed and systematized. The main idea was to establish the relationship between the administrative workload of the preschool school supervisor and its impact on the counselling and accompaniment practices directed at principals.

To this end, the theoretical concepts found in the literature were defined and interpreted to describe, in common language, the characteristics that underpin the main activities of the educational figure. These include the words supervision, counselling, accompaniment and administrative load, as well as the terms supervisor, principal,

leadership, School Technical Council (CTE) and Technical Zone Council (CTZ), among others.

The methodological route used allowed the selection of 28 valid documents for the analysis, with which information was systematized, a synthesis was carried out and organized in a structured manner to finally present the findings on the subject.

Below are the results of the analysis carried out based on the systematization of this information.

Results

School supervision includes multiple activities carried out by the supervisor, which are divided into two categories: administrative and academic. The theoretical review allowed us to identify the key concepts to understand the scope of action of school supervision.

Table 1 includes essential definitions of the elements that describe the main functions of this body, as well as the actors involved in each of its tasks. It is important to note that the terms are organized chronologically from the oldest to the most recent, and within each period an alphabetical order is also maintained.

Table 1. Key definitions of concepts related to school supervision

Author/Year	Variable/Outcome
SEP, 2016	Leadership: This is the ability to analyze practice to promote educational improvement and guide teacher performance to design innovative forms of intervention. It is a key skill for school management. The principals lead by mobilizing and managing a shared vision of what they are trying to achieve together.
SEP, 2017	Administrative: School administration is the series of processes dedicated to consolidating educational activity in a school, through the management of physical and economic resources, to facilitate student learning.
SEP, 2017	Function: The supervisor's main function is to provide counselling and accompaniment, with the aim of improving student learning. Specific functions are: control, administration and linking; technical-pedagogical advice; promoting school organization, collaborative work, as well as community participation.
SEP, 2017	School supervision: Performs technical-pedagogical and administrative functions, prioritizing academic matters over administrative matters. It is an educational authority that accompanies, advises and evaluates.
Education 2020, 2018	Administrative burden: Disproportionate and disjointed burden of administrative procedures that hinder and limit the school's primary task: ensuring that all students learn. Bureaucratic procedures that saturate time due to excessive workload.
SEP, 2021	Technical Council of the Zone: This is the collegiate body established as a space for analyzing, deliberating and making decisions on educational matters in the school zone.
DOF, 2024	Accompaniment: Pedagogical action carried out systematically and permanently by the principal and the supervisor, to dialogue with teachers about educational problems and needs. It involves visiting the classroom and the school to make decisions that contribute to improving student learning and professional practices.
DOF, 2024	Technical Pedagogical Advisor: Teacher specializing in pedagogy who provides accompaniment to other teachers to promote continuous

	improvement. Provides advice and technical support using methodological tools.
DOF, 2024	Counselling: Training process developed by the supervisor and other educational agents. It seeks to improve teaching and management practices. It promotes learning through dialogue based on experience, identifying difficulties, observing, systematizing practices, as well as the formulation, implementation and monitoring of improvement proposals.
DOF, 2024	School Technical Council: Collegiate body of the school that makes pedagogical decisions to contribute to the maximum achievement of learning, strengthen critical thinking and the relationship with the community.
DOF, 2024	Teachers: Education professionals who, together with the State and society, assume co-responsibility for student learning, supporting them as guides in their educational process.
DOF, 2024	Principal: Person who plans and implements school management, and evaluates the functioning of the school in relation to the current legal and administrative framework.
DOF, 2024	Supervisor: Authority that oversees compliance with the current regulatory and technical provisions of the schools under its responsibility. It accompanies, supports and advises school groups to facilitate and promote educational excellence and the achievement of the goals of education.

Source: Own elaboration.

Once the theoretical concepts have been analyzed, Table 2 is presented, which summarizes the most recent scientific research on school supervision. In addition, it highlights key elements that underpin this research, since they are part of the supervisory function, including: leadership, supervisor, principal, administrative workload, training, counselling and accompaniment.

