



School Principals' Perspectives on Individual Teacher Evaluation in Greek Primary Education: Implications for Educational Innovation and Quality Enhancement

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ABSTRACT

The implementation of individual teacher evaluation under Law 4823/2021 has reintroduced teacher appraisal as a key educational policy issue in Greece, assigning school principals a central role in its implementation. This study investigated primary school principals' perceptions of the teacher evaluation process and examined the factors influencing their attitudes toward the new evaluation framework. A quantitative cross-sectional design was employed using a structured questionnaire administered to 83 primary school principals. Participants had a mean age of 54 years, an average of 26 years of teaching experience, and approximately six years of administrative experience. Descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were performed to examine principals' perceptions and identify significant predictors of their attitudes toward teacher evaluation. The findings showed that most principals had not received formal training in teacher evaluation, although they reported a high level of familiarity with the legislative framework and the provisions of Law 4823/2021. Most participants had evaluated only a limited number of teachers during the previous two years, while non-participation in evaluation was mainly attributed to teachers' strike or work abstention actions. Principals perceived the evaluation process as highly bureaucratic and considered the administrative burden to affect school leaders more than teachers. They also reported insufficient communication and information provided by the Ministry of Education regarding the implementation of the new evaluation system and emphasized the need for revisions to specific provisions of the legislation. Regression analysis further indicated that knowledge of the legislative framework, previous evaluation experience, and perceptions of the evaluation methodology significantly influenced principals' attitudes toward teacher evaluation. These findings highlight the importance of systematic evaluator training, clearer institutional guidance, and reduced administrative complexity to strengthen the effectiveness, consistency, and acceptance of teacher evaluation in Greek primary education.

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INTRODUCTION

Teacher evaluation has become a strategic priority in contemporary educational reform, as it is increasingly associated with improving teaching quality, strengthening teacher professionalism, and enhancing student learning outcomes. Recent international evidence suggests that effective teacher evaluation systems contribute to school improvement when they integrate accountability with professional learning, continuous feedback, and instructional support rather than focusing solely on performance

measurement (OECD, 2023; OECD, 2024). Moreover, education systems are increasingly expected to develop evaluation policies that promote reflective practice, evidence-informed decision-making, and sustainable professional development.

Contemporary research conceptualizes teacher evaluation as a developmental process that extends beyond administrative accountability. Effective evaluation practices include structured classroom observation, constructive feedback, post-observation dialogue, and opportunities for continuous

professional learning. These practices strengthen instructional improvement when evaluation is embedded within a collaborative school culture rather than implemented as a compliance mechanism (Darling-Hammond, 2023; Hunter, 2022).

Despite these developments, the implementation of teacher evaluation remains one of the most challenging aspects of educational policy. International studies indicate that evaluation systems often struggle to achieve an appropriate balance between accountability and professional development. When evaluation is perceived primarily as a bureaucratic or supervisory process, teachers are less likely to view feedback as meaningful for improving their instructional practice (Kraft & Christian, 2022; OECD, 2024).

School leadership is widely recognised as a decisive factor in the successful implementation of teacher evaluation policies. School principals function as instructional leaders who translate educational policy into school practice by conducting classroom observations, providing feedback, supporting teachers’ professional growth, and fostering collaborative learning environments. Leadership practices characterised by transparency, trust, and instructional support are consistently associated with higher teacher engagement and more effective implementation of evaluation systems (Hallinger, 2018; Leithwood et al., 2020; Hunter, 2022).

Recent evidence further demonstrates that principals’ professional preparation substantially influences the quality of teacher evaluation. Evaluators who receive systematic training are better equipped to provide constructive feedback, apply evaluation criteria consistently, and connect evaluation outcomes with teachers’ professional learning. Conversely, inadequate preparation may reduce the credibility of evaluation, increase administrative burden, and weaken teachers’ confidence in the evaluation process (Kraft & Christian, 2022; OECD, 2024).

Within the Greek educational system, the enactment of Law 4823/2021 reintroduced individual teacher evaluation after several decades of limited implementation, representing one of the most significant educational reforms in recent years. Although this reform has generated extensive public and academic discussion, empirical research has focused predominantly on teachers’ attitudes and policy analysis, while considerably less attention has been given to school principals, who are directly responsible for implementing the evaluation process in schools. This lack of empirical evidence limits understanding of the practical challenges associated with implementing the new evaluation framework.

Addressing this gap, the present study investigates primary school principals’ perceptions of the implementation of individual teacher evaluation under Law 4823/2021 and examines the factors influencing their attitudes toward the evaluation process. Specifically, the study aims to: (a)

examine principals’ training, knowledge, and evaluation experience; (b) explore their perceptions of the implementation process and the challenges encountered; and (c) identify the demographic and professional variables associated with their attitudes toward teacher evaluation.

The novelty of this study lies in providing one of the first quantitative investigations of Greek primary school principals following the implementation of Law 4823/2021. By focusing on school leaders as the principal evaluators responsible for applying the new legislative framework, the study contributes original empirical evidence to the international literature on educational leadership and teacher evaluation while offering practical implications for educational policy, evaluator preparation, and the effective implementation of teacher appraisal systems.

