

Teachers' Perceptions of Current Assessment Practices and their Limitations: A Study of Government and Private School Teachers

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Abstract

Assessment lies at the heart of the teaching-learning process, shaping not only how student achievement is recorded but also how teaching itself is planned and delivered. This study examined how school teachers perceive the assessment practices currently in use in their classrooms and the defects and limitations they associate with these practices. A structured questionnaire comprising two composite scales, Current Assessment Practices (CAP) and Limitations of Current Assessment Practices (LCAP), was administered to a sample of 80 secondary school teachers (26 male, 54 female) drawn from government and private schools, spanning a range of teaching experience from below five years to more than twenty years. Responses were analysed descriptively, and composite scale scores were compared across gender, type of school, and teaching experience using the Mann-Whitney U test and the Kruskal-Wallis H test, non-parametric procedures appropriate to the ordinal, non-normally distributed nature of the data. The findings indicate that teachers hold generally favourable perceptions of current assessment practices, while simultaneously acknowledging notable defects and limitations in those same practices. None of the three background variables examined, gender, type of school, or teaching experience, produced a statistically significant difference in either CAP or LCAP scores, suggesting that these perceptions are broadly shared across the teaching profession rather than confined to particular subgroups. The study concludes by discussing the implications of these findings for assessment reform and teacher professional development, and recommends sustained, practice-oriented training to help teachers translate favourable attitudes toward assessment into practices that more fully address its recognised shortcomings.

Keywords: assessment practices, classroom assessment, teacher perception, government and private schools, assessment reform

1. INTRODUCTION

Assessment is widely regarded as one of the most powerful levers available to a school system for shaping the quality of teaching and learning. It performs several interlocking functions: it certifies achievement, provides feedback that guides further learning, and informs teachers about the effectiveness of their own instruction. Over the past two decades, education systems in India and elsewhere have moved away from a narrow reliance on terminal, memory-based examinations toward broader conceptions of assessment that also value continuous, formative, and school-based evaluation of the learner's scholastic and co-scholastic development. This shift has placed considerable new demands on classroom teachers, who are

now expected to design, administer, and interpret a wider range of assessment tools than examination-centered systems previously required.

Yet policy intentions and classroom realities do not always coincide. A growing body of research on assessment reform in Indian schools, much of it concerned with the Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) scheme introduced under the Right to Education Act, 2009, has documented a persistent gap between what assessment reform envisages and what teachers can implement in practice. Teachers frequently report positive attitudes toward the stated goals of broader formative assessment, while citing large class sizes, inadequate training, increased paperwork, and unclear guidelines as obstacles to implementing these goals with fidelity.

Against this backdrop, the present study examines how teachers themselves describe and evaluate the assessment practices currently used in their schools. Rather than assuming that reform has either succeeded or failed, the study asks teachers directly: what does current assessment practice look like from their vantage point, and what do they see as its principal defects and limitations? Answering these questions descriptively, and testing whether the answers vary across gender, school type, and teaching experience, provides a grounded picture of assessment as it is actually practiced, which can usefully complement policy-level accounts of assessment reform.

2. STATEMENTS OF THE PROBLEM

Despite sustained attention to assessment reform, little is known about how classroom teachers themselves perceive the assessment practices they must use, or whether such perceptions vary by gender, school type, or teaching experience. This study addresses that gap by examining teachers' perceptions of Current Assessment Practices (CAP) and their Limitations (LCAP) among government and private school teachers

3. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Research on teachers' assessment beliefs and practices consistently finds a gap between what teachers believe and what they actually do in classrooms, a gap shaped less by individual conviction than by structural conditions like workload, training, and institutional support.

Indeed, Rae et al. (2015) found that private-school teachers in the Indian context had truly positive attitudes toward NCF reform priorities, broadening assessment beyond scholastic dimensions and expanding internal, school-based assessment, but that these beliefs did not map cleanly onto reported practice. Assumptions about private/public schooling are complicated by sectoral comparisons. Survey research in Lahore district found no significant differences between sectors in classroom assessment techniques (files.eric.ed.gov, EJ1209818). This indicates that a practice is shaped more by shared systemic pressures than institutional type.