Table 2. Main contributions of scientific research

Author	Variable/Outcome
Sarasola and Da Costa, 2016	Leadership. The competence through which people intentionally influence others in order to improve student learning. Therefore, the role of the principal is crucial when it comes to making a difference.
Corona, Ramirez and Vazquez, 2017	Management leadership. Proposes building a model of management skills that promote leadership and management autonomy of the school supervisor.
Moreno, 2018	Administrative load. Intensification of teaching work, oversaturation of activities that has even led to <i>burnout syndrome</i> or the syndrome of the burned-out teacher. Management leadership. Increased responsibilities: supporting student learning as well as teacher learning.
Gutierrez and Mendoza, 2019	Supervision. The redefinition of supervision to innovate teacher training in preschool involves revaluing the pedagogical aspect through systematic reflection, the design of proposals and the training of management staff. It represents the structural redefinition of supervision, since administrative practices focused on control and surveillance predominate.
Leiva and Vasquez, 2019	Leadership. In Chile, educational policy proposes that principals provide support to teachers. There is currently a transition process, which goes from supervision to teacher accompaniment. It proposes three models: intervention, facilitation and collaboration.
Leyva, 2019	Supervisor. The supervisor has not been a priority for the educational system. His activities focus more on bureaucratic issues, which limits his pedagogical tasks and produces an isolation from the schools and the educational community. He favors governability more than the quality of education. In 2013, Mexico established the obligation to compete for available positions, but this did not lead to substantive changes

	in educational practices, which is why it is important to strengthen training and professionalization processes.
Maya, Aldana and Isea, 2019	Leadership. Quality education is possible when there is effective leadership that promotes democracy, assertiveness and the participation of all, by actively involving teachers in work plans, where they acquire a leading role.
Martinez, 2020	Training. Supervisors, ATPs and principals are the main guarantors of the teacher training process. As academic leaders, they take on the responsibility of accompanying teaching groups to guide schools towards improving educational results. Strengthening the sense of identity and belonging of all educational actors is required to achieve this learning community.
Ramirez, 2020	Supervision. Historically, supervision has been a fundamental component of the educational system. The authority figure of the supervisor is almost always related to inspection, control, surveillance, oversight, and intervention. The transformation of the function is in a process of constructing new meanings in its purpose, concept, modality, and implementation, seeking to rethink the supervisor as an authentic leader.
Sandoval, Pineda, Bernal and Quiroga, 2020	Leadership. The new principal in Latin America faces problems in his first years. To do this, it is proposed to develop a school leadership that enables him to make decisions. It is also necessary to promote training programs to respond to school realities.
Casanova, 2021	Leadership. Leading through inspection involves curricular, organizational, management and teaching supervision. Inspection. It constitutes a bridge between theory and reality. Inspection is associated with bureaucratic and controlling tasks, but with no influence on improving the quality of education. It requires a change of image and pedagogical prominence.

Casanova, 2021	Leadership. In order to implement the appropriate responses in each school, pedagogical and management autonomy is essential, that is, contextualizing reality in order to make pertinent, committed and responsible decisions to improve educational quality. The training of principals and teachers, inclusive leadership, and continuous evaluation are the basis for achieving this.
Perez, 2021	Function. It is difficult for school supervisors in Mexico to adopt a technical-pedagogical role. Surveillance-administration functions predominate. They respond to the expectations of educational authorities and justify it socially. This is an area that has received little research.
Perez and Lopez, 2021	Training. The aim is to understand the practices of supervisors and the meanings of their role, but there is no culture of continuous learning and professional training; learning about their role is a personal task. Transformation requires a deconstructive process.
Casanova, 2022	Training. It is necessary to establish training plans for supervisors to ensure ongoing training for the performance of their duties. Advice and support. Supervision must move from bureaucratic control to leadership through support and advice to become a driving force for leaders of innovative cultures in the system.
Jamaica, 2023.	Support. It is necessary to have the support of authorities who demonstrate empathy and promote decision-making. Both the principal and the supervisor need to be more democratic and closer to the needs of teachers, banishing the idea of persecution by helping to improve administrative and pedagogical management.

Source: Own elaboration

As can be seen in both tables, the function of each educational actor has been defined, as well as the processes that make up the exercise of school supervision.

In conclusion, one of the central functions of supervisor is to provide counselling and accompaniment to teaching and management staff, with the main objective of improving student learning. The largest area of impact, and the means to achieve this, is the strengthening of management leadership through training, advice, the Technical Council of the Zone and visits to schools.

The aim is for the principal to guide teaching practices through classroom observation, dialogue, reflection during the School Technical Council sessions, evaluation and decision-making together with his/her group.

To achieve this goal, it is essential that supervisory staff achieve a balance between the administrative burden and technical-pedagogical work, which represents a major challenge within the educational system.

Discussion

After defining the key concepts through a theoretical review and comparing them with the most recent research on school supervision, the results are discussed.

The objective of the theoretical research was to analyze the impact of the administrative burden on the counselling and accompaniment that school supervision provides to preschool directors. As a result of the analysis, information was obtained that defines this function and addresses the main problems faced by supervisors.

