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## **SCHOOL LEADERSHIP IN SPAIN**

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**SUMMARY.**- 1. *Legal Framework*; 2.- *The Governance and Management of Schools*; 2.1- *Autonomy and Leadership*; 3.- *Current Challenges Facing School Leaders*; 4.- *Concluding Remarks*.

## **1. LEGAL FRAMEWORK.**

Section 27 of the Spanish Constitution, under Part I, chapter II, regarding Rights and Liberties, regulates the right to education. Its first section lays down that "Everyone has the right to education. Freedom of teaching is recognized." It thus establishes a fundamental right in terms of right to freedom and right to provide services, subsequently stipulating the series of liberties and rights that arise thereof plus other duties and guarantees with regard to other members of the educational community and the State Administration. In this respect, a recent publication (Gomez Montoro, 2003), referring to the constitutional framework regulating the Right to Education, highlights the "harmonious coexistence established between everyone's right to education and the freedom of teaching, which are stipulated jointly and with the same effect in the first part of section 27", which has led to the widespread acceptance of a formula (attributed to professor Martínez López-Muñiz) establishing the right to education in freedom. The Constitution stipulates a "framework of coincidences", as expressed by the Constitutional Court itself, which allows for a harmonization of freedom and equality, quality and fairness, widespread access and freedom of choice.

Notwithstanding this general constitutional framework, the result of consensus, educational legislation in Spain has undergone continuous change according to the political party in power. At present, the system is regulated at Organic Act level by the LOE (Organic Education Act) (2004) which revokes the previous law

LOCE (2002), approved by the foregoing government, and which never came into effect. The current law has the peculiarity of repealing all previous laws except for the LODE, which remains in force with the necessary amendments laid down in the additional provisions of the LOE. At the present time, we are engaged in applying and implementing this Act.

Another particular aspect of the educational system is the competence framework of the Autonomous Regions, who assume the majority of competencies, so they are responsible for implementing and applying the basic regulations. The different regulatory implementation carried out by the Autonomous Regions has highlighted the need to structure our educational system and revealed the possibility of fragmentation, according to the varying regional regulations, and endangering equal opportunities and the principle of interterritorial solidarity.

## **2. THE GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF SCHOOLS**

The LOE deals with the governance and management of schools in its Part V regarding *Participation, autonomy and governance in schools*, aiming to highlight, from the outset, a kind of leadership where participation and autonomy establish a model of governance that is conditioned by both.

The reference to participation, as a basic value in educating the population, falls among the objectives of the Spanish educational system as both an operating and organizational principle. This is reflected as much in the spirit that underlies the drafting of our last educational law, as in the structure of governance expected from each school.

Participation is also reflected in the right of parents, teachers and, as the case may be, students, to intervene in the management and control of schools financed with state funds, as laid down by Section 27.7 of the Constitution, which establishes shared responsibility in schools' governance and takes shape as the creation of collegiate entities for their educational administration and coordination. Accordingly, the School Council, the Teachers' Board and other educational coordination bodies under Chapter III, Heading V of the LOE (Organic Education Act). The School Council, whose composition includes representatives from the educational community and even from the local authorities, has the most important competencies (Section 127) and is even involved in selecting the school's head teacher.

Chapter IV regulates the management of state schools. The provisions of the new law represent a change in the way school governance is conceived as regards other laws and particularly as regards the LODE.

Although the LOE stipulates, in article 118.2. *The participation, autonomy and management of schools which offer education regulated by this Law will comply with the stipulations of the Law and with the Organic Law of 8/1995 of July 3rd, on the Right to Education, and with the regulations stated therein.,* the differences are significant.

There are a number of aspects in management that change significantly. It seems that the intention is to give more importance to exercising leadership as a decisive factor in school operation with a more professional approach.

1. The management team is expressly mentioned as a basic governing body with greater functions and collegial work sense with distribution of tasks. Article 131 entitled "The management team" provides:

1. *The management team, the executive body governing the school, will be composed of the head, the director of studies, the secretary and whoever else the Education Administrations decide.*
2. *In carrying out their functions, the management team will work in coordination with each other on the instructions of the head and the legally-established specific functions.*

2. The team sense is stressed as it is proposed by the head and appointed by the administration. The school council is only aware of the proposal. Accordingly, article 131,3. provides that *The head, after reporting to the Teachers Council and the School Council, will make proposals to the Education Authority for the appointment and cessation for the posts of director of studies and school secretary from among the school teaching staff.*

3. The head is no longer selected by the school council but by a specific committee appointed for the purpose by the administration, with mixed composition. It is the administration who subsequently appoints the head.

