

## **ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TESTS CONDUCTED BY DTEs AT PRIMARY SCHOOL LEVEL**

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### **ABSTRACT-**

The objective of this study is to find out the effectiveness of tests conducted by Director Staff Development (DSD) under the supervision of District Teachers Educators (DTEs) to know the views of teachers about the merits and demerits of papers arranged by DSD and their impact on the performance of teachers. A sample 50 PST male teachers and 50 PST female teachers were selected and data was collected through a structured questionnaire. The results reveal that testing enhances the knowledge and skill of teachers and students and it is suggested that its standards must be scaled up to improve the quality of education.

**Key words:** primary education; school teachers, District Teacher Educator, Teachers training; professional development; testing system;

**Type of study: Original Research paper.**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### ***1.1 Background of study***

Teaching requires different levels of competence. It is well known that the performance of trained teachers is much better than untrained teachers. It needs their continuous professional development to meet the challenges of this job. Teachers play a key role in the educational process, and influence the social, economic and academic lives of their pupils. The demands for their improvement are significant and these can be met only by creating a scientifically based profession, which is supported by a body of theoretical and practical knowledge.

In Punjab (the largest province of Pakistan containing 60% of total population) Punjab Education Sector Reforms Program' (PESRP) were introduced in 2003, with the primary objective of enhancing access to students; improving the quality; and governance in education sector. The education reforms focus on increasing enrolments (with net primary enrollments rates of only 45 percent) and retention, especially for girls, and in improving governance and monitoring in this sector. The program has stressed that the goal of quality education cannot be achieved without improving professional competence, motivation and accountability of teachers ([Government. of Pakistan, 2003](#)). To achieve these objectives, Directorate of Staff Development, (DSD) Punjab has developed a conceptual framework for Continuous Professional Development (CPD). The CPD framework provides scheme for teacher development in Punjab which can broaden the scope of teacher development from mere "teacher training" to "continuous professional development" for quality learning of students. It combines in-service training

of teachers (INSET) with follow-ups, in-class, teacher support, mentoring, monitoring, accountability, incentives, and teacher career growth. These measures were previously not included in the teacher development in Punjab (Government of Punjab, 2012).

### **1.2 Main Research problem.**

Our Research main research problem is to study the effectiveness of tests conducted by District Teachers Educators at primary level to assess the competency of teachers working at different primary schools of District Vehari.

### **1.3 Objectives of study**

The objectives of this research study are given below: -

- To find out the effectiveness of tests that are conducted by DSD under the supervision of DTE.
- To record the views of teachers about the merits and demerits of papers arranged by DSD for tests.
- To assess the quality and effectiveness of these tests.
- To analyze the performance of students in these papers.
- To compare these tests with BISE papers in order to determine the standard of these tests.
- To find out the impacts of these tests on the performance and teaching of primary teachers.
- To judge whether these tests are helpful for teachers to complete the course within given time frame.

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- To analyze the benefits of different programs of DSD for improvement of learning and teaching.
  - To investigate the difficulties being faced by primary teachers in teaching primary classes.
  - To find out the solutions of these problems with the help of educational experts and results of this study.

### **1.4 Significance of study**

Education plays an important role for the progress of a country and nation. testing and exams are important tools that determine the effectiveness and validity of the education system. There are many institutions in Pakistan like PEC at elementary level, BISE at higher secondary level and Universities and Degree Awarding Institute at graduate and post graduate levels. There is no doubt that these institutions have command over paper setting to conduct examinations. In Punjab there is another institution named DSD that conducts exams from 3<sup>rd</sup> class to 5<sup>th</sup> class in English, Urdu, Math, Physics, Chemistry, Islamic studies and other subjects of social sciences six times in a year. DTES are responsible for conducting these exams. This study will analyze the merits and the demerits of these tests. The results of this study will be helpful for academicians, policy makers, teachers and the students in improving teaching skill, learning process and policy framework. In this perspective, this study is very significant and its results will be useful for all involved in education sector. Due to the importance of teachers training program in Punjab by the District Teachers Educator (DTEs), it was decided to conduct present research. It is expected that this research will pave the way for further research. It will also enable the higher authorities and policy maker to know the facts regarding

the effectiveness of teacher training arranged by DTEs, hence they will be able to make future decisions about current issues.