The literature on India's Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) scheme speaks directly to the defects-and-limitations dimension of this study. Teachers in both CBSE and state-board settings regularly describe CCE as an administrative headache that impedes instructional flow and implementation without ongoing training. In a survey, most felt that it increased paperwork and interrupted teaching, but many said it helped identify the existing knowledge of students (Academia.edu, "Appraisal of CCE," 2019). Likewise, a study in the Malwa region of Punjab found that after several years of implementing CCE, elementary teachers faced problems with inconsistent evaluation methods and an additional workload (ResearchGate, 2018).

Demographic variation, by contrast, appears muted: research on CCE perceptions in Assam found no significant gender or locale differences (International Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation, 2020), though a few studies have found interaction effects involving qualification and training (Academia.edu, 2015). Two themes motivate the present study: first, teacher perceptions of reform tend to combine genuine endorsement of goals with candid recognition of implementation flaws, paralleling the CAP/LCAP distinction here; second, demographic differences in perception have generally proved modest or non-significant, raising the question of whether this pattern holds for the present sample and instruments.

4. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To examine teachers' perceptions of the nature and characteristics of current assessment practices (CAP) in their schools.
2. To examine teachers' perceptions of the major defects and limitations of current assessment practices (LCAP).
3. To compare scores of CAPS and LCAP depending on gender, type of school, and teaching experience.

5. HYPOTHESIS

The null hypotheses tested were as follows:

1. H01: No significant difference exists between male and female teachers in CAP scores.
2. H02: There is no significant difference in CAP scores of teachers in government and private schools.
3. H03: There is no significant difference in the CAP scores of teachers with varying lengths of teaching experience.
4. H04: There is no significant difference in LCAP scores between male and female teachers
5. H05: There is no significant difference between the LCAP scores of teachers of government schools and private schools.
6. H06: No statistically significant difference exists in LCAP scores between teachers with differing teaching experiences

6. METHOD

6.1 Research Design: The study employed a descriptive survey design, collecting teachers' self-reported perceptions at one point in time and comparing these perceptions across existing demographic groups, rather than using experimental manipulation

6.2 Sample: The sample comprised 80 school teachers, of whom 26 were male and 54 were female. Teachers were drawn from both government (n=40) and private (n=40) schools and represented four bands of teaching experience: below 5 years, 6-10 years, 11-20 years, and above 20 years (n=80 with valid experience data).

6.3 Tools Used: Two composite scales were used: Current Assessment Practices (CAP), measuring agreement with statements on existing assessment procedures, tools, and routine; and limitations of Current Assessment Practices (LCAP), measuring agreement with statements on shortcomings or gaps in those practices. Both used a four-point response format (Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree).

6.4 Statistical Techniques: Descriptive statistics were computed for both composite scales. Given non-normal distributions, non-parametric tests were used: Mann-Whitney U (gender, school type) and Kruskal-Wallis H (teaching experience), with significance set at $\alpha = 0.05$.

7. DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Present assessment practices and their defects

Having established the sample and design above, the analysis now turns to teachers' perceptions of current assessment practices and the defects they associate with them, addressing the study's first two objectives. Two dimensions are examined: 1) covers teachers' endorsement of current practice (the CAP scale), and 2) covers their perceived shortcomings in it (the LCAP scale). The two need not align; a teacher can view current practice favorably while still seeing its defects. For each, the analysis first presents response distributions by gender, then compares composite CAP and LCAP scores by gender, type of school, and teaching experience (Mann-Whitney U for the two-group comparisons; Kruskal-Wallis H for experience), to establish both the general pattern of perception and whether it varies across subgroups.

7.2 Nature and Characteristics of the Present Assessment Practices

Table 1 presents the distribution of teacher responses to the CAP scale, disaggregated by gender. Of the 80 teachers in the sample, 26 were male, and 54 were female. Because the CAP scale comprised multiple items, each respondent contributed more than one response across the four agreement categories, which is why the reported totals exceed the sample size of 80; the percentages in the final column are likewise computed across the pooled item-responses rather than across individual respondents, and are reproduced here exactly as presented in the source tabulation.

Table 1: Responses on Current Assessment Practices (CAP) by Gender

Response	Male	Female	Total	% of Total
Strongly Disagree	0	1	1	1.3%
Disagree	7	16	23	28.8%
Agree	81*	172*	253	316.3%*
Strongly Agree	16	27	43	53.8%
Total	26	54	80	100.0%

Interpretation: Most responses (253) fall under 'Agree', with a further 43 'Strongly Agree' showing generally favourable perceptions of current assessment practices, alongside a smaller but notable minority (23 responses) expressing disagreement.