1. Article 133. 1. *The selection of the school head will be made through a process which involves the participation of the education community and the Education Authority.*

- 2. This process must give rise to the selection of the most appropriate candidates in professional terms and those who obtain the most support from the education community.*
4. Some initial training is required if the person has no management experience and only after this is the candidate appointed by the administration.
  1. Article 136. *Appointment.. Selected candidates must pass a programme of initial training, organised by the Education Administrations. Selected candidates with at least two years accredited experience as school head will be exempt from the initial training programme.*
  2. *The Education Administrations will appoint the candidate who has passed the training programme head of the corresponding school for a period of four years.*

These four aspects represent an innovation with respect to the LODE, by highlighting the management aspect. The School Council continues to have a relevant governance function when approving the educational project and taking part in other important aspects of school operation. But there is a clear strengthening of the head's position and his team on one hand, and on the other hand of the role of the school owner; that is, the Administration.

In the Report drawn up by the Education Ministry for the OECD (MEC March-2007), the competencies of the different bodies of governance are described as follows:

“The LOE establishes that the collegiate bodies of governance are the school councils and teacher’s assemblies, and that the executive body is the leadership team, comprising the head teacher, the head of studies, the school administrator and those persons appointed by the education authorities.

The competencies of the school council in state schools, in which the leadership team, teachers, parents, students and members of the local community are represented, include: the approval and evaluation of school projects (educational, leadership and the annual general plan of activities) as well as the regulations for the organisation and the functioning of the school, participation in the head teacher selection process, admission of students, pupil behaviour, renovation of materials, collaboration with the wider community and an analysis and evaluation of the general performance of the school.

The teachers’ assembly is responsible for planning, coordinating, reporting and, where appropriate, deciding on all the

educational aspects of the school. Thus, its competencies, among others, include: the approval and evaluation of the curriculum content as well as the pedagogical aspects of other projects, the analysis and evaluation of students' results, the resolution of disputes and setting out the criteria in matters of student guidance, tutorials, evaluations and learning support.

The distribution of leadership tasks within schools is normally as follows: the head of studies focuses on the academic processes, organisation and disciplinary matters, the school administrator on the administrative and financial processes and the head teacher on institutional and external relations and on the coordination of the leadership team. When the coordinators of the departments or the cycles do not have periodic meetings with the head of studies, they sometimes attend the leadership team meetings.

The proposals submitted by each one of the members at the coordination meeting are decided on the basis of consensus and in the event of a disagreement, the head teacher decides. Nevertheless, the head teacher, as the maximum authority within the school, must safeguard that the decisions respect the regulations or any other fundamental criteria. Issues that require an immediate decision can be resolved by the head teacher and the persons involved, without having to wait until the next meeting".

In my opinion, the key aspect in the way leadership is addressed lies in the concept of Autonomy, laid down as a general principle in Section 120. Schools are said to enjoy "autonomy in educational, organizational and management terms within the framework of the current legislation". In practice, the margin of real autonomy is very low, both in economic terms and as regards people management, so framing leadership within the real autonomy that schools enjoy is actually merely theoretical and proves to be poorly conceived upon implementation.

In presenting some provisional conclusions (International Seminar Educational Leadership (Madrid. September 2007) of a recent report on leadership drawn up by the OECD, (Beatriz Pont 2007) attention was drawn to the need to expand the margin of schools' autonomy so that conditions of genuine leadership could be achieved. It then underscored the low levels of autonomy within the Spanish educational system and its relationship with a leadership model that sees the head teacher as a team leader and a mediator who, although exhibiting positive aspects, is urged both by the educational sector as a whole and by teachers to be given more authority, professionalism and social recognition.

A key, controversial aspect has been determining the selection method for the head teacher. The LOE (Organic Education Act)

derogates a system intended to highlight professional aspects by establishing an appointment by the educational authorities, replacing it with a system where candidates are selected by the School Council and the authorities appoint the selected candidate. Such candidate must have passed an initial training programme, although candidates who can demonstrate two years' experience in a management position are exempt from this training. In practice, although the aim is to introduce a system combining election and appointment, the former prevails, with the resulting risk of not fully professional profiles. The idea of participation arises again, conferring a relevant role to the educational community, with the aim of guaranteeing the acceptance of chosen candidates and, as a consequence, endorsing the effectiveness of their work.