A first point would be to visualize the supervisor's workload in each school that he or she accompanies. As Pérez and López (2021) point out, the reality of supervision goes beyond the normative documents. The practices of personnel with supervisory functions have a broader scope than what is established, since by assuming that they represent an authority figure, they are assigned roles that they are forced to fulfill. An example of this is the task of calling the attention of teachers, which distorts the purposes for which the function was created.

By reviewing the national indicators of continuous improvement in education in Mexico, referring to school supervisions (MEJOREDU, 2023), the conditions of these are analyzed, based on the question: to what extent do preschool education school supervisions have a reasonable number of schools that allow them to fulfill their obligations in a timely manner? The current situation is contextualized according to their workload, that is, the number of schools under their charge, and the difficulties faced in fulfilling their responsibilities are identified.

According to the initial statistics of the school year, or Form 911 (administrative record of the SEP to obtain the most relevant statistical information on students, staff and school resources), there are notable differences in the composition of school zones in each federal entity. However, a complete record of the supervisions and their schools is not yet available, but there are basic conditions for this body to support the continuous improvement process (MEJOREDU, 2023).

This analysis is based on the premise that the main task of supervision is the pedagogical and management support to the schools in its area. In this sense, serving more than twenty schools represents a problem if it is considered that these must be visited within the average twenty business days of a month, since in theory these are the days required for the supervisor to carry out the visits and provide the required accompaniment. This amount varies according to the characteristics of the centers, such as whether they are urban or rural, the means of transportation available to access them, the road infrastructure, among others (MEJOREDU, 2023).

The above shows how the number of schools assigned to an area becomes the basis for detecting limitations in the support of groups. The number of schools is a clear indicator of the administrative burden, which directly impacts the pedagogical task.

It should be noted that, according to information from MEJOREDU (2023), in Mexico, the educational level with the highest number of schools assigned by zone is preschool. In Chihuahua, one of the zones with the largest number of kindergartens was identified, a total of 52, only below Michoacan and Veracruz, with 60 and 70, respectively.

The complexity of the tasks performed by a school supervisor depends not only on the number of schools, but also on their particular characteristics: the type of school (multigrade or full-service), the number of students, its location and necessary transfers, the human resources available (teaching staff, management staff, or staff with ATP functions), the type of support, the material resources, among others.

In the study carried out by MEJOREDU (2023), special attention is given to the figure of the Technical Pedagogical Advisor when assessing the redistribution of workloads when accompanying schools. The incorporation of the ATP represents a support to the pedagogical task of the supervisor, since he visits the teachers, advises them and strengthens their professional practices in a way that is close to their training needs. In this way, it contributes to the improvement of student learning, the understanding of the teaching process and the study plans and programs.

The above provides relevant information for analyzing the conditions under which supervision tasks are carried out, which allows for reflection on educational policies aimed at improving the service.

If the supervisors have a number of no more than twenty schools and with the appointment of an ATP, they will be able to offer a more efficient and effective service to the groups. This will allow them to establish closer communication with principals and teachers, as well as better attention to the teaching and learning processes (MEJOREDU, 2023).

The above suggests a significant proposal for educational authorities, since the parameter of assigning a maximum of twenty schools per zone could improve the monitoring practices carried out by the supervisor. This change would represent a turning point in the performance of the function, by reducing the administrative burden that has historically characterized the supervisory control figure. By having an excessive number of schools, their time is consumed in answering bureaucratic procedures.

As Pérez (2021) indicates, school supervisors socially justify the omission of their pedagogical tasks and prioritize the tasks assigned by their educational authorities, turning them into administrators and not academic leaders.

As mentioned above, supervision is an area that has been little studied and, although there are numerous areas to explore, this article is limited to establishing the relationship between administrative burden and counselling and accompaniment. Below are probable topics to be addressed in future publications.

A central point of interest would be to know how the processes for accessing the function have been transformed, from positions of trust, the teaching ladder or the vertical promotion competitions established by the Professional Teaching Service (SPD) and USICAMM. Leyva (2019) already carried out a study on the influence of promotion competitions on the performance of the function.

Another relevant aspect for the continuous improvement process is the training that supervisors receive, as it is an area of opportunity highlighted in the consulted bibliography. As Pérez and López (2021) mention, there is no culture of continuous learning and professional training, learning about one's role is considered a personal task.

It is also important to review the main tasks assigned to the supervisor. In 2017, the SEP defined advice and support as core functions and organized 26 specific functions in four areas: control, administration and linking; technical-pedagogical advice; promoting school organization and collaborative work; as well as community participation. Currently, the

profiles, domains, criteria and indicators are defined in the Framework for Excellence in Teaching and School Management in Basic Education (USICAMM, 2022).