Research Problem

The implementation of teacher evaluation has become a critical issue in educational systems worldwide, as countries increasingly seek mechanisms that enhance teaching quality, strengthen professional development, and promote school improvement. However, the effectiveness of evaluation reforms depends not only on the existence of legislative frameworks but also on the preparedness, perceptions, and professional capacities of the individuals responsible for their implementation. In this context, school principals represent key actors because they are directly involved in translating evaluation policies into school-level practices.

In Greece, the introduction of individual teacher evaluation through Law 4823/2021 has renewed the debate regarding the purposes, procedures, and consequences of teacher appraisal. Although the legislative framework provides a structured approach to evaluation, its implementation has raised concerns related to evaluator preparation, teacher acceptance, administrative demands, and the overall effectiveness of the process. Despite the importance of school principals’ role, limited empirical evidence exists regarding their experiences, knowledge, training, and attitudes toward the new evaluation system.

The need to investigate this issue is particularly relevant because the success of educational reforms depends significantly on the perceptions and practices of school leaders. Understanding principals’ perspectives may contribute to improving policy implementation, supporting evaluator preparation, and strengthening trust among educational stakeholders. Furthermore, examining the factors associated with principals’ attitudes can provide valuable insights into how teacher evaluation systems may become more effective, transparent, and development-oriented.

From a scientific perspective, this study contributes to the international literature on educational leadership and teacher evaluation by providing quantitative evidence from the Greek educational context, where empirical research on principals’ involvement in the implementation of the new evaluation

framework remains limited. The study expands current knowledge by examining not only principals’ levels of training, experience, and legislative awareness but also the factors that predict their attitudes toward teacher evaluation.

Research Focus

The present study focuses on the role of primary school principals as evaluators responsible for implementing individual teacher evaluation under Law 4823/2021. The research interest is centered on understanding how principals experience the evaluation process, how prepared they feel to undertake this responsibility, and which professional and contextual factors influence their attitudes toward teacher evaluation.

Specifically, the study examines four main dimensions: (a) principals’ training and previous experience in teacher evaluation; (b) their knowledge and perceptions of the legislative framework; (c) the conditions they consider necessary for effective evaluation implementation; and (d) the factors predicting positive or negative attitudes toward the evaluation process.

The scientific perspective guiding this research is that teacher evaluation cannot be examined independently from educational leadership. Rather, its effectiveness is shaped by the competence, acceptance, and active involvement of school leaders who mediate between educational policy and school practice.

Research Aim and Research Questions

The aim of this study was to investigate primary school principals’ perceptions regarding the implementation of individual teacher evaluation under Law 4823/2021 and to identify the factors influencing their attitudes toward the evaluation process.

To achieve this aim, the study addressed the following research questions:

RQ1: What is the level of training and practical experience of primary school principals regarding teacher evaluation?

RQ2: To what extent do school principals possess knowledge of the legislative framework governing teacher evaluation, and how do they perceive the information provided by educational authorities regarding its implementation?

RQ3: Which conditions do school principals consider necessary for the effective implementation of individual teacher evaluation?

RQ4: Which professional, experiential, and perception-related factors significantly predict principals’ attitudes toward teacher evaluation?

The study findings revealed that a substantial proportion of principals (57.83%, $n = 48$) had not received any formal training in teacher evaluation, while only 26.51% ($n = 22$) had participated in training programs provided by the Ministry of Education. Despite limited training opportunities, most principals (69.88%, $n = 58$) had evaluated at least one teacher during the previous two years, with an average of 3.49

evaluated teachers. Among principals without evaluation experience, the main reported barrier was teachers’ participation in strike or work abstention actions.

Regarding legislative knowledge, principals reported a relatively high level of familiarity with the evaluation framework ($M = 3.61$, $SD = 0.96$) and with the provisions of Law 4823/2021 ($M = 3.19$, $SD = 1.09$). However, they expressed concerns regarding the adequacy of information provided to teachers by the Ministry of Education ($M = 2.29$, $SD = 1.01$). Principals identified evaluator training as the most important prerequisite for effective evaluation implementation ($M = 4.23$, $SD = 0.79$), followed by meritocratic leadership selection ($M = 4.11$, $SD = 0.90$), collegial relationships and cooperation ($M = 4.08$, $SD = 0.89$), and teacher acceptance of evaluation ($M = 3.87$, $SD = 0.98$). Finally, multiple regression analysis demonstrated that principals’ attitudes toward teacher evaluation were significantly predicted by evaluation methodology ($\beta = 0.59$, $p < .001$), information technology ($\beta = 0.21$, $p = .013$), attitudes toward the legislative framework ($\beta = 0.20$, $p = .030$), and the number of teachers evaluated during the previous two years ($\beta = 0.16$, $p = .034$). These findings indicate that positive attitudes toward evaluation are strongly associated with practical experience, appropriate methodological approaches, technological competence, and acceptance of the legislative framework.

Overall, the study provides new empirical evidence regarding the implementation of teacher evaluation in Greek primary education and highlights the importance of systematic training, effective communication, and supportive evaluation procedures for strengthening the role of school principals as educational leaders.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Teacher Evaluation: From Accountability Mechanisms to Professional Learning Processes

Teacher evaluation has become a fundamental component of educational reform worldwide, as education systems increasingly seek mechanisms that improve teaching quality, strengthen teacher professionalism, and enhance student learning outcomes. International research indicates that contemporary evaluation systems have gradually moved away from traditional accountability-oriented models toward more developmental approaches that emphasize professional learning, feedback, and instructional improvement (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2023; OECD, 2024). Within this perspective, evaluation is not considered merely a mechanism for judging teacher performance but rather a structured process that supports reflection, collaboration, and continuous professional development.