The foreseen requirements do not include prior, specific training for performing management tasks, which reflects a lack in providing resources and undue attention to the professionalism that this position requires. However, it does require five years' experience and the presentation of a management project that includes, among other things, objectives, lines of action and evaluation as per stipulated in Section 134. Finally, candidates from within the school have priority.

There is little tradition in Higher Studies and Masters' courses that involve specific training programmes for school heads. Nevertheless, little by little, and often through private initiative, specialized programmes are being incorporated to respond to the growing complexity that a head teacher faces with regard to the demands imposed upon schools. These are, in fact, just a reflection of the complexity inherent to society itself and, in order to address this, policies must be developed with regard to professional recognition, assistance in specific training and a greater availability of resources.

Programmes offered by universities have a two-fold purpose: some are aimed at working professionals and are oriented towards professional development; others involve initial training, providing the skills to perform management tasks. These courses harmonize the principles of efficient management with their proper application to the educational sector in managing teams and people, forming a transformational, transcendent, mission-based leadership, certainly responding more fully and effectively to an educational centre's needs. In this respect, some of the research conducted in business schools (Cardona, 2005) is very interesting. However, as mentioned above, these programs are an exception in the existing general training offered to school heads and not the rule.

Although it is true that programmes have also been promoted by regular or employer organizations at private schools and

universities, they are aimed at meeting manager training needs within these entities themselves and, occasionally, are extended to the sector. They usually consist of a training programme that is not limited to educational aspects and address other fields such as people management, relationships with the environment or analysis of economic management and communication. In short, they conceive management tasks as general administration that integrates and harmonizes the different areas, based on development of the school's mission involving everyone, and a project promoted by the whole organization.

There are increasing numbers of professional head teachers' associations that are highlighting these problems, drawing attention to the challenges faced by educational leadership. Recently, the Head Teachers' Federation (FEDADI), which comprises numerous head teachers' associations at regional level, requested recognition for the specific nature of head teachers' tasks, their stability and their importance as a quality factor within the system, in developing the regulations of the LOE (Organic Education Act). Increasing professionalism also implies adequate preparation to address the complexity mentioned above, the planning and coordination needs of educational action and, in general, training to re-orient and resolve conflicts in educational centres.

The Head Teachers' Associations, also suggest increased professionalism in selection processes and, in short, propose that evaluation of the management project should meet certain objective criteria, previously published. The head teacher's competencies under Section 132 appear, at first sight, to be broadly outlined, although, in practice, the decision-making process carried out by the management team at present is limited to proposing and informing, confusing the School Council's control function with powers of decision and execution.

Furthermore, the schools' real autonomy must be increased in both economic and educational terms and as regards the organization of people. They should be able to appoint department heads and other educational managers, to increase their capacity for economic management, because decentralization in decision and control always proves to be more efficient. Educational autonomy would involve flexibility in the curricula and the organization, enhancing the response capacity to specific, mission-based and value-based educational projects that confer schools with a diversity of profiles according to the social environments where they perform their educational functions. The representation that head teachers assume must be accompanied by recognition of their authority, together with presence and position in their social environment, in accordance with their responsibility. All of the above increases schools' evaluation so that the required autonomy goes hand in

hand with the corresponding accountability, where there would be assessment of such management tasks and, in accordance with the school's project, its mission and vision.

Spain is, after Holland, Belgium and the United Kingdom, the fourth European country with the greatest proportion of the private sector in education, at around 30%. In turn, this private sector shows a marked differentiation in its composition, between schools that receive state funding, called subsidized private schools, and private schools. This organization is mirrored at employer, trade union and sector policy level and, naturally, in the legal framework that regulates them, showing varying degrees of autonomy and, as a consequence, a broad diversity of management models.

Subsidized private schools, private schools that receive state funding, run the risk of acquiring similarities to state schools and, in practice, losing their own character and autonomy, by having to "assimilate" in order to receive the funding that allows students free access. The tension that arises on either side between freedom and autonomy, the obligatory compliance with certain requirements to be organized in a similar way to state schools, considerably hampers the performance of genuine leadership with respect to the school project. It would be preferable to implement evaluation or control for subsidized private schools in terms of results, leaving greater scope for autonomy and eliminating bureaucratic processes that impose limits and uniformity on schools and prevents them from adapting to the diversities of the social context they operate in.

