

1. Details of Module and its structure

Module Detail	
Subject Name	Education
Paper Name	Educational Administration, Management & Leadership in School Education
Module Name/ Title	School Standards and their Evaluation
Module Id	e-PGEDN 13.17
Pre-requisites	Learners are expected to be aware of the basics of school standards and their evaluation
Objectives	<p>After completion of this module, learners will have a clear picture of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Concept of school standards and evaluation framework. 2 Structure of key domain to evaluate school performance. 3 Approaches and Processes for school evaluation: self and external. 4 Programme framework of NPSSE.
Keywords	Educational administration, SSSE, NPSSE, web portal

2. Development Team

Role	Name	Affiliation
Principal Investigator	Prof. P. K. Sahoo	Department of Education, University of Allahabad, U.P.
Co-Principal Investigator	Prof. Rajaram S. Sharma	Central Institute of Educational Technology, NCERT, New Delhi
Co-Principal Investigator	Prof. Dhananjay Yadav	Department of Education, University of Allahabad, U.P.
Paper Coordinators	Prof. Vidya Agarwal,	Department of Education,

		University of Allahabad, U.P.
	Dr. J.S. Dhillon	Principal, Khalsa College of Education, Amritsar
Content Writer/Author (CW)	Ms. Harpreet Kaur	Khalsa College of Education, Ranjit Avenue, Amritsar
Content Reviewer (CR)	Professor Surinder Kaur	Khalsa College of Education, Ranjit Avenue, Amritsar
Language Editor (LE)	Dr. Aerum Khan	Central Institute of Educational Technology, NCERT

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10. Summary

Learning outcomes

After completion of this module, learners will have a clear picture of:

1. Concept of school standards and evaluation framework.
2. Structure of key domain to evaluate school performance.
3. Approaches and Processes for school evaluation: self and external.
4. Programme framework of NPSSE.

1. Introduction

Improving quality and performance of schools have been continuously reaffirmed in all the policy pronouncements. The school education system in India is observing speedy expansion coupled with increasing diversity of student population. The complexity of diversified context (rural, urban and tribal), composition of schools (large and small) and conditions (provisioning) are major challenges to achieve equitable quality education for all children in India. Rights Based Approach to elementary education through enactment of Right to Education Act (2009) has emphasized accountability of schools. Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) clearly visualizes “decentralizing school management and accountability” as a means to improving school performance. Policy documents continue to emphasize access to schooling and concurrently aim to achieve quality in school education. The critical role of schools in the changing education context in terms of its effectiveness and improvement is gaining key importance for providing quality education for all children. There is a greater realization that in view of the huge investments in terms of human and other resources in school education sector, the school needs to perform and deliver at its optimum level. The quality initiatives in school education sector, thus, necessitate focusing on school, its performance and improvement. Therefore, to meet the demand for high quality education, a growing emphasis is being placed upon comprehensive school evaluation systems as they are central to school improvement initiatives.

2. School Evaluation for School Improvement

Each school is unique to its own context, size, conditions and provisions. A school is an institution and a space for learning, having the mandate to translate national vision and curriculum in their true spirit. It has been acknowledged nationally and internationally that schools do matter and have major impact upon the development of learners, learning process and life of children. The school is now increasingly recognized as a key agency to improve performance of learners and for the realization of educational objectives. The focus is gradually shifting on schools to take initiatives for their change and improvement in a progressive way. In other words, the school is visualized as an organization capable of reforming itself rather

than being totally dependent on external support systems. School evaluation refers to the evaluation of an individual school—its performance in a holistic manner. It is gaining importance as a means for empowering school to make professional judgment on critical performance areas. It facilitates the schools to understand their strengths, opportunities for improvement, and on developing plans, prioritizing actions, decision-making, resource utilization and creating evidence based support for their improvement.

The purpose of school evaluation needs to be understood in the context of its role and contribution to the wider goal of improving the quality of schools. It needs not be perceived as an exercise to identify the weaknesses or deficiencies in the performance of a school and expecting compliance of suggestion for interventions in respect of identified weaknesses or deficiencies. Currently, schools do not have a ‘structured mechanism in place’ to systematically and honestly review and evaluate their performance. Hence, it is imperative to focus on every school as a point of delivery and improve its performance in a progressive manner through a continuous process of evaluation. School evaluation empowers the school as a whole to celebrate its change and encourages for sustainable transformation.