Recent educational policy literature highlights that effective teacher evaluation requires a balance between accountability

and improvement. Evaluation systems that focus exclusively on monitoring, ranking, or administrative control may generate resistance among teachers and weaken professional trust, whereas systems that incorporate formative feedback and developmental opportunities are more likely to promote teacher engagement and instructional improvement (OECD, 2020; Darling-Hammond, 2023). Consequently, international reforms increasingly attempt to combine summative evaluation requirements with formative practices that encourage teachers to examine and enhance their pedagogical approaches.

A central issue in contemporary research concerns the relationship between evaluation procedures and professional growth. Evidence suggests that evaluation does not automatically lead to improvement; rather, its effectiveness depends on the quality of feedback provided, the expertise of evaluators, and the existence of supportive professional cultures. Feedback-oriented evaluation systems are considered more effective because they provide teachers with specific information regarding their instructional practices and create opportunities for targeted learning activities (Kraft & Christian, 2022). Their study demonstrated that evaluator preparation significantly affects the quality of feedback, indicating that technical procedures alone are insufficient without appropriate evaluator competence.

Another important trend in the international literature is the increasing emphasis on teacher professionalism and agency. Modern approaches recognize teachers as active participants in evaluation processes rather than passive recipients of external judgments. This perspective suggests that successful evaluation systems should encourage dialogue, self-reflection, and collaboration between teachers and evaluators (Darling-Hammond, 2023). Therefore, trust and professional relationships become essential conditions for ensuring that evaluation contributes to improvement rather than becoming a source of anxiety or resistance.

Despite these developments, significant tensions remain regarding the purposes and consequences of teacher evaluation. A continuing debate concerns whether evaluation should primarily serve accountability functions or professional development goals. Research conducted in different educational contexts demonstrates that high-stakes accountability approaches may increase compliance but do not necessarily improve teaching quality, particularly when teachers perceive evaluation as punitive or disconnected from professional learning opportunities (OECD, 2020; Kraft & Christian, 2022). Conversely, developmental approaches may enhance teacher engagement but require substantial investment in training, leadership capacity, and institutional support.

Therefore, current international evidence suggests that teacher evaluation should be understood as a complex organizational process influenced by policy design,

leadership practices, evaluator competence, teacher perceptions, and school culture. Although evaluation has become a widespread educational reform strategy, its effectiveness depends largely on how it is implemented within specific national and institutional contexts.

School Leadership and the Implementation of Teacher Evaluation

School leadership is internationally recognized as a decisive factor in the successful implementation of educational reforms, including teacher evaluation systems. Contemporary research emphasizes that school principals are not simply administrative implementers of centrally designed policies; rather, they act as key mediators who interpret, negotiate, and translate educational reforms into school-level practices (Grissom et al., 2021; Leithwood et al., 2020). In the case of teacher evaluation, this mediating role becomes particularly important because principals are responsible for organizing evaluation procedures, conducting observations, providing professional feedback, and ensuring that evaluation contributes to instructional improvement.

The theoretical foundation of this perspective is strongly connected with instructional leadership theory, which positions school leaders as central actors in improving teaching and learning processes. According to Hallinger (2020), instructional leadership involves the active involvement of principals in defining educational goals, monitoring teaching practices, supporting teacher development, and promoting conditions that enhance student learning. Within teacher evaluation systems, instructional leadership implies that principals should move beyond administrative compliance and use evaluation as a mechanism for identifying professional learning needs and strengthening instructional capacity.

Recent empirical research indicates that the effectiveness of teacher evaluation depends considerably on principals’ professional knowledge, leadership competencies, and understanding of evaluation purposes. Grissom et al. (2021) demonstrated that principals influence school effectiveness through multiple pathways, including instructional guidance, teacher support, and the development of professional cultures. Similarly, Leithwood et al. (2020) emphasized that successful school leadership is associated with the ability of leaders to create shared goals, build collaborative relationships, and support teachers’ professional learning. These findings suggest that evaluation systems cannot function effectively without leadership capacity capable of connecting assessment procedures with improvement processes.

A major issue identified in the literature concerns the preparation of school leaders as evaluators. Although principals are frequently assigned responsibility for teacher evaluation, many education systems provide limited opportunities for developing evaluation-related

competencies. Kraft and Christian (2022) found that administrator training significantly influences the quality of feedback provided to teachers, indicating that evaluators require specific preparation in classroom observation, evidence interpretation, and feedback communication. Without such preparation, evaluation practices may become inconsistent, subjective, or focused mainly on procedural requirements rather than meaningful professional improvement.

Leadership style also affects how teacher evaluation is perceived and implemented within schools. Distributed and participatory leadership approaches emphasize collaboration, teacher involvement, and shared responsibility in decision-making processes. These approaches are associated with stronger professional relationships and greater acceptance of educational reforms because teachers perceive themselves as active participants rather than passive recipients of policy decisions (Bush & Glover, 2021). Conversely, leadership approaches based primarily on hierarchy, supervision, and control may strengthen perceptions of evaluation as an accountability mechanism and increase resistance among teachers.

