

# An Appraisal of the Teacher Appraisal System

**Dr. Purna Prabhakar Nandamuri,**

*Assistant Professor,  
ICFAI Business School (IBS),  
IFHE University, Hyderabad, India.  
purnapnandamuri@gmail.com;  
prabhakar.nandamuri@ibsindia.org;  
+919440661551.*

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*Abstract– It is widely believed in academics that what gets assessed is what gets taught. High quality teaching is essential to improve student outcomes. Therefore, teacher evaluation or appraisal is high on education agenda. The basic objective of this work is to critically appraise the prevailing teacher appraisal system at secondary level of schooling. This paper is an integral part of the doctoral dissertation – ‘A study of Management Practices of Secondary Schools’. The primary data was collected through self designed questionnaire from a stratified sample of 188 secondary schools – about 34% of the population in Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh in India. The findings reveal that no formal appraisal activity is practiced in public sector schools while a majority of the private unaided managements were implementing on their own. A strong association is observed between the type of school and the preference for an integrated teacher appraisal system.*

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*Keywords: Performance appraisal, Teacher appraisal system,  
Teacher evaluation, School based management, Quality of education.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Educating children eventually produces more educated adults, and many economists have suggested that this type of investment raises incomes in developing countries more than in others. This opinion is backed by Nobel prize-winning research (Schultz, 1989). Investment in human capital has caused economic growth in East Asia (McMahon, 1998). A year of education is associated with a 3 to 14% increase in wages and productivity in Sub-Saharan Africa (Simon, 2000). In Taiwan, it is found that rising education rates are positively correlated with growth since 1960 (Lin, 2003). In such a situation of priority given to education, simply investing in the system and letting it develop in its own way and produce the results as a natural output will not be the spirit of management. There must be some type of regulatory mechanism incorporated in the system itself for ensuring

the quality and efficiency of the system to ascertain the envisioned goals of the nation as well as the society.

Increasing demand for accountability of the education system is a worldwide phenomenon which is possible only when the teachers feel accountable for performance of the school and its students. Therefore, teacher evaluation or appraisal is high on education agenda. Years ago, schools and teachers were regularly inspected by the school inspector, whose range of duties included enforcing students and penalizing inefficiency, testing potential students for promotion, and mentoring teachers who needed advice or assistance to improve their teaching (Millikan, Beare and Caldwell, 1989). Seen more as a punitive practice then, the concept of inspection has been replaced by that of teacher appraisal which is underpinned by the philosophy that it is an opportunity for 'someone else' to comment on a teacher's work in a professional and thorough manner and should in all cases include formative and developmental consequences (Connors, 1990).

According to a research by Sanders and River (1996), on an average, two students with average performance (50th percentile) will diverge by more than 50 percentile points over a three year period depending on the teacher they were assigned. Education Commission of India, 1970-84 states that the quality, competence and character of teachers are the most significant factors influencing the quality of education. One of the best indicators of the status of education, as seen from the Dakar point of view, is a measure of how effective and child friendly are classroom processes. Guruprasad (2009) opines that even though there are numerous strategies and tools used to assess teacher performance in classrooms and redress the issues, many of these are not convenient enough to be used in today's classrooms, due to reasons such as large pupil-teacher ratios and shortage of trained professionals with specific inspection and monitoring skills. Linking the school improvement plan to the teacher appraisal process creates a system whereby all individuals are focused on the school's goals and each individual understands his or her part in achieving those goals (Reddekopp, 2007).

As per the modern school management practices followed around the world, every school is to develop a teacher appraisal process. Teachers in developing countries often face little administrative pressure to provide high quality educational instructions. Linking teacher pay to student performance has been suggested as a way of improving accountability of educational providers to local communities and improving education outcomes in schools, but the theoretical predictions regarding its effectiveness are ambiguous and the empirical evidence to date is limited and mixed. The study attempts to explore the teacher evaluation mechanism in the sample schools in terms of the prevailing system, the standards, comparison and communication of the results.

## **2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Karthik and Venkatesh(2009) found that teacher pay based on student performance was found to be highly effective at improving student learning. Nearly 75% of teachers in incentive schools reported that their motivation levels went up as a result of the program; over 95% had a favorable opinion about the program; over 85% had a favorable opinion regarding the idea of providing bonus payments to teachers on the basis of performance; and over two thirds of teachers felt that the government should consider implementing a system of bonus payments on the basis of performance.

