
AN ASSESSMENT OF THE USEFULNESS OF ONLINE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION REPORTS (PERs) IN COMPARISON TO MANUAL REPORTS IN SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to compare the usefulness of online performance evaluation report to manual performance evaluation report. The researchers used a sample of 250 public school head teachers and teachers, which were distributed by gender, locality of the school, designation, qualification, and time spent on the job. A questionnaire comprising 37 statements, eight factors, and four hypotheses comparing these factors was developed. Cronbach's alpha calculated for each factor was more than 0.8, which proved to be a valid and reliable measure. Of all 250 respondents, more than 80% agreed that online PER is more useful, while 20% remained neutral. The correlation between factors was significant, and the regression analysis of each hypothesis was $r > 0$, which proved the hypotheses to be true. The findings imply that the new online PER is better in assessing teachers' performance according to aspects of their job and professional duties and will also help in achieving national professional standards and professional excellence. This approach to evaluation in SED will conserve departmental resources, save time, and make promotions and professional development easier and faster as it provides timely and effective feedback.

KEYWORDS

Online Performance Evaluation, Usefulness, Professional Excellence, Effective Feedback, Professional Duties

INTRODUCTION

The primary objective of education is to address the socioeconomic problems that a country faces, and it is a crucial process for the development of a state. Public educational institutes were founded to support the teaching and learning process and the most important resource for education is teachers. The Pakistani government is conscious of the significance of a teacher in delivering high-quality education because they are in charge of the knowledge, skills, and attitude development of the younger generations, as well as assisting in preparing them for various duties and responsibilities and the teachers should be developed professionally in a sustainable way throughout their lives and should have their performance continually evaluated. Understanding many components of a fruitful performance, evaluation is essential given that teacher performance evaluation can be a crucial source for increasing the emphasis on educational quality and that many modifications in the past have failed. As a result, the OECD (2013) found that the evaluation of educators is important given that no endeavor at educational improvement can be considered successful and profitable without the presence of excellent instructors in the classroom. They also demonstrated how instruction, carried out by effective teachers, is at the core of both teaching and learning.

To accommodate such a perspective from all over the world and the nature of education in different countries, Pakistan's National Education Policy (2009) focuses on the systematization of observation and evaluation, wherever they are viewed in the school system. Quality, accessibility, and governance have been consistent themes of government-funded education since Pakistan's establishment. The National Education Policy (NEP) laments the low public trust in national institutions, including the Department of Schools Education (SED), and seeks to reduce the education provided by these public institutions by setting standards for receiving input. The system must improve the quality of developing and defining educational processes and the consequences of these educational outcomes by institutionalizing methods of observation and evaluation from the lowest to the highest levels to restore public trust (NEP, 2009).

According to Tatek (2012), department heads, school administrators, and other head teachers work collaboratively to evaluate teachers. School administrators must ensure that these stakeholders are well-versed in evaluation procedures and actively participate in the implementation of the Teacher Performance Appraisal System (TPAS) in order for it to be effective. The current management and organizational

structure focuses on the process by which top management establishes overall plans, policies, strategies, and programs. In this case, the “top management” could be the Minister of Education or the Director of Public Education (DPI) of Punjab. Kerstan and Israel (2005) found through a further study of school administration in the United States that it takes about 5–6 hours to assess an individual teacher. This demonstrates the need for faster and more efficient evaluation methods. The above issues highlight that evaluation of each department’s performance is an important component of career development, and Punjab’s School Education Department has used paper-based PER for many years. Recent technological advances have necessitated an overhaul of the PER system. Issues such as nepotism and other bureaucracies that PER creates on paper raise concerns about the credibility of that system.

In the year 2021, the School Education Department (SED) finally caved in and introduced a digital PER system. Data innovation has opened new doors for instructional establishments to be more responsive to the data needs of heads, workers, understudies, and different partners. The digitalization of a teacher’s service record can prove to be a milestone for evaluating a teacher’s performance and helping to steady the record of teachers for future advancements. Thusly, the principals, heads, and top administration authorities who go about as judges are allowed to compose harmful comments in any case successful workers, while the low or unacceptable entertainers might procure phenomenal appraisals.

