

Teacher's Self-Assessment Rubrics A Tool for Reflective Practices in Teaching

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Abstract

Teachers play a crucial role in the educational process. Various studies have proven their impact on ensuring quality education and more specifically, students' learning outcomes. The various issues and challenges in preparing and sustaining the quality of teachers through appropriate teacher preparation programmes have been a much discussed area in research and policy documents. Ensuring and sustaining a quality teacher requires a mechanism to reflect, assess and improve the teacher's performance. In this regard, the National Policy on Education 1986 (NPE) highlighted the need for a data-based, open, transparent and participatory teacher appraisal system as a part of the professional development programme for teachers. Justice Verma Commission (JVC) report (2012) recommended the need for the development of a coherent system of teacher appraisal systems. Based on the recommendation of the Justice Verma Commission, the Government of India entrusted the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) to develop a tool for assessing the performance of teachers. Accordingly, in the year 2013, NCERT developed a tool titled Performance Indicators for Elementary School Teachers (PINDICS). Later on, to cater to the needs of teachers working at various stages of school education as well as subjects, the council further developed a tool namely Teacher's Self-Assessment Rubrics (TSAR) for the use of teachers working at different levels.

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How to use TSAR for teachers as a self-assessment tool is the major discussion point in this paper. Once the teacher submits the self-assessment report, how the other senior officers, such as Principal/Head Teacher, CRCC, BRCC, etc., can be used the same for the purpose of the improvement of school education in general, and student learning in particular has also been narrated through appropriate examples. Specifically, the paper describes the ways in which assessments of teacher performance using TSAR can help in reflecting on the teaching learning process as well as a means for the organisation of a continuing professional development programme for teachers.

INTRODUCTION

The report titled 'Education for National Development' submitted by the Indian Education Commission (1964–66) chaired by D. S. Kothari emphasised that, "The destiny of India is now being shaped in its classrooms. This, we believe, is no mere rhetoric. In a world based on science and technology, it is education that determines the level of prosperity, welfare and security of the people. On the quality and number of people coming out of our schools and colleges will depend our success in the great enterprise of national reconstruction, the principal objective of which is to raise the standard of living of our people" (*Indian Education Commission Report*, Para 1.01, P2. 1966). Since independence, our government has given priority to the education sector. Various flagship programmes have been initiated by the government to improve the education of our future generation. District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), and Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) are some of these initiatives undertaken by our government to ensure quality school education.

Most of these programmes initially gave emphasis to universal access and retention. The important objective of these programmes, viz., providing quality education, is still under criticism, debate and discussion in our country.

If we go back to the quotes from the Kothari Commission, the very next question that comes to our mind is 'Who is shaping the destiny of our classroom?' The answer is crystal clear and the responsibility we owe to the teachers. On the other hand, the criticism of failure to ensure quality school education under the above-mentioned schemes also points towards teachers. Are teachers alone responsible for this? Definitely, no, there are, of course, some other factors. But there are empirical studies which report that the quality of teachers significantly influences the achievement and the performance of children [Rockof (2004), Hanushek and Rivkin (2012), Aaronson, Barrow and Sander (2006), Slater, Davies and Burgess (2012), Leigh (2010)]. These studies have been reported from western nations and from developed countries. Generalisation of these

findings to the Indian context may be considered with the condition that the quality of teacher will definitely have an impact on student performance, whatever other factors may be.

CONTEXT

In this context, the recommendations of the JVC report (2012) need to be highlighted. While discussing the present system of teacher appraisal in India, JVC report mentions that different states and institutions utilise approaches, procedures, and instrumentalities like writing of annual confidential and performance reports of teachers at the supervisory level, lesson observation and feedback by supervisor and principal, school inspection, linking teacher performance with performance of students in examinations including board examinations, assessment based on achievement of students vis-a-vis pre-fixed targets, etc. While talking about the quality of teachers in our country, the commission suggested the importance of creating a mechanism for organising teacher audit and performance. The commission reviewed the existing system of teacher appraisal in the country and suggested guiding principles and framework for constructing teacher appraisal.

A similar observation was made earlier by different commissions and educational committees in India. They have expressed a need for effective teacher appraisal in schools. Based on JVC recommendation, the Ministry of Education (then Ministry of Human

Resource Development), Government of India, has entrusted the responsibility of developing the teacher performance assessment tool for elementary school teachers to NCERT and subsequently developed the tool titled Performance Indicators (PINDICS) during 2013. The document includes brief guidelines for the teachers, Head Teachers, Supervisors, and Administrators such as CRC, BRC or DIET officials about the tool, its administration, scoring and further use. The second part of the document consists of the tool for teacher assessment in the form of a rating scale. It consists of 7 performance standards (PS), 13 specific standards and 54 performance indicators. The 21 states or UTs have been using the PINDICS since 2014–15 for teacher assessment at elementary level, either by adapting or through adopting and translating into the regional language.