Private schools, on the other hand, enjoy greater autonomy as regards internal organization and people management, according to the guidelines that their owners establish. They can implement a leadership model with greater impact on schools' quality, by enjoying greater scope for development and responsibility.

## **2.1 Autonomy and leadership**

An important aspect that in the provisions of a number of articles affecting school governance is the role assigned to education authorities to determine the scope of competences that correspond to them. That is to say, the law provides that the educational authorities shall be who determine the specific competences of schools on matters of personnel, organisation and financing, by virtue of the degree of autonomy they establish.

In the framework of the LOE, each Autonomous Region is therefore responsible for determining how far it goes in the practice, scope and nature of school leadership, as this is decisive in the real autonomy assigned.

Accordingly, art. 123,5 provides that *The Education Administrations may delegate certain competences to public school management bodies, including those related to staff management, giving responsibility to head teachers for the management of resources at the school's disposal..*

And art. 131 5. . *The Education Administrations will foster the exercise of the management role in schools, by adopting measures which help to improve the performance of management teams in relation to staff and material resources and through the organisation of training courses and programmes*

It remains to be seen how the Autonomous Regions implement the regulations allowing schools to have real, specific competences. The last report from the Commission on monitoring the objectives of the Lisbon strategy stated, in the chapter on modernising educational systems, school leadership in the framework of independent financing, allowing management teams to be trained in the scope of their own projects.

Effective people management as regards selection, capacity to create new teams, clashes with the civil service statute, and specifically with the Education Statute, currently at draft stage and under negotiation with the trade unions. Difficultly without flexibility, mobility of teaching staff, capacity of management teams to choose the most appropriate teachers for different projects, may all advance significantly.

On this matter, the LOE simply mentions school management teams' faculty to describe the professional profile required but does not authorize them to conduct the selection process. It is the very personnel circulating round the educational system, according to certain criteria, who do not always correspond to what makes people management efficient: their degree of commitment and identification with the organisation. There is a major area here to offer greater flexibility to the education system, to make leadership effective, because it affects the most sensitive point and with greater repercussion on education: the suitability of the teaching staff carrying out this function because they make it more effective. Without a doubt, this it is one of the greatest challenges facing education.

To sum up, effective leadership that enhances the school requires a clear, broad scope of autonomy in decision-making. In fact the report Education at a Glance 2012 confirmed this analysis by presenting a series of statistical results which show that Spain is below the OECD average. Taking advantage of the comparative capacity of this information we put forth a panoramic view of the state of school autonomy around the globe to serve as context for the

particular situation of Spain. Additionally, we include a domain by domain look at decision making in the educational system of Spain in relation to the average for OECD members. Throughout, we provide different visualizations of the data pertaining to school autonomy, culminating with a detailed analysis of the distribution of decision making capacities per level of government, per domain in Spain.