Evaluation of Performance can be characterized as the continuous cycle utilized of recognizing, estimating, and also fostering the performance of each employee as per an association’s essential objectives (Aguinis, 2018). The Web-based performance evaluation system is a productive program that enables performance evaluations to be conducted over the internet. Additionally, more research is needed to evaluate the use of web-based human resource management systems or electronic human resource management (eHRM). An internet-based PA framework can be more than the conventional manual structure put on the web in that it could be coordinated with an illustrative portrayal of position authorizing chiefs and evaluators to incorporate information from the employee’s job descriptions into the evaluation (Admin, 2006).

Fortunately, e-performance management, as shown above, can provide workers with detailed representations of skills to memorize for evaluation frameworks. Managers and representatives can view presentation-related information in a consistent manner as well as review performance at that time. The employee may view her feedback on her online performance as more unbiased than the manager’s criticism, which she may also view as more unbiased. When ironic data is presented electronically, people are less likely to misunderstand it and are better able to make precise corrections (Darling, 2010). It is important to consider both web- and handbook-based feedback because the

two types of criticism are used by different educational institutions. Undoubtedly, studies have been conducted in school systems around the world over the past decade to explore various aspects of web-based classroom feedback. These aspects include teacher responsiveness to feedback, undergraduate attitudes toward online submissions, and the level of undergraduate responsiveness to online assessment reports (Bosnjak & Tuten, 2003). The researchers formulated eight different aspects for the assessment of the usefulness of the Performance Evaluation Report, which is explained below.

Usefulness

The usefulness of the PER is the essence of how employees can learn valuable lessons from their evaluation to help them do their job more effectively, improve and learn new teaching skills based on targets, and check whether it helps fulfill teaching standards (Borg, 2018).

Feedback

A teacher's success is not only measured by student performance but also by effective feedback from management and administrators. Effective evaluator feedback to teachers makes the learning and teaching process visible (Hattie, 2007). Effective feedback provides guidelines teachers can use to improve student's learning experiences.

Professional Duties

Teacher evaluation is highly dependent on their commitment to their professional duties (Schmidt, 2001). Somech (2005) pointed out a cooperative link between digital leadership, defined as checking and supervising staff through online surveys, which ensures better commitment by staff to their duties.

Teaching Standards

The education sectors in Pakistan are now more focused on the improvement of the teaching standards in education at all school, college, and university levels. The Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC) established ten standards for teachers in 2009 to improve the teaching and learning process in Pakistan (Khizar et al 2019).

Professional Development and Promotions

Mullins (2005) defined the professional development of a teacher as: "the development of the significant, meaningful, and lifelong learning of the teacher, in which teachers improve their conceptions and change their teaching methods; it is a process that includes the development of the teacher's individual, professional, and social dimensions and embodies the teacher's development to becoming a critical thinker with sound decision-making and behavior." According to Blandford (2000), many

decisions are made based on these evaluations, which can be “formative,” used to raise quality standards, or “summative,” used to decide on pay raises promotions and job status.

Time and Resources Conservation

In the past years, many researchers have identified that by using an online faculty evaluation system, employee performance gets better as compared to a paper-based system, as it saves time and resources. Also, traditional PERs are time-constrained and cumbersome as supervisors have to manually sign, mark, and evaluate them, while paper-based PERs are resource-intensive, while online is paperless and cost-effective. It should also be noted that an online record is maintained (Werther & Davis, 1989).

Professional Excellence

Professional excellence expresses in its meaning the skills that may make someone a skilled professional. Prabhu (2012), in his article “How to Achieve Professional Excellence,” clarifies that overall performance needs to be evaluated on the grounds of the requirements, targets, and goals of private and governmental institutions and how these are fulfilled.

Need for Improvement

Clark (2015) remarked that the impartiality of the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system of the employees makes it more realistic and reliable. So it is required to improve an accurate model for the M&E system, which should be sovereign to some extent and also dependable and authentic in society. The performance evaluation system must meet its proposed objectives. Principals, head teachers, and secondary school teachers themselves experience and note their performance levels for further improvement in their careers. This study will provide necessary information to the stakeholder in education about the benefits and usefulness of the new digital PER and highlight issues caused by manual reports; hence, it can be helpful to improve professionalism, performance excellence, and the overall development of the personnel. The digital PER system has many potential benefits for organizations. This information is readily available, and it enhances efficiency and decision-making. If used properly, these systems can increase overall productivity. This decision to provide an overall report that includes all aspects of a job makes the organizational heads more involved and provides information about strengths and weaknesses, thus allowing better decisions for the future of the employee (Miller, 2007).