Teacher's Self-Assessment Rubrics (TSAR)

PINDICS as a Teacher-Assessment Tool was designed in such a manner that the supervisory personnel at CRC, BRC or other levels could use it for assessing the performance of teachers and supporting them through appropriate teacher development programmes by teachers using it as a self-assessment tool for reflection of their practice. It was developed specifically for elementary stage teachers, but later on the need for self-assessment of teachers at all the stages was felt. Therefore, a tool including guidelines for the

self-assessment of teachers' performance titled 'Teacher's Self-Assessment Rubrics (TSAR)' was developed with the intention of using it for teachers working at all the stages of school education for assessing their own performance based on their expected roles and responsibilities (NCERT, 2019).

This tool was intended to identify the areas of strength and challenges of a teacher when they perform their duties and later on to facilitate them to enrich the teaching-learning process.

A series of workshops were organised for finalising the TSAR along with the guidelines. Experts and stakeholders from different areas of school education were involved in these workshops. The draft tool along with the guidelines were presented in various academic forums and comments and suggestions from teachers' unions and state functionaries from SCERTs or SPDs, etc., were also considered while finalising the draft TSAR. The draft was then tried out with a sample of teachers from various states and different types of schools. The final draft was shared with States or UTs for implementation after adopting or adapting the same. Regional workshops were also organised to provide academic support to States or UTs.

TSAR consists of performance standards (PS), specific standards and performance indicators. Performance standards mean the broad areas in which teachers perform their tasks and responsibilities. Under each

performance standards, there are some specific tasks which are expected to be performed by the teachers. These are termed as specific standards. Under each specific standard, there are some specific activities which are expected to be performed by a teacher and they are coined as performance indicators. Each performance indicator has four different levels of performance in a continuum and the descriptors of the performance expectations for each level have also been developed. TSAR consists of six performance standards and 45 performance indicators.

Performance Standards (PS)

Performance standards communicate expectations for each responsibility area of the job performance by the teacher. These are very broad areas in which there are various activities to be done by the teacher.

TSAR includes the following performance standards:

- **PS1-Designing Learning Experiences for Children**

Proper planning is an essential component of the teaching process. The performance indicators under this standard include how teachers plan for designing various learning experiences, such as using textbooks and other relevant documents while planning, using records of students' performance while planning, etc.

- **PS2-Knowledge and Understanding of Subject Matter**

There is no doubt that the subject and pedagogical knowledge and

understanding is an essential pre-condition to becoming an effective teacher. Indicators under this standard consist of items such as ‘demonstrate content knowledge with conceptual clarity using appropriate examples’, ‘use(s) subject knowledge for making it responsive to the diverse needs of the children’, etc.

- **PS3-Strategies for Facilitating Learning**

Pedagogical practices adopted by the teacher are crucial as far as student performance is concerned. This performance standard consists of specific standards, such as ‘Enabling Learning Environment and Classroom Management’, ‘Learning Strategies and Activities’, ‘Communication skills’, and ‘Assessment and feedback’. Each specific standard under this consists of various performance activities of teachers.

- **PS4-Interpersonal Relationship**

School being a miniature society, consists of interaction between various peoples. The development of the school depends upon the relationship between various stakeholders. This performance standard consists of different items which reflect how teachers are related with students, colleagues, parents and to the community.

- **PS5-Professional Development**

Continuing professional development can be considered as a significant aspect of the

performance of a teacher. This standard includes how teachers are involved in self-study, participation in various in-service teaching education programmes, and engagement in innovative activities and research.

- **PS6-School Development**

The contribution to the improvement of their school is also considered as a very important responsibility of a teacher. This standard consists of various areas in which a teacher contributes to the organisation of different school activities.

Each performance standard includes performance indicators, which directly indicate the expected roles and responsibilities of teachers. A teacher’s performance was assessed on a continuum ranging from ‘much effort is needed to reach the expected standard’ to ‘beyond the expected standard’. The subdivisions in this continuum were based on the actual performance of teachers, as per the different indicators specified under each performance standard.

The performance expectations under each level of performance have been described in terms of performance descriptors. These were observable and measurable statements of teachers’ actions, aligned to each performance indicator. They serve as the basis for identifying the level of performance.