Trust constitutes another fundamental element connecting school leadership with successful evaluation implementation. Research on school improvement consistently shows that teachers’ acceptance of reform initiatives depends strongly on their perceptions of fairness, transparency, and the intentions of school leaders (Bryk et al., 2021). When principals establish professional trust and communicate clearly about the purposes of evaluation, teachers are more likely to interpret evaluation as supportive rather than threatening. Therefore, leadership practices influence not only the technical implementation of evaluation but also the social and emotional conditions surrounding the reform.

International evidence further highlights the complexity of principals’ responsibilities during evaluation reforms. School leaders are expected to perform multiple roles simultaneously, acting as administrators, instructional leaders, evaluators, and supporters of teacher development. This combination of responsibilities may create significant challenges, particularly when evaluation systems involve extensive documentation and procedural demands. The OECD (2023) has emphasized that excessive administrative responsibilities can limit principals’ ability to focus on instructional leadership and reduce the developmental potential of evaluation processes.

The relationship between leadership capacity and evaluation effectiveness is particularly relevant in education systems undergoing major policy transitions. The OECD (2024) notes that successful educational reforms require investment in leadership preparation, professional learning opportunities, and institutional support structures. When reforms introduce new responsibilities without adequate preparation, school

leaders may experience uncertainty and may rely on informal practices rather than evidence-based approaches. Consequently, leadership development should be considered an essential component of any teacher evaluation reform.

The international literature also indicates that school context influences how principals implement evaluation policies. Factors such as school autonomy, organizational culture, professional relationships, and stakeholder involvement shape the interpretation and application of evaluation frameworks (Leithwood et al., 2020; OECD, 2023). Therefore, evaluation systems cannot be examined independently from the broader educational environment in which they operate.

The Greek context provides an important example of these challenges. The implementation of Law 4823/2021 introduced a new framework for individual teacher evaluation and assigned school principals a central role in the evaluation process. However, this reform has been introduced in a system where formal teacher evaluation had remained limited for many years, creating challenges related to leadership preparation, stakeholder acceptance, and implementation capacity. In such contexts, principals’ perceptions and experiences become essential indicators for understanding whether evaluation reforms can achieve their intended developmental objectives.

The present study addresses this research gap by examining the role of primary school principals in implementing individual teacher evaluation within the framework of Law 4823/2021. Specifically, it investigates principals’ training experiences, evaluation practices, knowledge of the legislative framework, perceptions of necessary conditions for effective implementation, and factors influencing their attitudes toward evaluation. By focusing on school leaders as central actors in educational policy implementation, the study contributes to the broader international discussion regarding the relationship between leadership capacity and the effectiveness of teacher evaluation systems.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study employed a quantitative research design in order to investigate primary school principals’ perceptions regarding the implementation of individual teacher evaluation within the framework of Law 4823/2021 in Greece. A quantitative approach was selected because it enables the systematic measurement of participants’ perceptions, experiences, and attitudes and allows the examination of relationships between variables through statistical analysis. The study followed a cross-sectional survey design, as data were collected from participants at a specific period of time without experimental manipulation.

The research focused on school principals as key actors in the implementation process of teacher evaluation. This methodological choice was based on the assumption that

principals occupy a central position between educational policy and school practice, since they are responsible for implementing evaluation procedures, providing feedback, and supporting teacher professional development

Sample and Participants

The target population of the study consisted of primary school principals working in public primary education schools in Greece. The final sample included 83 school principals who voluntarily participated in the study.

Regarding demographic characteristics, 38 participants were male and 45 were female. The mean age of participants was 54 years, while their average teaching experience was approximately 26 years. Participants had an average of six years of experience as school principals. The majority were general and special education teachers before assuming leadership positions and possessed postgraduate qualifications.

The participating principals worked in primary schools located mainly in urban and semi-urban areas, with an average student population of approximately 150 pupils per school.

A convenience sampling strategy was employed, as participation depended on the availability and willingness of school principals to respond to the research instrument. Although convenience sampling may limit the generalizability of findings, it is commonly used in educational research when access to the entire population is difficult. The sample was considered appropriate for the exploratory purpose of the study, which aimed to examine principals’ perceptions and identify factors associated with their attitudes toward teacher evaluation.

Participation was voluntary, and participants were informed about the purpose of the study, the confidentiality of their responses, and their right to withdraw at any stage. No personal identifying information was collected.

Instruments and Procedures

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire specifically developed for the purposes of the study. The questionnaire was designed based on the international literature on teacher evaluation, educational leadership, and policy implementation, while also incorporating the specific characteristics of the Greek legislative framework introduced by Law 4823/2021.

The questionnaire consisted of four main sections:

(a) Demographic and professional characteristics.

This section collected information regarding participants’ gender, age, teaching experience, years of service as school principals, educational qualifications, school location, and school size.

(b) Training and experience in teacher evaluation.

Participants were asked whether they had received formal training related to teacher evaluation, the institution providing

such training, whether they had evaluated teachers during the previous two years, and the number of teachers evaluated.

(c) Knowledge and perceptions of the legislative framework. Participants evaluated their knowledge of the legislative framework governing teacher evaluation, their familiarity with Law 4823/2021, and their perceptions regarding the adequacy of information provided by educational authorities. These items were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (“not at all”) to 5 (“very much”).

(d) Attitudes toward teacher evaluation and conditions for effective implementation.