**Chart 1. Percentage of decisions taken at each level of government in public lower secondary education (2011)**

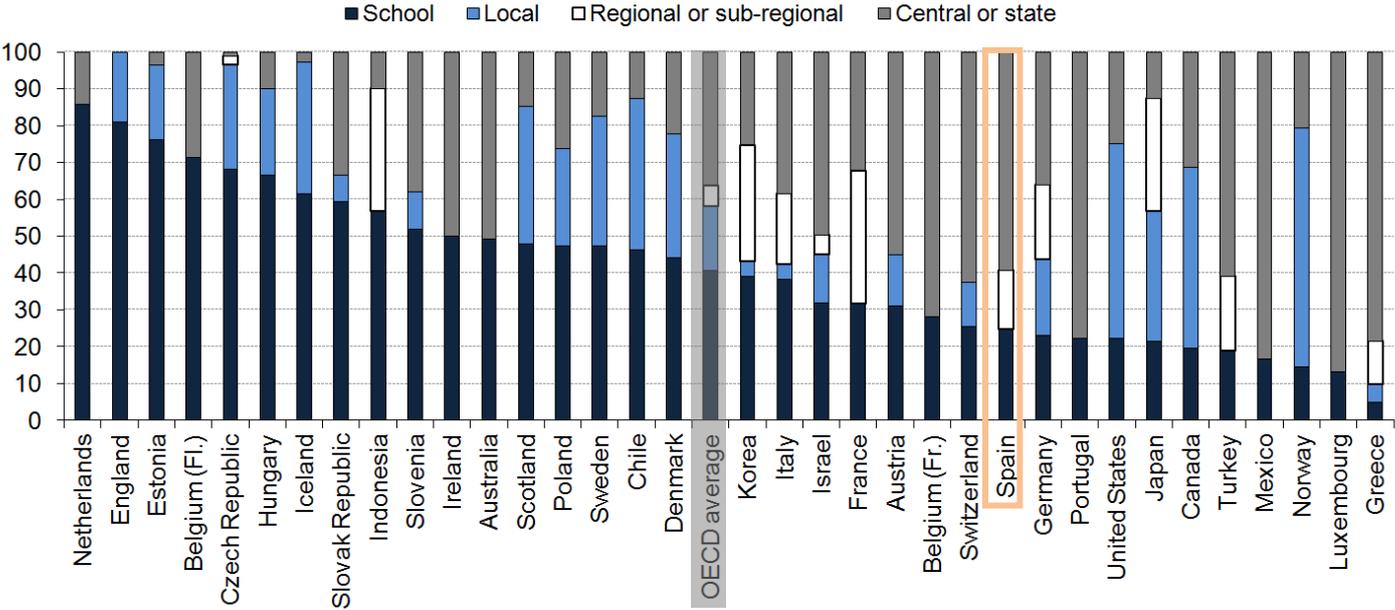


Chart 1 summarizes the global distribution of decision making capacities in the public lower secondary education field. It offers a glimpse at the level of centralization of each country’s educational system, and serves as a proxy to draw inferences about the level of autonomy within each. Right to left, we move from least centralized to most centralized according to the share of decisions made at the lower levels of government, specially schools. In this respect, there is high variability among countries, with 16 out of 36 making most decisions at the school level, and 12 making most decisions at the state or central level. Spain fits under the latter category, indicating greater centralization, and consequently less overall autonomy in the system in relation to the average for OECD countries. These observations, of course, are only intended to provide a general framework within which to interpret the specific situations of each country. Decentralization of the decision making responsibilities in a lower level of educative administration is not a sufficient condition for school autonomy. Indeed, the aggregate of decisions per country represented here, are not classified by domain, or mode of decision making. This is an important caveat that underscores the difficulty of analyzing real autonomy. Education at a Glance points out, for

example, that on average only half of the decisions made at the school level in OECD countries are fully autonomous. The following graphs illustrate some of these points in greater detail.

**Chart 2. Percentage of decisions taken at each level of government in public lower secondary education, by domain (2011)**