3. School Evaluation Practices: Current Status

Historically, school inspection and supervision by educational authorities has been considered as an instrument of school evaluation, the outcome of which is generally presented in the form of an inspection report. The inspection of schools is generally conducted without criteria of evaluation and clearly written inspection guidelines. In recent years, the efforts have been initiated by some states to develop and implement structured school evaluation programme against pre-determined criteria of evaluation. The states like Gujarat, Karnataka, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh, etc. have taken positive initiatives to improve quality of elementary education through School Assessment, Monitoring and Accreditation processes for which assessment and monitoring tools was developed. Each state has defined its own indicators, processes and approaches to assess school quality. Though varied in nature, these practices are indicative of the fact that there is greater recognition for assessing school performance to improve quality of schools and learning levels of children,

particularly at the elementary level. These initiatives are based on the assumption that systematic school evaluation leads to improvement in the overall quality of the schools and also the performance levels of teachers and students.

4. School Standards and Evaluation Framework (SSEF)

The School Standards and Evaluation Framework is developed as a comprehensive instrument for school evaluation. It enables the school to evaluate its critical performance areas against the well-defined criteria in a focused and strategic manner. The School Standards and Evaluation Framework is developed through a participatory approach, involving state-level functionaries, district and block level education officers, educators, school heads, teacher unions, teachers, etc. It is based on mutual consensus of all stakeholders on 'How to evaluate Indian schools' to improve their performance. The School Standards and Evaluation Framework has been piloted at each stage of its development.

4.1 Objective of School Standards and Evaluation Framework (SSEF)

The major objective of School Standards and Evaluation Framework is to establish and refer to an agreed set of key domains, core standards and processes which all schools must use as well defined criteria for school evaluation. It will provide a clear road-map for each school to embark on a journey of self and external evaluation, leading towards incremental school improvement with accountability.

4.2 Salient Features of School Standards and Evaluation Framework (SSEF)

1. Identifies key domains as critical performance areas and a set of core standards under each key domain as reference points for evaluation and improvement.
2. A comprehensive instrument for both self-evaluation and external-evaluation.
3. Flexible and adaptable for contextualization by the states, addressing the needs of diverse schools.
4. Clear, logical and easy-to-use by the school and external evaluators.
5. Makes the evaluation process consistent and transparent.
6. Enables schools to evaluate their current level of performance and provide concrete directions towards the next level of improvement.

4.3 Guiding Principles of School Standards and Evaluation Framework

The process of development of the School Standards and Evaluation Framework follows a very systematic approach. The conceptual framework is strongly supported

by evidence-based national and international researches on school evaluation. It acknowledges the diversity of schools and the students-cultural, linguistic and socio-economic background. The School Standards and Evaluation Framework is developed on the guiding principles of Constitutional Values, National Policies on Education, Curriculum Frameworks, etc. and is also in resonance with the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (2009), Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan and Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan. The principles of inclusion and equity are considered as the basic premises for developing the framework. The SSEF is strongly built on the notion of “All children can learn” and “All schools can improve”.

4.4 Structure of School Standards and Evaluation Framework

The School Standards and Evaluation Framework comprises seven ‘Key Domains’ as the significant criteria for evaluating performance of schools. Each ‘Key Domain’ has a set of ‘Core Standards’ that addresses the most significant elements of the respective Key Domain. The evaluation of each ‘Key Domain’ entails sequential steps. These steps are ‘Reflective Prompts’, ‘Factual Information’, ‘Core Standards’ (with descriptive content), ‘Supportive Evidences’, which together facilitate schools in making professional judgment of their level of performance. Each school is expected to prepare a consolidated evaluation report in the ‘School Evaluation Dashboard’. The SSEF is flexible for adaptation contextualization and translation in the state specific language. The structural arrangement of each Key Domain facilitates each school to evaluate their own performance in a systematic and professional manner with the support of evidences.