The Punjab School Education Department has introduced a nuanced online evaluation and performance system that is a new and better version of the manual report. This calls for a comparison between the old and new systems of PER. This study will compare the traditional to the new online PER system in an attempt to establish a

relationship between professional excellence and development in the new, improved PER. It will examine the usefulness of online PER over manual PER.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. Compare the usefulness of the new online PER system to the conventional PER system.
2. Highlight the perceptions of personnel about online and manual PER.
3. Determine how the new PER can contribute to a professionally ethical environment in the school education sector.
4. Examine new additional sections in the online PER and correlate these to professional development set by the 2009 national professional standard.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

1. Effective feedback is strongly correlated with improving teaching standards in performance evaluation.
2. Improving assessment on aspects of the job is strongly correlated with the achievement of professional excellence.
3. Professional development and promotion are strongly correlated with time and resource availability.
4. Professional duties are strongly correlated with the need for improvement in the performance appraisal system.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research study is quantitative in nature and researchers attempted to correlate the old and new Performance Evaluations Reports. The sample consisted of 250 respondents including head teachers and teachers of public schools of District Sahiwal. The data were collected through questionnaires selecting the participants using stratified random sampling.

Research Instruments

A demographic questionnaire was designed keeping in view account of the research variables these include gender, locality of the school, designation, qualification (academic and professional), and time spent on a previous job and in the current school. The main self-designed questionnaire consisted of thirty-seven questions formulated according to the eight variables namely professional duties, improving teaching standards, effective feedback, improving assessment on aspects of the job, professional excellence, professional development and promotion, time conservation and resources and need for improvement to be tested through four hypotheses. These variables are explained in the introduction of this paper.

Procedure

The researchers used a self-designed questionnaire. A consent form was included in the questionnaire the participants were asked to be fair and honest in responding to the tool. The collected data were analyzed using SPSS version 21. The validity and reliability were tested through Cronbach's Alpha. Correlation analysis was done for all variables and hypotheses were tested by regression analysis.

RESULT AND DATA ANALYSIS**Table 1: Demographics Characteristics of the Respondents**

Demographics	F	%
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	100	40
Female	150	60
<i>Locality of School</i>		
Rural	189	75.6
Urban	61	24.4
<i>Designation</i>		
PST	51	20.4
EST	56	22.4
SST	47	18.8
Headteacher	47	18.8
Headmistress	28	11.2
<i>Qualification</i>		
Matric	9	3.6
Inter	1	0.4
B.A/B.Sc.	32	12.8
M.A/M.Sc.	123	49.2
M.Phil.	75	30
Ph.D.	10	4
<i>Professional Qualification</i>		
PTC	101	40.4
B.Ed.	115	46
M.Ed.	24	9.6
M.A Edu		
<i>Experience</i>		
1-5	28	11.2
5-10	56	22.4
10-15	42	16.8
15-20	52	20.8
20 above	72	28.8

Time spent in school		
1-5	97	38.8
5-10	74	29.6
10-15	52	20.8
15-20	20	8
20 above	7	2.8

Note. *f* = Frequency

Of all the 250 respondents 60% were females 40% were Males and 75.6% fr *Note. f* = Frequency of rural and 24.4% were from urban schools. Most respondents were highly qualified 49.2% masters and 30% M.Phil. professional duties, improving teaching standards, effective feedback, improving assessment on aspects of the job, professional excellence, professional development and promotion, time conservation and resources, and need for improvement.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Variables

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Professional Duties	4.2	0.61
Improving Teaching Standards	3.9	0.76
Effective Feedback	4.2	0.61
Improving Assessment on Aspects of the Job	4.2	0.64
Professional Development and Promotion	4.3	0.63
Professional Excellence	4.3	0.61
Time Conservation and Resources	4.1	0.67
Need for Improvement	4.0	0.63

Table 2 depicts the usefulness of Online PER over Manual PER to be moderate level. Online PER does include parameters to ensure professional excellence and development and can improve teaching standards by giving effective feedback. Moreover, it can assess teachers based on professional duties and aspects of the job but there is still a need to improve this system as it is a new approach to evaluation so it needs time.