7.2.1 Significant Differences in Current Assessment Practices by Gender

To determine whether male and female teachers differed systematically in their overall perception of current assessment practices, the composite CAP score for each respondent was computed and compared across the two gender groups using the Mann-Whitney U test. Table 2 reports the descriptive statistics for the composite CAP variable and gender (coded 1 = Male, 2 = Female), while Tables 3 and 4 present the rank-based comparison and the associated test statistic.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min	Max
Current Assessment Practices	80	12.2250	1.07885	9.00	16.00
Gender	80	1.68	0.471	1	2

Table 3: Mann-Whitney U Test — Ranks (Gender)

Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Male	26	43.19	1123.00
Female	54	39.20	2117.00

Table 4: Test Statistics (Gender)

Statistic	Value
Mann-Whitney U	632.000
Wilcoxon W	2117.000
Z	-.797
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.462

Interpretation: With $p = 0.462$ (> 0.05), the null hypothesis is retained: there is no significant gender-based difference in perceptions of current assessment practices. Male teachers show a marginally higher mean rank, but the gap is not meaningful.

7.2.2 Significant Differences in Current Assessment Practices by Type of School

The same composite CAP score was then compared across the two types of school represented in the sample, government and private, again using the Mann-Whitney U test, since school type is a dichotomous grouping variable. Table 5 restates the descriptive statistics for CAP alongside those for the type-of-school variable (1 = Government, 2 = Private), and Tables 6 and 7 present the corresponding rank comparison and test statistic.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min	Max
Current Assessment Practices	80	12.2250	1.07885	9.00	16.00
Types of School	80	1.51	0.503	1	2

Table 6: Mann-Whitney U Test — Ranks (Type of School)

Type of School	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Government	40	37.96	1480.50
Private	41	42.91	1759.50

Table 7: Test Statistics (Type of School)

Statistic	Value
Mann-Whitney U	700.00
Wilcoxon W	1480.500
Z	-1.056
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.291

Interpretation: $p = 0.291$ (> 0.05): no significant difference between government and private school teachers' views of current assessment practices, despite private-school teachers holding a slightly higher mean rank.

7.2.3 Significant Differences in Current Assessment Practices by Teaching Experience

Teaching experience was recorded in four bands (Below 5 Years, 6-10 Years, 11-20 Years, above 20 Years) and, as a variable with more than two categories, was compared against the composite CAP score using the Kruskal-Wallis H test rather than the Mann-Whitney U test. Table 8 presents the descriptive statistics, Table 9 the mean ranks across the four experience bands, and Table 10 the resulting chi-square statistic.

Table 8: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min	Max
Current Assessment Practices	80	12.2250	1.07885	9.00	16.00
Teaching Experience	79	2.34	1.096	1	4

Table 9: Kruskal-Wallis Rank Test — Ranks (Teaching Experience)

Teaching Experience	N	Mean Rank
Below 5 Years	24	41.35
6-10 Years	18	31.75
11-20 Years	23	39.04
Above 20 Years	14	49.86

Table 10: Test Statistics (Teaching Experience)

Statistic	Value
Chi-Square	6.138
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.105

Interpretation: Although teachers with 20+ years show the highest mean rank (49.86) and those with 6-10 years the lowest (31.75), the Chi-square test is not significant ($p = 0.105 > 0.05$)—teaching experience does not significantly influence perceptions of current assessment practices.

7.3 Major Defects and Limitations of the Existing Assessment Practices

Attention now turns from teachers' descriptions of current assessment practices to their evaluation of the shortcomings inherent in those practices. Table 11 presents the item-level response distribution on the LCAP scale, again disaggregated by gender and again reflecting a multi-item pooled tabulation, so that the reported totals and percentages exceed the sample size of 80 for the same reason.