## **2. Literature Review**

The Directorate of Staff Development is an apex organization and is committed to develop the Pedagogical skills and knowledge through a continuous process of professional development of teachers in Punjab. The core objective is to enhance the quality of learning at all levels of education by training and nurturing the teaching cadre both at DSD and simultaneously in the field ([Government of Punjab, 2012](#)). DSD has created support network to provide in-service training, follow-ups, pedagogical support and mentoring to the primary school teachers. Accordingly, each district has been divided into clusters of schools, called Cluster Training and Support Centers (CTSCs) on the base of strength and location of PSTs in the district. DTEs were selected from teaching cadre and were trained to train PSTs in CTSCs ([Government of Punjab, 2010](#)). Professional development refers to skills and knowledge attained for both personal development and career advancement. Professional development encompasses all types of facilitated learning opportunities, ranging from college degrees to formal coursework, conferences and [informal learning](#) opportunities situated in practice. It has been described as intensive and collaborative, ideally incorporating an evaluative stage ([Speck & Knipe, 2005](#)). National Professional Development [Center on Inclusion \(2008\)](#) describes that there are a variety of approaches to professional development, including consultation, coaching, practice, lesson study, mentoring, reflective supervision and technical assistance. Specific continuous professional

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development linked to the introduction of new educational reforms and training programs organized by the relevant authorities in general as a professional duty for teachers in all countries (Eurydice, 2008; European Commission, 2009). In the OECD (2005) study, it was found that teachers frequently make a financial contribution to the costs of transport, course fees or course materials during professional development programs. The major exceptions are Chile, Northern Ireland and Sweden where teachers generally do not contribute to such costs. Guskey (2000) contends that many teachers perceive CPD to be irrelevant to their needs and it is fact that we still know relatively little about its impact (p.32). The international literature on teacher CPD (Harland and Kinder, 1997; Joyce and Showers, 1988; Day, 1999; Ingvarson et al., 2003) depict discouraging picture. There is ample evidence, for instance, of the failure of attempts to implement change (Fullan, 2001) and of the superficial nature of the gains achieved (Cooley, 1997). There are currently three main providers: education colleges run by provincial and Municipal Educational Authorities; tertiary teacher education and other institutions of higher learning; and overseas institutions and organizations. The program is based on the premise ‘that professional learning is more likely to improve student learning outcomes if it increases teachers’ understanding of the content they teach, how students learn that content and how to represent and convey that content in meaningful ways’ (Ingvarson et al., 2003). Drawing a linkage between pre-service and INSET and career development is essential to ensure teacher motivation, which in turn enhances teacher performance and thus impacts learning outcomes positively. Such a link is absent in developing countries (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, Zanzibar, 2005). On the issue of TPD assessments, all developing countries follow mostly quantitative assessment indicators. South Africa is an exception and has

undertaken creation of a holistic performance assessment system which tracks progress on qualitative issues (Parker, 2002). Punjab is the first province in Pakistan to address shortcomings in its in-service teacher training system by introducing a continuous professional development (CPD) model for its primary teachers in 2006. District teacher educators (DTEs) were recruited and deployed to serve as the key actors in this CPD model. They hold primary responsibility for teacher professional development both in the school and at the cluster level (each cluster contains 25 to 30 schools within a 15-kilometer radius). DTEs comprise a mobile workforce of over 3,000 dispersed throughout Punjab with about 2 DTEs per cluster, each of whom is responsible for 10 to 15 schools. The DTEs have to visit teachers in schools in their clusters twice a month to offer on-the-job mentoring and training support. They are to identify, assess and redress specific knowledge and skill gaps in teachers through one-to-one interactions. During these school visits the DTE is expected to conduct student assessments to assess learning process, observe teacher practice in the classroom, guide and mentor teachers how to improve their knowledge and skills. They have to train teachers collectively for one day in every quarter at the cluster-training centers known as CTSCs where all teachers of a District are congregated. DTEs were seen as the antidote to the shortcomings of the one-off, inadequate, irregular trainings that teachers were receiving thus far that were often lacking alignment with teachers' actual needs. More than 10 years later, policymakers are revamping the CPD model. While a number of changes have been proposed, a key change is the elimination of the post of DTE. This policy note describes the proposed changes, motivations for reform, and the advantages and challenges posed in

the revised model. This note is based on conversations with relevant officials and stakeholders in Punjab's education sector. It reflects their views on different issues (Awan and Zia,2013). According to DSD Lahore (2006) the DTEs has to perform following tasks as a teacher trainer:

- To assess and identify professional development needs of primary school teachers within the cluster;
- To organize in-service training courses for the teachers as per identified needs within the overall CPD framework;
- To work with the head teachers to plan and organize school-based in-service training (INSET) and other professional development activities.
- To visit and provide professional support to one teacher/mentee per day. A second teacher/mentee may be covered during the same day only under specific instructions of CTSC or DTSC head concerned.
- To plan and conduct Professional Development Day (to be notified by the Education Department in due course) every month on which all PSTs will gather at their respective CTSCs. DTEs will review the activity of the whole month and will also help the PSTs to develop lesson plans. PSTs will keep a record of the concepts and ideas learnt on PD days in the PST Log Book provided to them to participate in training courses and other professional development activities organized by DSD or other institutions designated by DSD.
- To seek professional advice from the CTSC head and/or Teacher Educator (TE) concerned to address any problems or difficulties faced while providing pedagogical support to the teachers.
- To maintain records of professional events and advice given to the individual teacher within the cluster.