This section examined principals’ perceptions regarding the prerequisites for successful evaluation implementation, including evaluator training, teacher acceptance, collaboration, school autonomy, and leadership conditions. Items were measured using five-point Likert-type scales.

The questionnaire was administered electronically. Data collection was conducted during the academic year 2025. Before completing the questionnaire, participants received information regarding the objectives of the research and provided informed consent.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using quantitative statistical methods. Initially, descriptive statistics were calculated to summarize participants’ demographic characteristics and responses to questionnaire items. Frequencies and percentages were used for categorical variables, while means (M) and standard deviations (SD) were calculated for continuous variables and Likert-scale responses.

To examine principals’ perceptions regarding teacher evaluation, mean scores were calculated for the individual questionnaire dimensions, including knowledge of the legislative framework, perceived prerequisites for effective evaluation, and attitudes toward evaluation.

Furthermore, inferential statistical analyses were conducted to investigate relationships between variables and identify predictors of principals’ attitudes toward teacher evaluation. Specifically, a multiple linear regression analysis was performed, with **principals’ attitudes toward teacher evaluation** as the dependent variable. Independent variables included demographic characteristics, information technology competence, number of teachers evaluated during the previous two years, attitudes toward the legislative framework, and perceptions of evaluation methodology.

The regression model was evaluated using standardized regression coefficients (β), t-values, significance levels (p-values), and variance inflation factor (VIF) values to examine the contribution of each predictor and assess potential multicollinearity problems. The results indicated that evaluation methodology, information technology competence, attitudes toward the legislative framework, and previous evaluation experience were

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statistically significant predictors of principals’ attitudes toward teacher evaluation.

Statistical significance was determined at the $p < .05$ level. All statistical analyses were performed using appropriate statistical software.

RESULTS

TRAINING IN TEACHER EVALUATION

Regarding training in teacher evaluation, the findings indicate that the majority of school principals (57.83%, $N = 48$) had not received any form of relevant training. In contrast, 26.51% ($N = 22$) reported having participated in training programs provided by the Ministry of Education, while 15.66% ($N = 13$) indicated that they had received training from other institutions or organizations

Table 1. Training in Evaluation

Category	N	%
No	48	57,83
Ministry of education	22	26,51
Other	13	15,66

EXPERIENCE IN TEACHER EVALUATION

This section presents school principals’ responses regarding their experience in teacher evaluation. The findings indicate that 69.88% ($N = 58$) of the participants had evaluated one or more teachers during the previous two years, whereas 30.12% ($N = 25$) reported no relevant evaluation experience.

Table 2. Experience in Teacher Evaluation

Categorical Variable	category	N	%
Evaluation of at least one teacher within the last two years	No	25	30,12
	Yes	58	69,88
Reason for non-evaluation of teachers in the last two years	Participation in Strike or Work Abstention	4	21,05
	Abstention	15	78,95
	Evaluated teacher’s participation in strike or work abstention		
Quantitative Variable	min-max	M.O.	T.A.
Number of evaluated teachers	0-15	3,49	3,65

KNOWLEDGE OF THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHER EVALUATION

The participating school principals reported a high level of knowledge regarding the legislative framework governing teacher evaluation ($M = 3.61$, $SD = 0.96$). They also indicated that they were fairly well informed about the provisions of

Law 4823/2021 concerning teacher evaluation ($M = 3.19$, $SD = 1.09$). However, they expressed the view that the Ministry of Education has made limited efforts to adequately inform teachers about the new evaluation system ($M = 2.29$, $SD = 1.01$).

Table 3. Knowledge of the Legislative Framework for Teacher Evaluation

Question	min.	max.	M.O.	T.A.
1. Knowledge of the legislative framework for teacher evaluation	1	5	3,61	0,96
2. Knowledge of the provisions of Law 4823/2021 on teacher evaluation	1	5	3,19	1,09
3. Adequacy of information from competent authorities on the implementation of the evaluation system (Law 4823/2021)	1	5	2,67	1,07
4. Adequacy of the Ministry of Education’s actions regarding teacher information on the new evaluation system	1	5	2,29	1,01

PREREQUISITES FOR EFFECTIVE EVALUATION

For the effective implementation of individual teacher evaluation conducted by the school principal, the participants identified several key prerequisites. School principals considered specialized training of evaluators in the evaluation process to be highly important ($M = 4.23$, $SD = 0.79$), along with the merit-based selection of school principals ($M = 4.11$, $SD = 0.90$). They also emphasized collegial relationships and

collaboration ($M = 4.08$, $SD = 0.89$), as well as ensuring the acceptance of the evaluation by the teachers being assessed ($M = 3.87$, $SD = 0.98$).

Furthermore, they highlighted the importance of substantial school autonomy ($M = 3.84$, $SD = 0.83$), the financial upgrading of school principals ($M = 3.82$, $SD = 1.09$), the equal participation of teachers in defining evaluation goals

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and criteria ($M = 3.73$, $SD = 1.18$), and the permanence/tenure of school principals ($M = 3.72$, $SD = 1.12$).