5. Key Domains and Core Standards

The structural arrangement of each Key Domain facilitates each school to evaluate their own performance in a systematic and professional manner with the support of evidences.

5.1 Enabling Resources of School- Availability, Adequacy and Usability: This Key Domain addresses the quality dimensions of schools, i.e. School Premises, Playground with Sports Equipment and Materials, Classrooms and Other Rooms, Electricity and Gadgets, Library, Laboratory, Computer, Ramp (where provisioning

exist) Mid-Day Meal, Kitchen and Utensils, Drinking Water, Hand Wash Facilities and Toilets.

5.2 Teaching- Learning and Assessment: In this Key Domain measurable expectations included are Teachers' Understanding of Learners, Subject and Pedagogical Knowledge of Teachers, Planning for Teaching, Enabling Learning Environment, Teaching-learning Process, Class Management, Learners' Assessment Utilization of Teaching-learning Resources and Teachers' Reflection on their own Teaching-learning Practices.

5.3 Learners' Progress, Attainment and Development: The element cover in this domain are Learners' Attendance, Learners' Participation and Engagement, Learners' Progress, Learners' Personal and Social Development and Learners' Attainment .

5.4 Managing Teacher Performance and Professional Development: Orientation of New Teachers, Teachers' Attendance, Assigning Responsibilities and Defining Performance Goal, Teachers' Preparedness for Curricular Expectations, Monitoring of Teachers Performance and Teachers' Professional Development need to be taken into account to bring about holistic improvement.

5.5 School Leadership and Management: It includes Building Vision and Setting Direction, Leading Change and Improvement, Leading Teaching-learning Leading and Management of School.

5.6 Inclusion, Health and Safety: Inclusive Culture, Inclusion of Children With Special Needs (CWSN), Physical Safety, Psychological Safety and Health and Hygiene are setting benchmark for quality.

5.7 Productive Community Participation: Organisation and Management of SMC/SDMC, Role in School Improvement, School-Community Linkages, Community as Learning Resource and Empowering Community are significant dimensions of this Key Domain.

6. Approaches and Processes for School Evaluation: Self and External

The SSEF is a strategic instrument for both self and external evaluation. Self-evaluation is considered as the nucleus of the school evaluation process. It is intended to provide the school personnel with a common understanding of the school's overall performance and identify priority areas for improvement. External-

evaluation follows as a complementary exercise to self-evaluation so as to ensure that the two approaches work in synergy and respect the strengths and insights that each brings to the overall evaluation. It aims to develop a complete picture of the school for supporting its overall improvement.

6.1 Self Evaluation

1. A continuous and cyclic process; embedded in day- to-day activities of the school.
2. School, as a whole, acts collaboratively involving all its stakeholders, including the SMC/ SDMC.
3. Process of self-evaluation includes steps such as building preparedness among all stakeholders; collecting and analyzing evidences; recording judgment in the response matrix; preparing consolidated report in the School Evaluation Dashboard.
4. Is undertaken throughout the term (July-June) (The consolidated report filled in School Evaluation Dashboard needs to be submitted at the end of the term).

6.2 External Evaluation

1. Complementary exercise to self-evaluation to develop a complete and objective picture of school performance.
2. Evaluators are external to the school and internal to the system- like Education Officials, Head Teachers of other schools, other Public Administrators, etc.
3. Evaluators act as ‘Critical Friend’ to school; analyze and review self-evaluation documents; seek additional information from teachers, parents, children and other stakeholders; observe classroom practices and functioning of the school; give objective feedback to school; record judgment and prepare the evaluation report; provide support in prioritized areas for improvement.
4. Is planned for twice a year, typically as mid-term and end-term exercise. (The states may decide on the frequency of external evaluation as per their criteria).

7. Guidelines for School Evaluation

The following are guidelines for school evaluation as laid by school standards and evaluation framework.