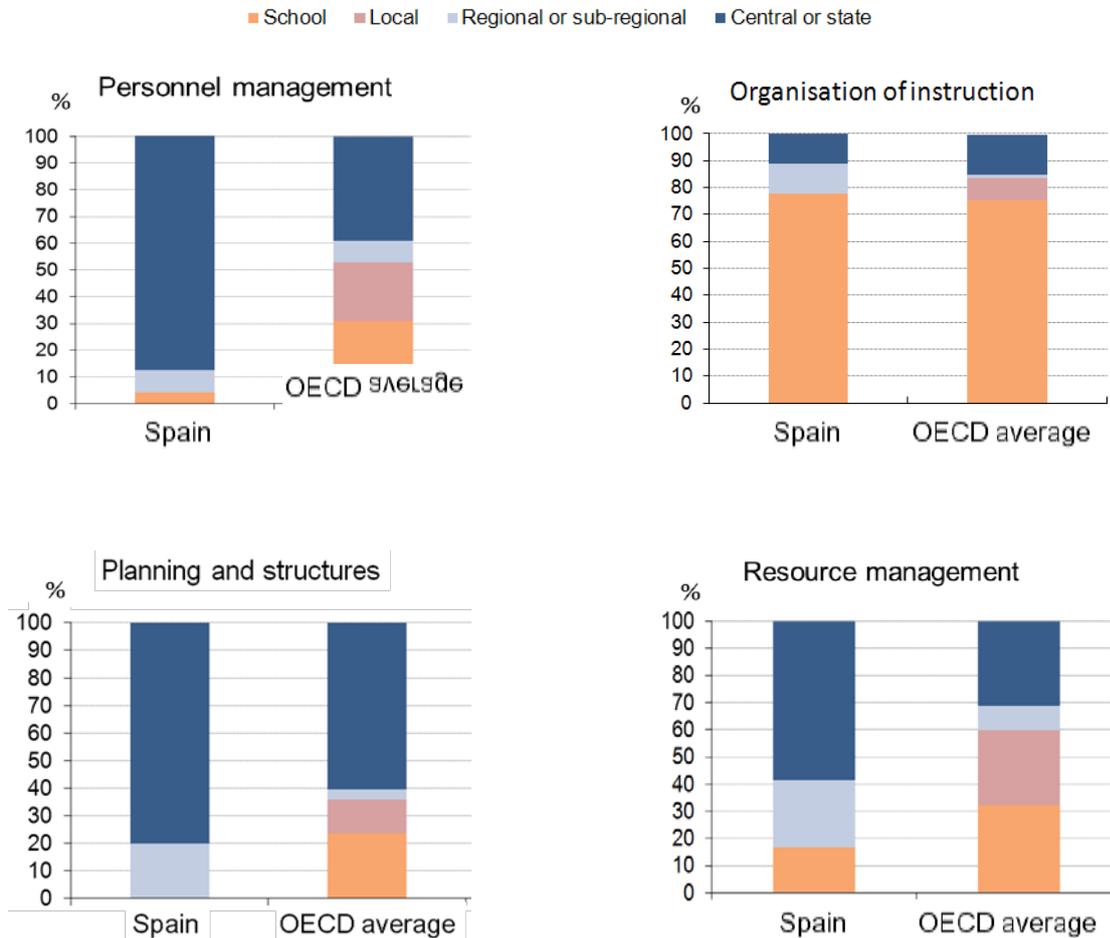


Chart 2 presents the subdivision of domains in which educational decisions are made by different entities in Spain, and the average of OECD countries.

In the domain of personnel management there is usually less delegation of competences to schools across OECD countries. In Spain, this fact is specially marked, with schools accounting for less than 5% of the decisions made in that area. Teachers' status as civil servants grants national and state governments great margin in the making of decisions regarding a school's personnel.

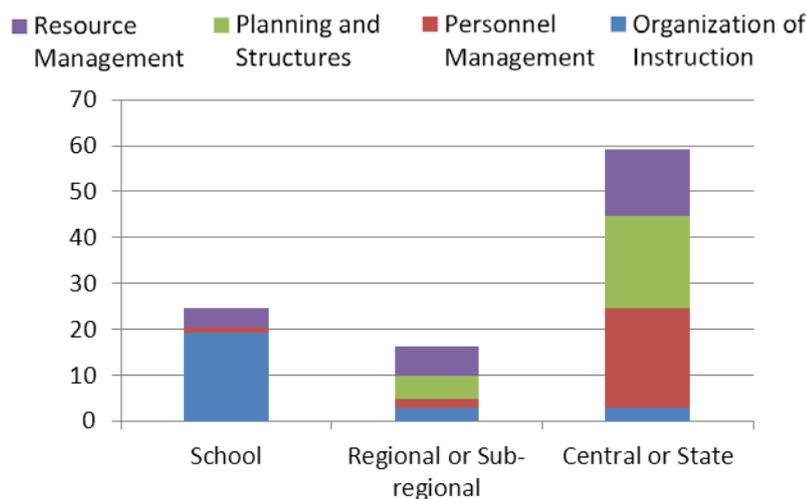
Pertaining to the organization of instruction, this country follows the global trend depicted in the OECD average bar of high decision making capacities for schools. This category includes decisions regarding instruction time, teaching methodology, the choice of textbooks, etc. Additionally, it is important to point out that even if most of these decisions are taken at the school level,

they must conform to nationally established standards, or are subject to the approval of higher levels of authority.

Contrary to the norm in OECD countries, where schools account for over a fifth of the decisions taken, Spanish schools wield very little influence over the planning and structure of education. In Spain, the subjects offered at schools, the qualifying examinations for a diploma, and the composition of the program of study are largely decided by the national and state government.