Table 3: Correlation Analysis

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
U	1								
PD	0.747	1							
IT	0.7747	0.5344							
S	7	7	1						

	0.8089	0.8962	0.6383						
EF	4	6	7	1					
IA	0.8257	0.5509	0.6405	0.71373					
AJ	8	1	3	4	1				
	0.6518	0.5124	0.4348	0.49053	0.5135				
PE	4	5	5	3	8	1			
	0.7147	0.4739	0.4890	0.54837	0.5872	0.4472			
PD	5	5	4	6	6	9	1		
TR	0.5792	0.2486	0.2691	0.26572	0.3393	0.2458	0.32		
C	1	0	8	2	4	8	761	1	
	0.8257	0.5509	0.6405	0.71373		0.5135	0.58	0.33	
NI	8	1	3	4	0.2255	8	726	934	1

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation analysis table shows the relationship between antecedents and independent and dependent variables. The values of all variables with each other are significant at the level of 0.01; these values also show a strong and positive relationship. Moreover, the values are $< .90$, so there is no issue of multicollinearity between variables. Based on the values, all the relationships are strong and significant concerning the independent and dependent variables.

Table 4: Linear Regression Analysis of Correlation of Effective Feedback with Improving Teaching Standards in Performance Evaluation

Hypothesis	R	R square	Adjusted R
1	0.638	0.407	0.405

The Effective Feedback is having a relationship with Improving Teaching Standards in SED based on the values showing in the regression table as values are $r = 0.4075$, and above-mentioned correlation table shows $p \leq 0.01$, which means that Effective Feedback is having a significant relationship with Improving Teaching Standards in the department.

Effective Feedback Line Fit Plot

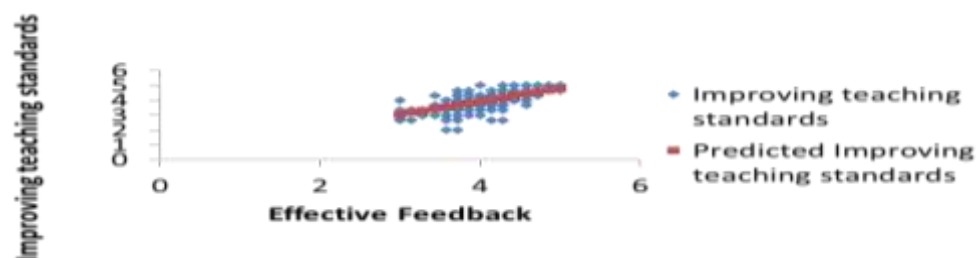
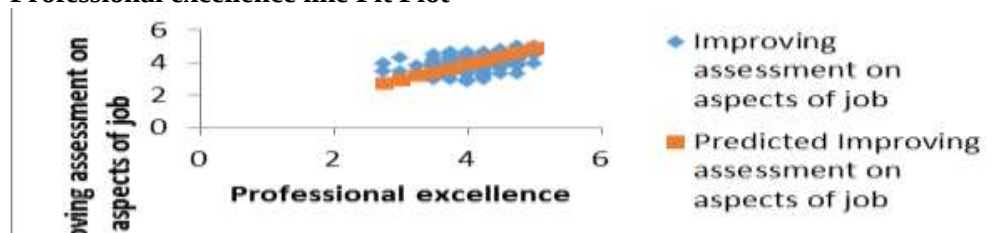


Table 5: Linear Regression Analysis of Correlation between Improving Assessment on Aspects of Job and Achievement of Professional Excellence

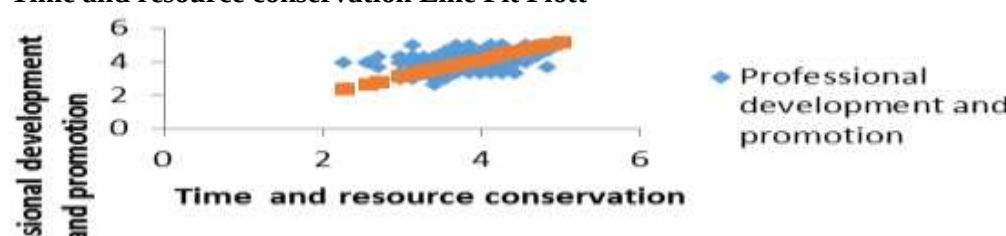
Hypothesis	R	R square	Adjusted R
2	0.994	0.989	0.989

The improving assessment of aspects of the job has a relationship with achieving Professional Excellence based on the values shown in the regression table as values are $r = 0.994$, and the above-mentioned correlation table shows $p \leq 0.01$, which proves the hypothesis.