The study concludes that performance-based bonus payments to teachers were a significantly more cost-effective way of increasing student test scores compared to spending a similar amount of money unconditionally on additional school inputs or extra teachers. However, Jain and Narayan's experiments (2009) showed that performance based pay which depends on the average of student's performance can cause teachers to coordinate their effort on high status students and away from low status students. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2009a) reviewed around 20 countries, including India, on how these countries evaluate teacher performance and provide rewards and incentives to motivate teachers. The report emphasizes that designing and implementing effective systems needs to be a gradual process that takes into consideration the needs of all the stakeholders and clarifies the objectives that it aims to achieve and concludes that no single model applies to all countries. The report provides answers to questions such as: i) what aspects of teacher performance should be rewarded, and how should performance be measured; ii) who should be rewarded- individuals, groups, or school; and iii) which reward mechanisms have proved successful.

However, the study of Kingdon and Teal (2007) didn't support the hypothesis that increasing teacher salaries across-the-board is a good way of motivating teacher effort. The study found that – after controlling for student's ability, parental background and the resources available – private schools get significantly better academic results by relating pay to achievement; government schools – which pay centrally determined high minimum wages across the board with little variation across teachers except for seniority- do not. Porter, Youngs and Odden (2001) reviewed a variety of performance assessments developed and adopted during the late 1990s and concluded that the implementation of such assessments is an expensive proposition.

### **3. OBJECTIVE**

The basic objective of the present research study is to critically analyze the prevailing teacher appraisal system in the select schools and to understand the perception of the school heads towards a comprehensive appraisal system.

### **4. METHOD**

Stratified sampling has been utilized to draw the sample from the finite universe of 557 secondary schools operating under four major types of management in Krishna District of Andhra Pradesh in India. The sample has been made largely representative by selecting 188 secondary schools accounting for around 34% of the population and representing 49 out of a total of 50 mandal administrative units. The primary data is collected through self designed questionnaire and interview schedules from the Headmasters / Principals of the select secondary schools. The data is analyzed through Chi-Square Test to establish the goodness of fit, consistency of association and the pattern of responses.

### **5. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS**

The status of teacher appraisal in the select schools is analyzed in terms of the prevailing system, frequency, the standards, evaluation and feedback.

#### **5.1 THE APPRAISAL SYSTEM:**

In India, the Government is responsible for setting regulatory and procedural requirements for schools and teachers. Policy makers may set performance standards and implement specific measures which should be, along with other factors, the focus of school evaluations (Ladd, 2007). However, there are several problems involved in the creation of effective and fair appraisal systems for teachers. The schools are not uniform, nor are the expectations of teachers. The backgrounds of teachers as well as the students are not the same. So, designing and implementing an invariable appraisal system would be difficult.

#### **5.2 NATURE AND FREQUENCY:**

There are a number of ways in which teacher performance could be appraised. An appraisal system could use self-appraisal, appraisal by peers, mentors, and superiors, or a system in which student performance is the basis of teacher appraisal. An OECD Survey (2009b) found that a number of countries had a relatively weak evaluation structure and did not benefit from school evaluations and teacher appraisal and feedback. The formal system of teacher assessment is prescribed to be completed by the Headmaster as one of his/her supervisory

responsibilities in school management. There are no specific criteria prescribed for this purpose. However, the students' success rates in the public examination at Grade X are informally considered to be the benchmark for teachers' performances. Since the common examinations are held annually the frequency of this informal type of evaluation also can be taken as annual.

### **5.3 THE STANDARDS AND MEASUREMENT:**

There are different types of evaluation standards, with some of the most common being an aesthetic standard, a practical standard, an ethical standard, and a logical standard. The logical standard is the most dominant and widely used type of measure. The accuracy of standards ensures that an evaluation reveals and conveys technically adequate information about the features that determine worth or merit of the program being evaluated. In the Indian context, in the absence of an integrated and formal teacher appraisal system, no criteria were prescribed for the Headmasters to be followed while completing the teacher appraisal. However, the minimum student pass percentage set to be achieved at Grade X is the only available option considered as the standard for teacher performance. Hence, the major issue before the policy makers is finding out ways; to improve teachers' performance, enable teacher resource and training institutes like CRCs-BRCs-DIETs to be accountable, and bring about improved teacher performance. In this direction, for the first time in India, the Ministry of HRD has taken an initiative, with the support of UNICEF, by designing a programme called ADEPTS (Advancement of Educational Performance through Teacher Support), to bring together NCERT, National and State level experts and institutions.

### **5.4 COMPARISON OF RESULTS:**

For observing the deviations, the actual performance measured is to be compared with the desired level of performance predetermined. It includes recalling, evaluating and analysis of data related to the employees' performance.