7.1 Self- evaluation guidelines

Building Preparedness

Collecting Evidences

Capturing Stakeholder Voices

School Observations

Classroom Observation

Review of Documents

Identifying and Recording Status of School Functioning

Identifying Strengths and Opportunities for Improvement

Formulation of Action for Continuous Improvement Plan (ACIP)

Integration of ACIP with School Development Plan

7.2 External - evaluation guidelines

Building Preparedness

Collecting Evidences

Capturing Stakeholder Voices

School Observations

Classroom Observation

Review of Documents

Identifying and Recording Status of School Functioning

Identifying Strengths and Opportunities for Improvement

Examining the Action for Continuous Improvement Plan (ACIP)

Examining integration of ACIP with School Development Plan

8. State Specificity, Adaptation, Contextualization and Translation

The SSEF provides the broad guidelines to institutionalize school evaluation by the respective states. It encourages local adaptation by the states, based on their socio-cultural context and state-specific policies. The framework is flexible for adaptation, contextualisation & translation in the state specific language.

For the evaluation of school the following instruments are used by school standards and evaluation framework.

8.1 School Evaluation Dashboard

The School Evaluation Dashboard facilitate each school to provide consolidated self-evaluation report in key performance domains and core standards, including action for improvement. It has three parts:

- i. Basic Information about learners and teachers

- ii. 'School Evaluation Composite Matrix', which provides the holistic picture of school performance across seven key domains and their core standards, and
- iii. Action for Continuous School Improvement Plan. The dashboard has also the provision for external evaluation report.

The 'School Evaluation Dashboard' is available online in a dedicated web portal. Each school can submit its self-evaluation report by using the interactive web portal. The external evaluators have to use the same web portal to provide their evaluation report. A consolidated school evaluation report, encompassing both self and external evaluation is generated online by the web portal.

The 'School Evaluation Dashboard' can be used for viewing and analysing school evaluation report and data which can further be consolidated at the block, district, and state level to extend appropriate support to school. It also facilitates schools in monitoring their own progress and improvement over the years. It would further direct the schools to take appropriate action for its continuous improvement and allow for revisiting their practices. The consolidated data at the block, district and state level can also direct policy-level decisions across the levels.

8.2 Web Portal

The web portal has all programme related documents which can be downloaded by all the users. The web portal has an interactive platform wherein each school can submit its self-evaluation report online. The external evaluators have to use the same web portal to provide their evaluation report. A consolidated school evaluation report is generated online encompassing both self and external school evaluation report. Each school can create its login ID by using UDISE code as login ID and can generate its password. Similarly blocks, districts and states can create their login ID and password. The web portal has a most unique feature in that it has access to school evaluation report of any school by the parents and public to observe and provide feedback. The web portal can be used by all the stakeholders as follows:

8.2.1 School: Creates its login ID by using UDISE code as login ID and can generate their password. Feeds school self-evaluation data and action for school improvement online. Final submission of self-evaluation data generates school self-evaluation report.

8.2.2 External Evaluators: Create login ID and password for the respective school. Access school self-evaluation report of the respective school. Feed school external evaluation data and generate external evaluation report.

8.2.3 Consolidated school evaluation report: Generate online school evaluation report encompassing both self and external evaluation.

8.2.4 Block, District, State and National level: Create login ID and password for the block, district, state and national level. Access evaluation report of each school, monitor the process and progress at the block and district level. Generate summary of the school performance evaluation and analyze the levels in the respective domains and core standards at the block, district, state and national level.

9. The National Programme on School Standards and Evaluation (NPSSE)

The NPSSE is an integrated and holistic effort towards school evaluation. It aims to cover all the schools of different size, context and management over a period of time in a systematic and sustained manner. The effective implementation of the NPSSE necessitates the development of material, building capacity of critical mass of human resources, institutional support and arrangement. Besides, research is an overarching activity and inextricably related to each phase of the NPSSE tasks.