Table 4. Preconditions for effective evaluation

Question	min.	max.	M.O.	T.A.
The evaluator’s specialized training in the evaluation process is considered important for the effective implementation of individual teacher evaluation	2	5	4,23	0,79
Meritocratic selection of the school principal is considered important for the effective implementation of individual teacher evaluation by the principal	1	5	4,11	0,90
Collegial relations and cooperation are considered important for the effective implementation of individual teacher evaluation by the school principal	1	5	4,08	0,89
Securing teachers’ acceptance of the evaluation is important for the effective implementation of individual teacher evaluation by the school principal	1	5	3,87	0,98
Meaningful school autonomy is considered important for the effective implementation of individual teacher evaluation by the school principal	1	5	3,84	0,83
The improvement of school principals’ financial status is considered important for the effective implementation of individual teacher evaluation	1	5	3,82	1,09
Teachers’ equal participation in setting evaluation goals and criteria is considered important for the effective implementation of evaluation	1	5	3,73	1,18
The job security (tenure) of the school principal is considered important for the effective implementation of individual teacher evaluation	1	5	3,72	1,12

PRINCIPALS’ ATTITUDES TOWARD TEACHER EVALUATION

According to the results of the multiple linear regression analysis, with “Principals’ attitude toward evaluation” as the dependent variable, the variables that emerged as statistically significant predictors were “Information Technology” ($\beta =$

0.21, $t = 2.56$, $p = 0.013$), the “number of teachers evaluated in the last two years” ($\beta = 0.16$, $t = 2.17$, $p = 0.034$), “attitude toward the legislative framework for evaluation” ($\beta = 0.20$, $t = 2.22$, $p = 0.030$), and “evaluation methodology” ($\beta = 0.59$, $t = 5.16$, $p < 0.001$).

Table 5. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis (Dependent Variable: Principals’ Attitudes Toward Teacher Evaluation)

Independent	B	Beta	t	P-value	VIF
Intercept	0,05	-	0,12	0,909	-
IT	0,98	0,21	2,56	0,013	1,45
Urban school setting	0,26	0,15	1,92	0,059	1,26
Second degree	0,19	0,09	1,14	0,259	1,37
Ministry of Education	-0,11	-0,05	-0,59	0,554	1,78
Number of evaluated teachers (last two years)	0,04	0,16	2,17	0,034	1,24
Trade union support for individual teacher evaluation	-0,05	-0,07	-0,84	0,407	1,39
Knowledge of the legislative framework for teacher evaluation	0,20	0,16	1,53	0,131	2,52
Attitude toward the legislative framework for teacher evaluation	0,22	0,20	2,22	0,030	1,71
Suitability of evaluation authorities	-0,13	-0,10	-1,16	0,249	1,77
Accessibility of the evaluation authorities	0,01	0,01	0,10	0,920	1,85
Key evaluation criteria	0,06	0,06	0,60	0,549	2,44
Significance of incentives in evaluation	0,09	0,11	1,30	0,198	1,44
Evaluation methodology	0,64	0,59	5,16	<0,001	2,79
Evaluation objectives	-0,14	-0,15	-1,70	0,093	1,80

DISCUSSION

The findings of the present study provide important insights into the implementation of individual teacher evaluation within the framework of Law 4823/2021 and contribute to the broader international discussion regarding the relationship between educational reform, school leadership, evaluator preparation, and professional learning. The results indicate that the implementation of teacher evaluation in Greek primary education is not determined exclusively by the existence of a legislative framework but is also shaped by organizational conditions, leadership capacity, professional beliefs, and the extent to which evaluation is perceived as meaningful by educational actors.

A first important finding concerns the limited participation of school principals in formal training related to teacher evaluation. More than half of the participants reported that they had not received specialized training, despite being responsible for implementing evaluation procedures. This finding reflects an international challenge identified in recent research: educational systems frequently introduce evaluation reforms without ensuring that evaluators possess the necessary knowledge and skills to conduct reliable and developmental evaluations. The OECD (2020) emphasizes that effective teacher appraisal systems require investment in evaluator competence, professional learning, and institutional support. Similarly, the European Commission (2021) highlights that strengthening teacher professionalism depends on coherent policies that connect evaluation with continuous professional development rather than treating appraisal as an isolated administrative procedure.

The lack of systematic preparation identified in the present study may have implications for the consistency and credibility of evaluation practices. International evidence indicates that evaluator expertise is essential because the quality of evaluation depends not only on formal criteria but also on the ability of evaluators to observe teaching practices, interpret evidence, and provide constructive feedback (Kraft & Christian, 2022). Therefore, the findings suggest that the successful implementation of Law 4823/2021 requires the development of structured training programs for school principals that combine theoretical knowledge of evaluation with practical skills related to classroom observation and professional dialogue.

Despite the limited formal training, participants demonstrated relatively high levels of knowledge regarding the legislative framework of teacher evaluation and the provisions of Law 4823/2021. This finding suggests that principals have actively engaged with the regulatory aspects of the reform, probably because of their direct responsibility for implementation. However, knowledge of legal requirements should not be confused with comprehensive evaluation competence. Contemporary literature distinguishes between procedural knowledge, which concerns understanding rules and

processes, and professional evaluation competence, which involves the ability to use assessment information for improvement purposes (Darling-Hammond, 2023). Consequently, although Greek principals appear familiar with the legislative framework, further support may be required to transform regulatory knowledge into effective instructional leadership practices.