With regards to resource management, Spain lags behind the average in terms of school autonomy – it is minimal and highly conditioned. For example, schools have decision making powers over the purchase of furniture and small items, and, within a framework set by the state government, the allocation of resources for operational expenditures.

**Chart 3. Distribution of decisions taken at each level of government in public lower secondary school in Spain, by domain (2011)**



**How to read this chart:** This chart represents a sample set of 46 key decisions made in public lower secondary education in Spain. Each bar represents the total share of those decisions made by the particular level of government. Each bar is also broken into sections that represent the domains in which that level of government made decisions: resource management, planning and structures, personnel management, and organization of instruction. The category Central or State corresponds to the national government and the government at the level of the autonomous communities. The Regional or Sub-regional category corresponds to province and local (city) governments.

As illustrated in Chart 3, the majority of decisions in education, regardless of domain, are made outside of schools. Schools have a relatively high discretion in terms of decisions about the organization of instruction. It is precisely this area that groups most of the decisions taken at the school level, leaving very little area for schools to decide in other matters. Also shown in this graph is the ample decision making capacity of Autonomous Communities, which, in Spain, have the competence of implementing the framework set by the national government.

This lower level of autonomy determines the role and responsibility of the educational system's leadership model. Spanish head teachers' decision making power ranks lower than the OECD average.

The autonomy belonging to the schools in Spain, as exercised by head teachers is characterized by communication and team-management-based factors; in short, a concept of leadership according to a participation-based approach with significant team involvement, in contrast to the individual action of head teachers. Decision-making is greatly affected by the points of view of educational community members and stakeholders.

However, we cannot ignore the fact that, together with participation, full accountability is also fundamental in management activities. In this respect, professor Ribolzi (2007) has stated that "the head's most important skill becomes to organize a learning environment in a highly changing context, bonding the teachers in the school and addressing the human resources to realise a common aim. The connection between the principal and the quality of the school climate is both direct and strong. A good head empowers the teachers, through a transformational leadership, improves the resources collecting and organising, and has both a bonding and bridging role, building a school community and assuring its connection with the society."

### **3. Current challenges facing school leaders**

The challenges faced by leadership in schools are closely related to those faced by the schools themselves. The role assigned to educational centres has undergone considerable change in recent years. The crisis affecting some institutions has the effect of passing on greater responsibility to schools. They are assigned fields and functions they previously never had. The breakdown of certain family models and other social factors, such as the phenomenon of emigration and the consolidation of multicultural societies, confer schools with new functions and areas of work. In this context, the management role takes on new competencies that surpass traditional managerial or bureaucratic/official tasks. The head teacher's role takes shape as a guide and team-leader, a mediator and an agent capable of involving the professionals he or she is responsible for in shared projects and values.

In my opinion, leadership in schools must be considered outside its strictly managerial function. Stakeholders are required to

take part in such leadership as schools are increasingly required to interact with their environment, to represent a key setting for socialization and to call for the presence and implication of the families involved. Consequently, it is essential to strengthen the position of the school project as a reference framework for educational activities in which everyone assumes their share of responsibility.

On the other hand, schools should not be passed on the responsibility of providing solutions, from their educational role, to the multiple deficiencies that society exhibits. It is also necessary to act decisively on the basis of creating mechanisms of cooperation with those responsible for designing and implementing social policies as a whole. Only integrated actions can bring about the advances for the necessary social cohesion—one of the strategic objectives laid down by the Lisbon Agenda 2010—and generate the appropriate environment for effectively improving the social conditions to allow, in the long term, integral development for the whole population (Tedesco, 2007). In this assignation of responsibilities, the social media has a major role to play, along with, in general, the whole leisure and entertainment sector, which particularly affects - educating or un-educating - the teaching-learning and socialization process of our young students.

Another important aspect, resulting from characteristics existing in many countries due to state ownership, is the civil-servant status of most teaching professionals, which, as in the case of Spain, hampers the development and implementation of effective leadership. This civil-servant status itself, bureaucratization, lack of mobility, lack of flexibility, temporary staff with high turnover - sometimes reaching 50%, and the total absence of competencies when selecting personnel, greatly limit the performance of such leadership responsible for managing this change. Significant experience in the different scenarios where educational diversity occurs would help to mitigate this, encouraging strategies of mobility throughout state, private and subsidized private sectors. An article on this matter (Díaz Lema, 2004) advocates greater "transfer from public to private or from private to public, helping to energize the educational system by making it more flexible and competitive". In this respect, Spain's current review of the "Estatuto de la Función Docente" (Statute of the Educational Role) does not at present appear capable of solving people management, educational careers and salary remuneration - to mention a few aspects - from parameters of agreement, effectiveness and rationality, more in accordance with the new requirements demanded of schools.