Finally, a topic discussed in this article, which can be further explored given the abundance of research, is leadership. Ramírez (2020) mentions that the effective leadership of the supervisor is a fundamental component of the educational system. The transformation of his function requires a process of resignification to redefine him as an authentic leader.

Supervisor leadership must empower principals through ongoing training that allows them to acquire tools to lead their schools based on informed decisions that promote their management autonomy, especially in the pedagogical field, to support their teaching staff. As addressed by Sandoval, Pineda, Bernal and Quiroga (2020), there are major challenges in terms of training and leadership.

To this last point we can add the important reports published by MEJOREDU (2022). The first one refers to school supervision and proposes pedagogical support strategies to promote school management autonomy. Its objective is to supervise to improve, by seeking a school transformation where each educational agent acts from their area of responsibility to improve together with their peers and guarantee the right of children to an excellent education. The second document promotes the empathetic and assertive leadership of the principal, to foster connections with the school community. It is emphasized that, when the principal exercises his role with leadership, it is possible for the school staff to adapt to changes and learn from complex situations, which inspires and transforms.

As Gutiérrez and Mendoza (2019) mention, it is essential to redefine supervision as a process that innovates the training of teaching groups in preschool education, which implies a structural redefinition of school supervision and conceiving it as a shared action. To this end, training for the performance of management functions is essential.

Conclusions

School supervision is a basic instance for the educational process, the role of the supervisor is essential for continuous improvement. To achieve the expected changes, it is necessary to establish basic operating conditions that allow reorienting the work towards counselling and accompaniment directors and reducing the administrative burden that currently limits their functions.

The study carried out by MEJOREDU indicates that assigning more than twenty schools to an area makes it difficult to provide close support to teaching groups. This conclusion coincides with various investigations that show how administrative and control tasks have displaced pedagogical advice, reducing the effectiveness of its central purpose.

The aim of this analysis is to contribute to the formulation of new organizational proposals that favor the transformation of school supervision. However, while some proposals are aspirations, other goals may be feasible and applicable to the educational structure.

One of the lines of action suggested in this article is the strengthening of management leadership, with the aim of having each educational actor actively participate in the transformation of the system from their area of intervention. This would allow taking advantage of the human resources existing in each area and school center.

Although MEJOREDU's studies show the administrative burden resulting from the allocation of more than twenty schools per zone, the budget issue is far from improving working conditions for school supervisors. Redistributing schools among more supervisors would imply a considerable increase in the budget allocated to human resources, which would mean opening up new positions for supervisors, ATP, administrative and support staff. In addition, additional material resources would be required, such as offices, furniture and technical equipment.

Given these limitations, alternatives have been explored that, although based on an academic foundation, also have an administrative background. During the 2023-2024 school year, in the School Technical Council (CTE) that takes place month by month in Basic Education, the strengthening of management leadership has been promoted as a strategy to rethink the practices of pedagogical advice and support. In this space, the analysis of educational planning and practice, classroom observation and feedback are invited. The proposal is that educational transformation be a task shared by the entire community.

Although supervision maintains its commitment to support and advise teachers, this strategy allows for establishing a bridge that strengthens the training process. When the principal, with the support of the supervisor, leads the professionalization of his or her group, closer and more effective support is generated. In this sense, strengthening the leadership of the principal becomes key to promoting improvement processes from supervision.

In addition to the MEJOREDU studies and in response to the objective initially set, it is proposed to reorient the organization of supervision to work collaboratively with principals to improve counselling and accompaniment practices. The goal is to strengthen leadership and professional training in order to promote a process of continuous improvement for the benefit of students. As has been raised in the different CTE sessions, an essential action to achieve this will be to reflect on and transform management and supervision practices, in order to redefine their support function (SEP, 2024).

In conclusion, there are key elements for the performance of the function. Some of them can be addressed from within supervision, such as ongoing training, strengthening management leadership through counselling and accompaniment, improving the organization and dialogue in spaces such as the School or Zone Technical Council. While other aspects are awaiting a redefinition from the educational structure, in particular, the reduction of the administrative burden and a more pertinent allocation of the number of schools per zone. It is worth starting with what is within the reach of those who perform the function.

If each educational actor assumes its role with leadership, it will be possible to move towards an educational service that prioritizes pedagogy over bureaucracy.

Future lines of research

In summary, there are various aspects that would be interesting to develop or delve into in complementary research to this work, since its scope goes beyond what is presented in this article. Among them, the following stand out: the processes for accessing the supervisory function, the teacher training of supervisors, the main tasks conferred on the figure, their leadership and the management autonomy of the principals. These lines of research should be analyzed in future studies with the purpose of redefining and strengthening the supervisory function.

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