Another significant finding concerns principals’ practical experience with teacher evaluation. Most participants had evaluated at least one teacher during the previous two years, although the average number of evaluated teachers remained relatively limited. This finding reflects the transitional nature of teacher evaluation implementation in Greece following the introduction of Law 4823/2021. Educational reforms often require time before becoming fully embedded within institutional routines, particularly in contexts where previous evaluation mechanisms have been absent or contested. Policy implementation research demonstrates that reforms are interpreted and adapted by practitioners, and their success depends largely on the capacity and willingness of local actors to incorporate new practices into everyday professional activity (Honig, 2020).

The finding that teacher participation in strike or work abstention actions represented a barrier to evaluation reflects broader tensions surrounding teacher appraisal in Greece. Resistance to evaluation has been documented internationally, particularly when teachers perceive evaluation systems as mechanisms of surveillance, control, or external accountability rather than opportunities for professional development. Research indicates that acceptance depends strongly on trust, transparency, perceived fairness, and the extent to which teachers understand the purpose of evaluation (Darling-Hammond, 2023). Therefore, resistance should be interpreted not simply as opposition to reform but also as an indication of unresolved concerns regarding legitimacy, implementation procedures, and professional autonomy.

The present study also revealed that principals perceive the evaluation process as highly bureaucratic. This finding corresponds with international concerns that excessive administrative requirements may undermine the developmental purpose of evaluation. The OECD (2020) has noted that evaluation systems can lose their educational value when they become dominated by documentation, compliance procedures, and accountability demands. This issue is particularly relevant for school principals, who already face multiple administrative responsibilities alongside their instructional leadership role. Excessive bureaucratic demands may reduce the time available for meaningful feedback, mentoring, and professional support for teachers.

A further important finding relates to principals’ perceptions regarding communication and information provided by educational authorities. Participants expressed concerns

about the adequacy of information available to teachers concerning the new evaluation system. This result aligns with international evidence emphasizing that successful educational reforms require effective communication strategies, stakeholder engagement, and opportunities for dialogue (European Commission, 2021). When reforms are introduced without sufficient explanation regarding objectives, procedures, and expected outcomes, uncertainty may increase and acceptance may decrease among educators. The regression analysis provided additional evidence regarding the factors influencing principals’ attitudes toward teacher evaluation. The strongest predictor was evaluation methodology, indicating that principals’ acceptance of evaluation depends substantially on how evaluation procedures are designed and implemented. This finding is consistent with research demonstrating that teachers and evaluators are more likely to support evaluation systems when they perceive them as fair, transparent, and connected to improvement rather than punishment (Kraft & Christian, 2022). The importance of methodology suggests that policy effectiveness depends not only on establishing evaluation criteria but also on designing procedures that are educationally meaningful and practically feasible.

The number of teachers evaluated during the previous two years also emerged as a significant predictor of principals’ attitudes. This finding indicates that practical experience contributes to the development of more informed perspectives regarding evaluation. Familiarity with evaluation procedures may reduce uncertainty and increase confidence among school leaders. This interpretation is consistent with research on educational change, which highlights that successful implementation requires opportunities for practitioners to gain experience, reflect on practice, and develop ownership of reforms (Leithwood et al., 2020).

Furthermore, principals’ attitudes toward the legislative framework significantly predicted their overall attitudes toward evaluation. This result highlights the importance of policy legitimacy and institutional trust. Educational reforms are more likely to succeed when school leaders perceive them as meaningful and compatible with educational values. Conversely, when leaders question the purpose or design of reforms, implementation may become primarily procedural rather than transformative (OECD, 2023).

The present study contributes to the international literature by focusing on school principals as central actors in teacher evaluation implementation. While previous studies have extensively examined teachers’ perceptions of appraisal systems, fewer studies have investigated the experiences of those responsible for conducting evaluations. By examining principals’ training, knowledge, experience, and attitudes, this research provides empirical evidence regarding the

conditions necessary for implementing teacher evaluation reforms effectively.

From a practical perspective, the findings indicate several important implications. First, educational authorities should prioritize systematic evaluator training before assigning formal evaluation responsibilities to school leaders. Second, evaluation systems should reduce unnecessary administrative complexity and emphasize professional dialogue, feedback, and improvement. Third, communication strategies should be strengthened to enhance understanding and acceptance among teachers and principals. Finally, policymakers should recognize that successful evaluation depends not only on legislative design but also on leadership capacity, professional trust, and organizational readiness.

Overall, the study demonstrates that teacher evaluation in Greek primary education represents a complex process influenced by institutional, professional, and contextual factors. The effectiveness of Law 4823/2021 will depend not only on the existence of formal procedures but also on the extent to which school principals are adequately prepared and supported to transform evaluation into a meaningful mechanism for professional learning and educational improvement.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The present study examined primary school principals’ perceptions and practices regarding the implementation of individual teacher evaluation within the framework of Law 4823/2021. The findings demonstrate that teacher evaluation remains a complex and demanding process within the Greek educational system, shaped by institutional, procedural, and contextual conditions. Although the introduction of a formal evaluation framework represents an important policy development, its effective implementation depends largely on the readiness, knowledge, and support provided to the actors responsible for applying it at school level.

A first important conclusion concerns the preparation of school principals for their role as evaluators. The majority of participants reported that they had not received formal training in teacher evaluation, while those who had participated in relevant training mainly received it through the Ministry of Education. This finding highlights a significant need for systematic and continuous professional development programs aimed at strengthening principals’ evaluation competencies. Effective implementation requires not only familiarity with legal requirements but also practical skills related to observation, feedback provision, communication, and the promotion of teacher professional learning.