Pending challenges include a review of the current legal framework for setting up schools with different ideologies and projects that meet the different existing requirements of a pluralistic

society. The Spanish Constitution covers the freedom to create schools but there exists no obligation to finance all educational initiatives, so the access and inauguration of such schools is subject to economic rationality. Consequently, a greater freedom of choice gives rise to plurality of educational offers and, as a result, greater diversity in how leadership is implemented according to each school's characteristics, as occurs in many other sectors of social and economic activity. Uniformity and rigidity are not good companions of leadership and even less of education, where freedom is inherent to the task of educating. Accordingly, different methods of exercising leadership would arise in reference to different schools, projects and environments.

Another of the challenges confronting the development of a leadership style that transforms schools and has an effect on the quality of their results is the existence or absence of a culture of assessment or accountability, which permits progress in autonomy and enhancement of professional performance. All professionalization involves a clear framework of competencies and responsibilities and, therefore, an appraisal of results with the corresponding creation of processes to bring about improvement. Quality of organizations stems from the quality of the work done by the people who compose them. Insofar as the so-called evaluation culture is not implemented professionally and with guarantees throughout the education sector, it will also be difficult to implement effective leadership that merges widely-ranging fields of decision-making capacity with the accountability required. As Bezzina (2007) notes, the role of the head is evolving, demanding a move from administration to leadership and from individuality to collegiality. We have to move to work with and for individuals. [There is] a need to focus on strategic planning; curriculum design, development and implementation; staff development and appraisal; monitoring and supervision of the quality of teaching and learning.”

In a latter publication, Bezzina (2009) expands on this idea: “Various local studies especially over the past decades have clearly shown that discrepancy between what school heads are expected and wish to fulfil and what, in reality, they do. Research into headship time and again has shown that they spend most of their time doing administrative work and hardly anytime focusing on the critical issues of schooling. However, the latest education reforms are showing a critical departure from past practices.”

## **Concluding remarks**

We should advance towards a harmonious system where autonomy, school leadership and accountability are brought together and reciprocally structured. In short, the aim should be to increase decision-making and self-evaluation powers to reinforce a style of leadership that works efficiently in the context of the complex, changing reality where the school operates.

We have to reconsider the selection and training of head teachers. The school's role has changed and, consequently, so has the head teacher's. This should strengthen the values shared by the educational community as a whole, exercising mission-based or transformational leadership. We should not limit the promotion of candidates to within the school, but open opportunities to other sectors which, with the necessary preparation, could occupy professional positions in schools.

In order for such aperture to be possible, it is necessary to design professional training programmes, prior to any managerial action, which provide qualification for such tasks, comprising all the different areas that require attention in a school: not only educational, organizational and administrative, but also involving other aspects relating to communication and institutional relationships, conflict resolution, knowledge management and collegiate development.

Greater social recognition is necessary, accompanied by a reinforcement of authority and economic motivation to compensate for the growing responsibilities and "plurifunctionality" of managerial tasks. At present, the salary difference of a head teacher does not amount to 20% of what the rest of staff is paid. Intrinsic motivation is not enough. Extrinsic motivation must be encouraged to compensate the lack of candidates and scant appeal of such managerial positions among teaching professionals.

In general, the educational sector requires an effort towards modernization that combines a guarantee of universal access to education, conceived as a basic human right exercised under conditions of freedom and fairness, with certain standards of quality. Only with an appropriate legal framework that reflects the performance of this right under conditions that respect the diversity of projects and by implementing a flexible, open educational function can progress be made in the transformation-based leadership that schools of today require.

If the evidence provided shows that proper school board governance can make a difference to school performance, priority must be given to actions aimed at improving managerial functions in

schools to further improve their results. Lastly, it would be advantageous for the necessary structural reforms that our educational system requires not be subjected to the ups and downs of partisan ideology and for them to involve everyone in providing recognition and training for our school leaders. They are also, to a large extent, responsible for achieving better school results, with positive effects on the overall quality of education.

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