9.1 Operational Structure

It is strongly believed that collaborative endeavour amongst experts, policy makers and practitioners would provide the right direction for developing, implementing and institutionalizing school standards and evaluation. The National University of Educational Planning and Administration (NUEPA) is leading the programme under the leadership of Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD). A National Technical Group (NTG) has been constituted comprising members from diverse institutions across the country to extend guidance and support. The National Programme on School Standards and Evaluation visualises the key role of the states in rolling out the programme in turn spirit. It has acknowledged the school assessment and monitoring efforts taken by the states like Gujarat, Odisha, Karnataka, etc. for improving the quality of elementary education. Many other states are also initiating their efforts towards assessing school performance. Hence,

substantial numbers of states have the capacity and resources to contextualize and adapt the National Programme on School Standards and Evaluation. As part of NPSSE initiatives to engage with states, State Technical Group (STG) is being constituted to take toward the state level tasks. It is also proposed to establish a Unit on School Standards and Evaluation (USSE) in each state. It is envisaged that the USSE in each state in close collaboration with STG, experts and teachers will engage in the development, adaptation and context specific framework for school evaluation, guideline for evaluation process, training manual and build capacity of the critical mass of human resources for school evaluation. The state will also identify institutions, schools, university department of education to work in tandem for developing a state specific model of school evaluation.

9.2 Development of Material

The following documents have been developed as part of the NPSSE Programme:

1. National Programme on School Standards and Evaluation (NPSSE): A programme document
2. School Standards and Evaluation Framework (SSEF)
3. Guidelines for School Evaluation
4. School Evaluation Dashboard and Web Portal

9.3 Capacity Building

In order to successfully roll out the programme nationally, it is important to build capacity at the state, block/ district and school levels, by organizing regular meetings, trainings, workshops, etc. These capacity building programmes aim to develop adequate competence at each level to understand the SSEF and evaluate schools in a systematic and standardized manner.

9.4 Institutional Mechanism

The NPSSE aims to institutionalize School Evaluation by developing national, state and school level mechanisms. It will collaborate with governmental institutions and professional experts at each level to the SSEF in its true spirit.

9.5 Research

The SSEU will pilot the SSEF nationally to judge its effectiveness (validity and reliability). It will also conduct research on state, national and international school evaluation practices to improve and enhance the SSEF regularly.

9.6 Development of Web Portal and Mobile Application

In order to make the School Evaluation Reports and Improvement process easily accessible to all the stakeholders including schools, development of Web Portal and Mobile Application is an integral part of the NPSSE operational plan.

School Evaluation is a systematic and sustained approach to engage in enquiry and reflection to make school a better place for students, teachers and community. Hence, 'school improvement' fundamentally means improving what a school does through continuous evaluation.

10. Summary

There is a greater realization that in view of the huge investments in terms of human and other resources in school education sector, the school needs to perform and deliver at its optimum level. The focus is gradually shifting on schools to take initiatives for their change and improvement in a progressive way.

In other words, the school is visualized as an organization capable of reforming itself rather than being totally dependent on external support systems. The School Standards and Evaluation Framework (SSEF) is developed as a comprehensive instrument for school evaluation keeping in view the diversity of schools and children in India. The SSEF has truly translated the spirit of 'School Evaluation' as the means and 'School Improvement' as the goal. The SSEF not only facilitates school evaluation process, but also provides pathways for change and improvement. Accordingly, each school can evaluate the current level of its performance and also get the concrete directions to undertake for the next level of improvement. The principles of inclusion and equity are considered as the basic premises for developing the framework. The SSEF is strongly built on the notion of "All children can learn" and "All schools can improve". The SSEF comprises seven 'Key Domains' as the significant criteria for evaluating performance of schools.

Each key domain begins with a brief introduction to highlight the importance of the specific performance area for the school. It also describes significance of the key

domains. The SSE Framework is a strategic instrument for both self and external evaluation. Self-evaluation is considered as the nucleus of the school evaluation process. External Evaluation follows as a complementary exercise to self-evaluation so as to ensure that the two approaches work in synergy and respect the strengths and insights that each brings to the overall evaluation. The ‘School Evaluation Dashboard’ is available online in a dedicated web portal. Each school can submit its self-evaluation report by using the interactive web portal. The external evaluators have to use the same web portal to provide their evaluation report. The National Programme on School Standards and Evaluation (NPSSE) is an initiative to institutionalize school evaluation for improving the quality of school education, both at the elementary and secondary levels. It is an endeavour to support continuing evaluation of each school for its improvement and development.