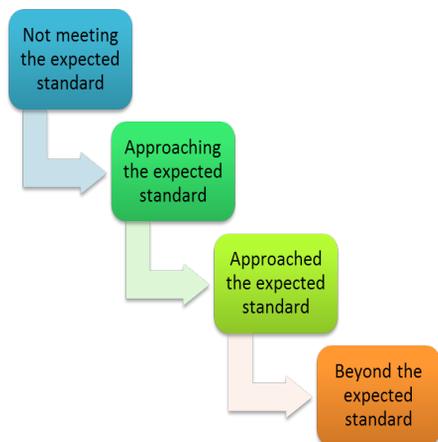


Fig. 1: Four Levels of Performance

Use of TSAR

TSAR can be used by teachers themselves for assessing their own performance and to make continuous efforts to reach the highest level. This tool can be used by teachers voluntarily, as a resource to guide their thinking, as they would be able to reflect on their instructional practices, including their areas of strength, the scope for growth as well as available and desired support.

The TSAR is for all teachers across the stages as envisaged in the NEP, 2020, i.e., Foundational, Preparatory, Middle and Secondary. Teachers at each of these stages can assess their performance as per the expectations and requirements of the stage and also their competencies, preparation and efforts to address these expectations and requirements. The TSAR is an assessment tool which serves as a guide for teachers to self-assess themselves and reflect on their daily

teaching practices as well as on their role as a teacher. This can also be used for teacher appraisal by the supervisory staff or mentor to assess and to provide constructive feedback for the improvement of a teacher's performance.

Assessment and Feedback Using TSAR

- **By Teacher:** Based on the assessment of TSAR, teacher has to prepare a self-assessment report highlighting the points that he or she feels satisfied with and the areas in which they need help for improvement.
- **By Head Teacher or Principal:** Based on the profile emerging from teachers' self-assessment and observation, Head Teacher or Principal has to prepare a report on the teacher's performance in various performance standards. Also, plan action points for improving their performance. The same could be forwarded to CRC, BRC or DIET.
- **CRC, BRC or DIET** has to compile the performance of every teacher on the Teacher Performance Sheet based on feedback of teachers and head teacher or supervisory staff.
- **Consolidation Sheet— CRC, BRC or DIET Level:** From the consolidated data, CRC, BRC or DIET has to identify the major standards, areas, themes, and how many teachers are under Level 1 and Level 2.

How to Utilise the Data for Teacher Improvement

The data collected from 50 teachers during the finalisation of the tool is given below for further explanation about how TSAR can be utilised effectively for teacher improvement. The purpose of TSAR and its importance were explained to those teachers and detailed guidelines were provided to these teachers before the administration of the TSAR. They were also briefed about reflective teaching and how reflection and introspection

about their own experience during teaching related activities could be used for self-development. They were also asked to be very honest while rating their performance at a particular level.

After completing the rating process, they were asked to complete the Teacher’s Performance Sheet given in the tool based on the rating they have given to various performance indicators. An exemplary sheet based on data provided by one of the teachers is given below:

**Table1
Sample Teacher’s Performance Sheet**

Performance Standards	Performance Indicators (Code)	Consolidated Rating of Teacher				Average (PS Wise) Total or No. of Indicators	Level of Performance
		L1(1)	L2(2)	L3(3)	L4(4)		
Designing Learning Experiences	1.1		2			12/5=2.4	L2
	1.2			3			
	1.3		2				
	1.4	1					
	1.5				4		
Knowledge and Understanding of Subject Matter	2.1		2			5/2=2.5	L3
	2.2			3			
Strategies for Facilitating Learning A: Creating Conducive Learning Environment	3A.1		2			19/7=2.7	L3
	3A.2			3			
	3A.3			3			
	3A.4		2				
	3A.5	1					
	3A.6				4		
	3A.7				4		

Strategies for Facilitating Learning B: Learning Strategies and Activities	3B.1		2			28/11=2.5	L3
	3B.2			3			
	3B.3			3			
	3B.4		2				
	3B.5				4		
	3B.6			3			
	3B.7	1					
	3B.8		2				
	3B.9			3			
	3B.10		2				
	3B.11			3			
Strategies for Facilitating Learning C: Communication Skills	3C.1		2			8/3=2.7	L3
	3C.2			3			
	3C.3			3			
Interpersonal Relationship	3D.1		2			7/3=2.3	L2
	3D.2		2				
	3D.3			3			
Professional Development	5.1			3		14/6=2.3	L2
	5.2				4		
	5.3			3			
	5.4		2				
	5.5	1					
	5.6	1					
School Development	6.1				4	18/5=3.6	L4
	6.2				4		
	6.3			3			
	6.4			3			
	6.5				4		

From the filled-in teacher’s performance sheet, it can be seen that the level of performance of the teacher is ‘approaching the expected standard with respect to the standards for designing learning experiences’, interpersonal relationship and professional development and, in the rest of the standards, the teacher has placed at the level of approached the standard. Based on the self-assessment report, the teacher has to prepare a descriptive report in the following format by highlighting the areas of strength, weakness and the support and improvement required.