Professional excellence line Fit Plot**Table 6: Linear Regression Analysis of the Correlation of Professional Development and Promotion with Time and Resource Conversation**

Hypothesis	R	R square	Adjusted R
3	0.991	0.983	0.983

The Professional development and promotion have a relationship with time and resource conversation a correlation table show $p \leq 0.01$, which means that Professional development and promotion is having a significant relationship with time and resource conversation for SED.

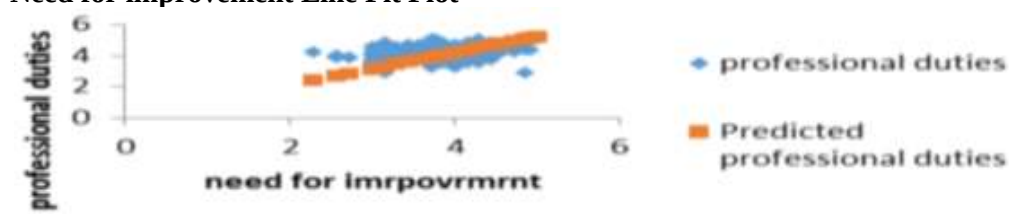
Time and resource conservation Line Fit Plott**Table 7: Linear Regression Analysis Correlation of Professional Duties with the Need for Improvement in Per System**

Hypothesis	R	R square	Adjusted R
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4	0.992	0.983	0.979
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Professional duties have a relationship with the need for improvement in the performance appraisal system based on the values showing in the regression table as values are $r = 0.991$ which means the hypothesis is correct.

Need for improvement Line Fit Plot



DISCUSSION

In previous years, many studies have identified the need for proper development and use of online evaluations of teachers. The online method evaluations have many benefits over the old-fashioned PER system as it is cost-saving and is faster in reporting results. Many other studies such as those conducted by Ngai, (2004) have pointed out the usefulness of online PER over Manual PER. Moreover, the usefulness of online PER can play a key role in developing a positive attitude of the employee toward SED and towards achieving targets/ objectives assigned by the department. If every employee is given proper and timely feedback it can create a healthier working atmosphere. It can also inspire and encourage the employees to be more professional on the job as it can provide a better chance at professional development and promotion (Russell & Goode, 2008). This study aims to compare common and digitized PER systems using online PER as a benchmark. The results can highlight the importance of technological progress and the growth of the education sector going hand in hand. According to Keeley (2012), many studies have come to different conclusions on this topic. Some found significant statistical differences between manual and online feedback, while others found no significant difference between the two types of evaluation.

This study was conducted on the usefulness of online PER as compared to manual PER. This study mainly focused on the usefulness of the new PER of SED to test the hypotheses. The results of the statistical procedures for all the hypotheses showed that online PER assesses employees based on their duties and job aspects. It is expected that it will also help in improving teaching standards and the assessment of employees on their job aspects. This study shows that sharing feedback made by the heads will help to increase job performance; this study also sheds light on the problems faced by the teachers after digitizing the performance appraisal system, which includes a lack

of pre-training, which is essential before launching or introducing any new program or scheme for the professionals. Similarly, language barriers, network problems, a lack of digitally literate staff, the cost of launching new software or a website, etc. were the problems pointed out in the current PER.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of the present study, it is recommended that the teachers and head teachers should be trained after digitizing the performance appraisal system. They should be trained in using an online appraisal system which is essential before launching or introducing any new program or scheme for the professionals. The teaching and non-teaching professionals should also be introduced to the terminology used in the PERs so that they could understand it while responding to these reports. The definitions of the terms and instructions to respond to these evaluation reports should be provided and it should be the responsibility of the concerned head to give orientation to the employees before they fill it out. Similarly, the professionals should be assisted in language understanding and they should be digitally literate and trained. The institutions should make necessary arrangements for the smooth functioning of the internet.

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