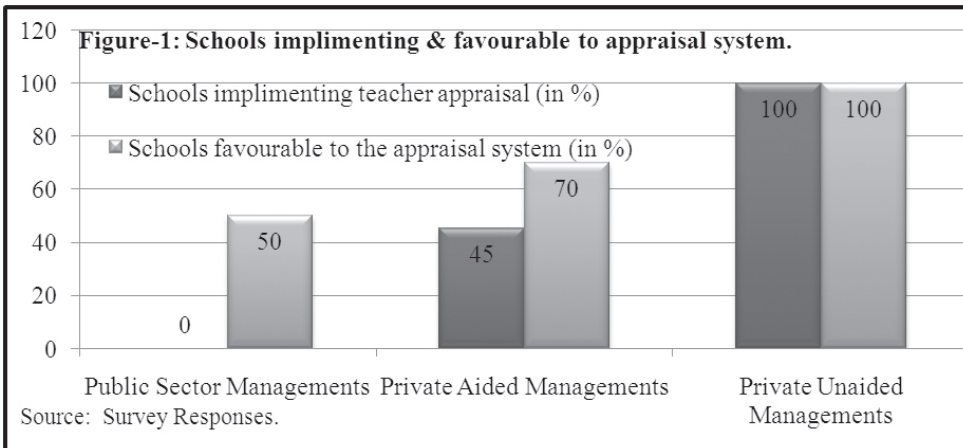
### **5.5 THE FEEDBACK SYSTEM:**

An essential aspect of any appraisal is the identification of strengths and weaknesses and taking steps to build on the former and correct the latter. Feedback is an essential part of improving performance. Through the formal feedback mechanism, the results of the appraisal are communicated and discussed with the employees concerned on a one-to-one basis. The problems and the possible solutions are discussed with the aim of problem solving and reaching consensus. Performance appraisal process is incomplete without the feedback given to the employee about his appraisal and his performance.

The survey findings regarding the aspects of the pervasiveness of the appraisal system, the frequency, measurement and comparison and the preference of the school heads for a well-defined appraisal system are discussed hereunder.

## 6. DISCUSSION:

No formal performance appraisal system is implemented for teachers in the public sector schools. Around 45% of the Private Aided schools are implementing a self designed formal assessment system for their teachers. All the Private Unaided managements are regularly monitoring their teachers’ performance through a self-designed appraisal system. The Headmasters of around 50% of the public sector and 70% of the aided schools were favourable to the teacher appraisal system (Figure-1). All the respondents, who favoured the appraisal system, demanded that the appraisal system must be linked to incentives like bonus, increments, special pay and even some other facilities like promotion. The ‘confidential report’ is the only prevailing form of teacher appraisal happening in public sector and aided schools. The school heads complete this annually basing on personal observation, oral feedback from students, parents and senior teachers and sometimes, teachers’ self assessment, as part of their supervisory responsibilities. This report always tends to be positive irrespective of other factors. However, no action has been initiated basing on the confidential report. All this is only to complete some administrative formalities. However, the pass percentage of Grade X students in the common examination is informally treated as the criterion for



teacher performance. But this remains purely informal since no action had been initiated against any teacher for achieving the worst pass percentages in his/her subject. The private unaided schools are conducting teacher appraisal more frequently and vigorously based on various parameters in addition to students’ end results.

The duties and responsibilities of teachers, prescribed in the School Academic Calendar and the State Government's Orders from time to time are considered to be the general standards for teacher evaluation. But no specific standards, other than students' success rates are established for the purpose of teacher appraisal. The students' success rate in the public exam is the widely used informal benchmark for teacher assessment. However, the minimum achievement targets are set uniform for the entire District unilaterally by the district administration without considering the conditions of the schools and the socio-economic background of the students. The private unaided managements are setting their own standards for teacher assessment and the teachers are being appraised against these standards regularly.

Generally, previous year's public exam results are taken as the benchmark for comparison of performance of the teachers in respective subjects. A majority of the public sector schools don't have the practice of comparing the present performance with previous year's performance in terms of the public examination results. There is no formal frame work for comparison of the performance results. Since the set standards are uniform to the entire District, despite vast diversity in the school environment, majority of the public schools are remaining as underachievers. No serious action is initiated to provide support for such underachievers – both schools and teachers. At the same time, there is no practice of encouraging the better performing schools and teachers. Thus, there appears no link between the teacher performance and the rewards and punishment system. Among the private managements, all the unaided and 50% of the aided schools compare their present results with the past performance and analyse the reasons for variations. Around 40% of the Private Unaided schools have incorporated performance based incentive schemes for their teachers. The better performers are rewarded with some benefits such as bonus, increments, promotion.