One copy of the completed teacher’s self-assessment sheet and the

descriptive feedback were collected from each participating teachers. In actual practice, this has to be shared with the Head Teacher or Principal. After collecting the self-assessment report from all the teachers, the Head Teacher or Principal needs to forward the same to CRC, BRC (for elementary teachers) and DIET (for secondary and senior secondary teachers). CRC, BRC or DIET has to consolidate the data obtained from all the schools based on the stages and subjects (for upper primary teachers onwards) in a tabular form given below, for example, the data collected during the finalisation workshop has been consolidated in the following Table 3.

Table 2
Format for Descriptive Report to be Prepared by the Teacher

Performance Standards	Strengths	Challenges	Improvement Plan
Designing Learning Experiences			
Knowledge and Understanding of the Subject Matter			
Strategies for Facilitating Learning			
Interpersonal Relationship			
Professional Development			
School Development			

Table 3
A Sample Consolidation Sheet at CRC, BRC or DIET Level
Consolidation Sheet — Performance Standard

Year: 2020–21

Name of CRC, BRC or District: Finalisation Workshop

Total no. of Schools in the CRC, BRC or District: 28

Total no. of Teachers in the CRC, BRC or District: -----

Level (Primary, Upper Primary, Secondary or Senior Secondary): Secondary

Subject (in case of teachers at the Upper Primary Level and onwards): All Subjects

Performance Standards	Number of Teachers at Each Level			
	L1 (1)	L2 (2)	L3 (3)	L4 (4)
PS 1: Designing Learning Experiences	4	17	21	8
PS 2: Knowledge and Understanding of Subject Matter	6	14	19	11
PS 3: Strategies for Facilitating Learning A: Creating Conducive Learning Environment	7	16	17	10
PS 3: Strategies for Facilitating Learning B: Learning Strategies and Activities	6	16	20	8
PS 3: Strategies for Facilitating Learning C: Communication Skills	8	15	19	8
PS 3: Strategies for Facilitating Learning D: Assessment and Feedback	3	19	19	9
PS 4: Interpersonal Relationship	9	16	20	5
PS 5: Professional Development	4	20	19	7
PS 6: School Development	11	19	15	5

The data from Table 3 reveals that, at least 40 per cent teachers were placed under approaching the expected standard or not approached. The table also provides the performance standards in which most of the teachers were in the bottom two levels as well as the upper levels. The school development is the standard in which maximum numbers of teachers were placed either in L1 or L2. Hence, this consolidated sheet could be used for

identifying the needs of the majority of teachers based on their performance.

From the above consolidated sheet, it can be seen that under first performance standard designing learning experience, there are 4 teachers who have not yet approached the expected standards and 17 teachers who are approaching the standards. This comes around 42 per cent of teachers from during the finalisation workshop.

Whether they require orientation, guidance and support or not? Is it essential to plan learning activities in advance? Should the teacher need to utilise the student assessment data while planning or not? The teachers might have rated themselves under these categories because of some of the concerns or difficulty they might have faced during planning and designing activities. Definitely, these teachers require assistance by either planning appropriate in-service programmes at School, CRC or BRC level or with the help of DIET or other academic organisations or institutions.

In the case of CRC, BRC or DIET, this consolidated data sheet could be used to identify the major standards, areas, and themes in which majority of teachers are either weak or strong, and also to identify how many teachers are under Level 1 and Level 2, who require subsequent support and mentoring.

The areas in which a teacher requires further guidance and support can be analysed based on the teacher's performance table and consolidated sheet. Thus, this consolidated sheet will give the number of teachers under each performance level.

In this way, the sheet need to be utilised by CRC, BRC or DIET as a tool for training assessment needs. In order to finalise the themes or topics of in-service programmes as well as

selecting teachers for a particular programme may be done based on this consolidation table.

CONCLUSION

In most of the developed countries, teaching is considered as the best profession and accordingly, the best people come for this profession but in developing countries like India, it is just the reverse. Hence, the need of the hour is to improve the quality of our teachers by providing continuous support and guidance. In order to shape the destiny of our country, we require dedicated, committed, hardworking and accountable teachers. Instead of criticising the teaching community, what we can do is to provide them with support and constructive feedback for their development. TSAR may be considered as a bold step in this regard.

Teacher, School, CRC, BRC or DIET could use the TSAR as a tool for self-assessment as well as peer-assessment. As per the roles and responsibilities prescribed under the SSA Guideline, CRC and BRC are expected to provide academic support to the teachers. For one reason or the other, most of our CRCs and BRCs are not functional in this way. TSAR consolidation will help the CRC, BRC or DIET to identify the individual teacher's needs and requirements and accordingly, they can be provided support and guidance.

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