- To devise a work plan, in consultation with CTSC head, on CTSC Form 1 (Monthly Work Plan) to schedule visits to the primary schools attached to his/her CTSC (DSD, 2006).

### **3. Research Methodology**

#### **3.1 Population**

In order to collect data, the district **Vehari** was selected. There are three tehsils in this district. These tehsils are Vehari, Burewala and 3 Mailsi. Among these tehsils, Mailsi was selected this research study.

#### **3.2 Sample of study**

Sampling is an important factor. It is responsible for correct collection of data. In this study we took a sample of 100 respondents and among them 50 were male and 50 were female teachers from primary schools of Tehsil Mailsi. Similarly, 100 students were selected randomly from the following schools to solve DTE test in order to assess about the effectiveness of the tests. The following schools were selected for tests and interviews:

- Government High School Dokota Mailsi.
- Government High School Juhni Mailsi.
- Government Girls Primary School 193/WB Mailsi.
- Government Girls Primary School Bahwal wah Mailsi.
- Government Girls Primary School Mari Mitroo Mailsi.
- Government Boys Primary School 195/WB Mailsi.
- Government Girls High School 143/WB. Mailsi.
- Government Girls Elementary School Lali pur Mailsi.
- Government Girls Elementary School 139/wb Mailsi.

### 3.3 Research design

As this study was to find the effectiveness of the tests that are conducted by D.S.D. So a paper was selected out of different previous papers randomly by D.T.E. This paper was given to the students of 5<sup>th</sup> class. They were asked to attempt it within given time. After this, papers were given to the experienced teachers to mark them. Then a questionnaire containing 30 questions about the test was given to record the views about paper marking system etc. Similarly, interviews were conducted to get more information about the test, about their demerits and their possible solutions of the problems.

#### **3.3 Analytical Technique**

5-points Likert Scale was used to record the response of the selected respondents about different statements given in the questionnaire.

### 4. Data Analysis

The statements and their responses are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Results of 5-points Likert scale

Statements	SA	A	SD	D	Neutral
This test has reliable.	26	34	29	11	0
This test has validity .	34	27	11	14	14
All students attempt these tests in given proper time.	78	10	5	4	3
The contents of these papers are related to the syllabus.	57	10	12	14	7
The tests conducted by D.T. Es	46	14	14	16	20

are effective to assess students' performance.					
All the standard rules are followed during these tests.	<b>39</b>	11	30	20	00
These tests are prepared by experienced teachers in D.S.D.	<b>59</b>	20	11	5	5
The rubrics provided by D.S.D are followed during the marking of these tests.	<b>10</b>	12	48	20	10
There is no cheating or use of unfair means during tests.	<b>15</b>	16	30	29	10
There is proper distance among students during these tests .	<b>12</b>	18	25	39	6
There is no teachers involvement during the conduction of these test.	<b>10</b>	15	37	35	3
There is total secrecy from paper setting to result declaration.	<b>21</b>	24	22	23	10
test length is proper.	<b>35</b>	40	8	7	10
The test items are very difficult in these tests that are conducted by D.S.D.	<b>39</b>	41	5	7	8
There is maximum elimination of irrelevant barriers to the answers in these D.S.D tests.	<b>27</b>	43	15	5	10

There is avoidance of unintended clues in the answers of MCQs of these tests.	<b>27</b>	43	5	15	10
The main focus of these tests is to improve the learning process.	<b>45</b>	25	12	13	5
These tests are assessed and evaluated by experienced teachers.	<b>13</b>	17	30	35	5
All the standard measures are adopted in the marking of these tests.	<b>13</b>	17	35	32	3
These D.T. Es tests are marked By the other schools of the same cluster center.	<b>100</b>	00	00	00	00
The teachers know about the person who is marking their student's papers.	<b>100</b>	00	00	00	00
The teachers can influence the results of these tests.	<b>82</b>	10	5	3	00
The schools ranking criteria is mostly dependent on the results of these tests.	<b>100</b>	00	00	00	00
The results of these tests are helpful to judge the teaching quality of the teachers.	<b>15</b>	12	33	35	15
The teachers are trained whose results of these tests are below criteria.	<b>45</b>	47	3	5	00

Students prepare these tests properly.	<b>10</b>	15	30	40	5
These tests motivate the teachers to write lesson plans and diaries.	<b>15</b>	13	42	20	10
These tests should be conducted continuously.	<b>23</b>	27	26	24	00
These tests are parallel to BISE standard.	<b>11</b>	09	34	36	10
These tests are effective for teachers and students' in education system.	<b>14</b>	12	34	35	5

## **5. Findings of study**

Data was collected with the help of questionnaire from the teachers. After this data was tabulated and analyzed carefully. The findings of this study are given below.