There is no formal system of feedback since the very appraisal system itself is not functioning properly. In some schools, the feedback system is happening through staff meetings, but certainly not a one-to-one process. However, the teachers' cooperation in this aspect is ranked as 'good' by all the school heads. There are very few instances of adverse responses from the participating teachers.

The responses regarding the preference of the school heads for an integrated appraisal system to be implemented are analyzed with the help of chi square test and the results are discussed here under.

**i. Goodness of fit:** The chi square value of 10.638 with a p value of 0.014 is statistically significant (Table-1). In other words, these results indicate that the obtained frequencies differ significantly from those that would be expected if all cell frequencies were equal in the population, thus establishing the goodness of fit of the responses collected.

**TABLE-1 : TEST STATISTICS FOR GOODNESS OF FIT (SPSS OUTPUT).**

	Preference for 'Appraisal System'
Chi-Square	10.638a
Df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.014

a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected is 47.0.

ii. **Association and pattern:** After establishing the goodness of fit, the data is tested to analyze the nature of association between the two categorical variables taken for the study - type of school management and the preference for an integrated appraisal system and cross tabulated to understand the pattern of the responses.

**TABLE-2 : CATEGORY OF MANAGEMENT AND PREFERENCE FOR 'APPRAISAL SYSTEM' CROSTABULATION**

Category of School Management		Preference for 'Appraisal System'				Total
		Can't be implemented	Not needed	Good if implemented	Strongly needed	
Public Sector	Count	32	55	18	12	117
	% within type of Management	27.4%	47.0%	15.4%	10.3%	100.0%
	% of Total	17.0%	29.3%	9.6%	6.4%	62.2%
Aided	Count	4	6	12	4	26
	% within type of Management	15.4%	23.1%	46.2%	15.4%	100.0%
	% of Total	2.1%	3.2%	6.4%	2.1%	13.8%
Unaided	Count	2	5	14	24	45
	% within type of Management	4.4%	11.1%	31.1%	53.3%	100.0%
	% of Total	1.1%	2.7%	7.4%	12.8%	23.9%
Total	Count	38	66	44	40	188
	% within type of Management	20.2%	35.1%	23.4%	21.3%	100.0%
	% of Total	20.2%	35.1%	23.4%	21.3%	100.0%

Among the three categories of school managements, positive preferences were ascending (Table-2) starting from public sector – only around 26%; private aided – about 62%; and unaided schools – around 85%. The private managements – both aided and unaided, are well above the average percentage of positive preference of the total sample (44%). The public sector schools lead (74%) in opposing implementation of an integrated teacher appraisal system followed by 38% of aided managements. The opposition from private unaided managements was very



less (15%) since many of them are already implementing some kind of appraisal system.

**TABLE-3 : CHI-SQUARE TEST RESULTS (SPSS OUTPUT).**

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	60.901a	6	.000
N of Valid Cases	188		

- a. 0 cells (.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.26.

The results indicate a strong relationship between the type of school management and the preference for teacher appraisal system. A highly statistically significant  $\chi^2$  value of 60.901 with the p value of 0.000 (Table-3) provides evidence that category of school management matters in expressing the preference for an integrated teacher appraisal system.

**iii. Strength of association:** Cramer's V is used as post-test tool to determine strength of association after chi-square has determined significance. The statistically significant chi-square value (60.901) implies that there is a significant relationship between the two categorical variables, but it does not say just how significant and important this is. Cramer's V value facilitates this additional information. In the present sample, the Cramer's V value is 0.402 and  $p = .000$  (Table-4) which indicates a strong association.

**TABLE-4 : SYMMETRIC MEASURES FOR STRENGTH OF ASSOCIATION (SPSS OUTPUT).**

	Value	Approx. Sig.
Cramer's V	.402	.000
N of Valid Cases	188	

## 7. CONCLUSION

The performance appraisal system for teachers in the select schools is not properly implemented. Neither standards were formally prescribed, nor comparison is done and the feedback activity was simply meaningless in absence of the former two vital stages. However a better percentage of private unaided managements are implementing a self-designed teacher appraisal system on their own to ascertain quality of education they provide and to design the rewards and punishments system. Overall, the preferences are divided more or less equally on the positive and negative continuum. There is a clear division of preference on implementing an integrated appraisal system among the public and private managements. The

private aided and unaided managements preferred while the public sector schools opposed the implementation of the appraisal system.

The policy makers can take the implication of this study and take policy decisions regarding implementation of a comprehensive appraisal system for the overall quality improvement of the system. Similar study can be undertaken on a multi-state and multi-stage basis in the more diverse educational system in India to arrive at more accurate and pragmatic findings and can suggest a more comprehensive appraisal framework for the policy makers.

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