Regarding evaluation experience, most principals had evaluated at least one teacher during the previous two years, although the overall number of evaluated teachers

remained relatively limited. Participants who had not conducted evaluations identified teachers’ participation in strike or work abstention actions as the main reason. This finding illustrates that the implementation of teacher evaluation in Greece continues to be influenced by broader professional and social dynamics surrounding educational reform. Therefore, acceptance and sustainability of evaluation systems require the development of trust, dialogue, and shared understanding among all stakeholders.

The study also revealed that principals possessed a relatively high level of knowledge regarding the legislative framework governing teacher evaluation and reported familiarity with the provisions of Law 4823/2021. However, they expressed concerns regarding the adequacy of information provided to teachers by educational authorities. This suggests that while school leaders have engaged with the formal requirements of the reform, communication strategies toward teachers may require further improvement. Clear and consistent information regarding the objectives, procedures, and developmental purposes of evaluation is essential for reducing uncertainty and strengthening acceptance.

Another significant conclusion concerns the organizational challenges associated with the evaluation process. Participants perceived teacher evaluation as highly bureaucratic, with administrative demands affecting both principals and teachers, although the burden appeared particularly pronounced for school leaders. This finding indicates the need for procedural simplification and greater emphasis on the formative dimension of evaluation. If evaluation becomes dominated by documentation and compliance requirements, its potential contribution to professional improvement may be weakened.

The results of the regression analysis further demonstrate that principals’ attitudes toward teacher evaluation are influenced by specific factors, particularly perceptions of evaluation methodology, previous evaluation experience, and attitudes toward the legislative framework. These findings highlight that the acceptance of evaluation reforms depends not only on the existence of legal provisions but also on how evaluation procedures are designed, experienced, and interpreted by educational leaders. Evaluation systems that are perceived as transparent, meaningful, and connected to professional development are more likely to gain support among school practitioners.

The findings have several implications for educational policy and practice. First, educational authorities should establish structured preparation programs for school principals before and during the implementation of evaluation reforms. Such programs should move beyond legislative information and focus on developing practical evaluation competencies. Second, policy communication should be strengthened through continuous dialogue with teachers and school leaders in order to increase understanding and

legitimacy of evaluation procedures. Third, evaluation frameworks should be reviewed periodically to reduce unnecessary bureaucracy and ensure that the process maintains a strong developmental orientation.

The present study also contributes to the existing literature by providing empirical evidence regarding the perspectives of school principals, who represent key actors in translating educational policy into school practice. While much previous research has focused on teachers’ attitudes toward evaluation, fewer studies have examined the experiences and challenges of principals responsible for implementation. By highlighting the importance of leadership preparation, institutional support, and evaluation design, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of the conditions required for successful educational reform.

Nevertheless, some limitations should be acknowledged. The study was based on a relatively limited sample of primary school principals and employed a quantitative self-report methodology, which may restrict the generalizability and depth of interpretation of the findings. Future research could include larger samples from different educational regions and levels, as well as qualitative approaches involving interviews or focus groups with principals, teachers, and educational policymakers. Such studies could provide deeper insights into the experiences, challenges, and meanings associated with teacher evaluation implementation.

Further longitudinal research would also be valuable in examining how perceptions and practices evolve as the evaluation system becomes more established. Future studies could investigate whether increased experience, improved training opportunities, and organizational adjustments contribute to greater acceptance and effectiveness of teacher evaluation over time.

In conclusion, the study demonstrates that the successful implementation of individual teacher evaluation in Greek primary education requires more than the establishment of a legislative framework. It requires adequately prepared school leaders, effective communication mechanisms, reduced administrative complexity, and a culture of trust and professional improvement. Under these conditions, teacher evaluation has the potential to move beyond an accountability mechanism and become a meaningful process supporting teacher development and educational quality improvement.

Suggestions for Future Research

Future research should further investigate the implementation of teacher evaluation in different educational contexts and examine how evaluation systems evolve over time. Since the present study focused exclusively on primary school principals’ perspectives, subsequent studies could incorporate the views of teachers, educational advisors, policymakers, and other stakeholders involved in the

evaluation process. A broader examination of different perspectives would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors that facilitate or hinder the successful implementation of teacher evaluation reforms. Further research could also employ qualitative methodologies, such as semi-structured interviews, focus groups, and case studies, in order to explore in greater depth the experiences, concerns, and expectations of educational actors. Such approaches could reveal underlying factors related to trust, professional identity, resistance, and acceptance that cannot be fully captured through quantitative measures alone.

Longitudinal studies are also recommended to examine how principals’ attitudes and practices change as the implementation of Law 4823/2021 becomes more established. Future investigations could explore whether continuous professional development, increased evaluation experience, and institutional support contribute to improved confidence among evaluators and greater acceptance among teachers.

Additionally, comparative studies between different regions of Greece and between different educational systems could provide valuable insights into how contextual factors influence teacher evaluation practices. Research examining the relationship between evaluation procedures and broader educational outcomes, such as teacher professional development, school improvement, and student achievement, would further contribute to understanding the long-term effectiveness of evaluation policies.

Finally, future research should explore alternative approaches to teacher evaluation that place greater emphasis on formative feedback, collaboration, and professional learning. Investigating models that successfully balance accountability with teacher development could support the design of more effective and sustainable evaluation frameworks.

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