According to teachers the reliability and validity score of this test was 60 percent. According to 88 percent students, time duration for the students to solve the paper was sufficient. As 88% of the participants are agree with the statement. About 26 percent teachers 26 percent of test material was from books while 74 percent were out of course.

The components of the test are from the course given in the books. 26% teachers are in the view that the contents of these tests are not according to the course. According to the participants the effective of test was 60 percent. Around 50 percent participants were agreed that these tests were followed the

standard rules of (BISE) while 50% were disagreed with this statement. 79 percent participants were agreed that these tests were prepared by most experiences teachers. There is no doubt that these tests are prepared by most experienced teachers. 79% is agree with this statement. However, 21 percent were disagreeing with it and expressed doubts about transparent assessment of tests. Similarly, 30 percent teachers disclosed that the students used unfair means because the Students don't sit at proper distance during these papers and due to this reason the students were able to copy the paper from other students sitting adjacent to him. 72 percent of participants were disagreeing with the statement that teachers were not in these tests. About 50 percent told that secrecy was maintained during the whole process of tests. The majority of female teachers maintained high level of secrecy during tests. As DTE has to conduct three tests in a day in three different schools simultaneously so it was difficult to maintain high level of secrecy and prevent unfair means during tests. About 75 percent of the participants were agree that the test duration was proper and due time was given to them to solve test papers

The paper length is proper according to 75% of the participants. The students of 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> found difficulty to solve the questions in a proper way. However, 75 percent students were agreed and there were no other options in objective portion of the paper.

Test items are difficult, conceptual and unseen for 3<sup>rd</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> class students. They are unable to solve these questions in a better way. There are no irrelevant options in the objective portion of the paper according to 75% of the participants. Around 70 percent participants were agreed that these tests would improve teaching and learning process. About 30 percent students expressed doubt about transparent assessment of test because untrained

teachers were also involved in evaluation process. As many as 65 percent apprehended that no standard rules were followed during evaluation process.

Those teachers whose results were below the criteria; they were trained by DSD. Students did not prepare these test seriously as they know that their teachers will help them in the exams. 70% of participant told that students did not prepare tests properly because they perceived that their teachers would help them during tests. 28 percent contended that the testing process would motivate the students to improve their knowledge and test solving capability.

However, teachers pleaded that they wrote students diaries and lesson plans in order to improve their school ranking. About 50 percent participants emphasized that such test should be continued for improving learning and teaching skills.

## **6. Policy recommendations**

After finding the results and taking interviews of the teachers DTE and other officials following recommendations are given to make these tests more effective both for teachers and students.

- These tests should be prepared from the text books provided by Government of Punjab in the same wording as given in the books in order to save the students from confusion.
- CPD and DSD should provide guidelines to the paper setter to follow these instructions.
- All the stakeholders should implement effectively on order to achieve the objectives and goals of these to make these tests more effective.

- The DSD department must be made efficient and proactive to improve the standard in order to make tests system ideal and foolproof.

It should be made compulsory for the teachers to get proper training before marking these tests as is carrying out in Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education.

- All papers marked by teachers should be rechecked by T.E, CTSC HEADS and, AEOs to remove the loopholes in the marking system. If the papers are not marked properly then teachers should be fined according to their mistakes in the marking system.
- Handsome remunerations must be given to the teachers to their interest in paper marking.
- The papers must be sent to other cluster Centers for marking in order to reduce teachers' influence on the results and to create transparency in the assessment.
- Female DTEs should be appointed in the girl schools in order to minimize the male influence on female side. During the conduction of exam sudden and surprise visits of T. Es and CTSC Heads should be made to eliminate the chances of cheating in these tests.
- Distance between two students should be at kept 4 to 5 feet .in this way students cannot copy or see others' papers.
- Four versions technique should be adopted for the students. but the paper contents should be identical, just question number should be different.
- The contents of test papers must be different from school to school to maintain secrecy and remove the possibility of using unfair means during tests.
- DSD should work with other partners to develop need-based self-explanatory teacher guides/manuals and provide them to PSTS.

- Workshop on Multiple teaching methods may be organized to solve immediate issues of PSTs.
- Lesson planning is an essential part of effective teaching to motivate teachers to plan their lessons in advance and also it requires effective follow up strategy on part of the DTEs at least once in a month face to face training.
- Preparation and use of audio/visual aids using low/no cost material can also be made possible through effective follow up/classroom base support.

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