Table 11: Responses on Defects & Limitations of Current Assessment Practices (LCAP) by Gender

Response	Male	Female	Total	% of Total
Strongly Disagree	17	37	54	67.5%
Disagree	27	62	89	111.3%
Agree	72	133	205	256.3%
Strongly Agree	14	38	52	65.0%

Total	26	54	80	100.0%
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Interpretation: Responses are mixed: the largest bloc (205) falls under 'Agree', with an additional 52 'Strongly Agree', showing many teachers acknowledge shortcomings in the current system, while a sizeable group (54 + 89) disagree that major defects exist.

7.3.1 Significant Differences on Defects & Limitations by Gender

As with CAP, the composite LCAP score was compared across gender using the Mann-Whitney U test. Table 12 gives the descriptive statistics, Table 13 the rank comparison, and Table 14 the test statistic.

Table 12: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min	Max
Defects & Limitations of Current Assessment	80	83.7375	5.57286	74.00	99.00
Gender	80	1.68	0.471	1	2

Table 13: Mann-Whitney U Test — Ranks (Gender)

Gender	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Male	26	37.94	986.50
Female	54	41.73	2253.50

Table 14: Test Statistics (Gender)

Statistic	Value
Mann-Whitney U	635.500
Wilcoxon W	986.500
Z	-.686
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.493

Interpretation: $p = 0.493 (> 0.05)$: no significant gender difference. Despite a slightly higher mean rank for female teachers, both genders broadly agree that the current system has defects.

7.3.2 Significant Differences on Defects & Limitations by Type of School

The comparison was repeated for the type of school. Table 15 presents the descriptive statistics, Table 16 the rank comparison, and Table 17 the test statistic.

Table 15: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min	Max
Defects & Limitations of Current Assessment	80	83.7375	5.57286	74.00	99.00
Types of School	80	1.51	0.503	1	2

Table 16: Mann-Whitney U Test — Ranks (Type of School)

Type of School	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Government	39	38.36	1496.00

Private	41	42.54	1744.00
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Table 17: Test Statistics (Type of School)

Statistic	Value
Mann-Whitney U	716.000
Wilcoxon W	1496.000
Z	-.807
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.420

Interpretation: $p = 0.420 (> 0.05)$: government and private school teachers share a similar view of the deficits in the current assessment system; the type of school has no significant influence.

7.3.3 Significant Differences on Defects & Limitations by Teaching Experience

Finally, the composite LCAP score was compared across the four teaching-experience bands using the Kruskal-Wallis H test. Table 18 presents the descriptive statistics, Table 19 the mean ranks by experience band, and Table 20 the resulting chi-square statistic.

Table 18: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Min	Max
Defects & Limitations of Current Assessment	80	83.7375	5.57286	74.00	99.00
Teaching Experience	79	2.34	1.096	1	4

Table 19: Kruskal-Wallis Test — Ranks (Teaching Experience)

Teaching Experience	N	Mean Rank
Below 5 Years	24	40.81
6-10 Years	18	38.72
11-20 Years	23	40.04
Above 20 Years	14	40.18

Table 20: Test Statistics (Teaching Experience)

Statistic	Value
Chi-Square	.087
df	3
Asymp. Sig.	.993

Interpretation: Mean ranks are nearly identical across all experience groups (38.7–40.8), and the test is far from significant ($p = 0.993$). Teaching experience does not influence perceptions of defects in the current assessment system.

8. CONCLUSION

The present study set out to examine how school teachers perceive the assessment practices currently in use in their classrooms, and the defects and limitations they associate with those practices, and to determine whether these perceptions vary by gender, type of school, or length of teaching experience. The

evidence gathered from 80 teachers paints a picture that is, at first glance, seemingly contradictory but, on closer reading, entirely coherent: teachers regard current assessment practices favorably in general terms, while at the same time recognizing specific and substantial defects within those same practices.

On the CAP scale, the overwhelming majority of responses fell in the 'Agree' and 'Strongly Agree' categories (296 of 320 pooled item responses, or 92.6%), indicating that teachers are, broadly speaking, comfortable with and supportive of the assessment procedures, tools, and routines they currently use. This should not, however, be read as uncritical satisfaction. On the LCAP scale, a clear majority of pooled responses (257 of 400, or 64.3%) also fell in the 'Agree' and 'Strongly Agree' categories, showing that a substantial share of the same teacher population perceives real shortcomings such as gaps in how assessment is designed, administered, or used to inform teaching, in the very practices they otherwise endorse. Rather than reflecting inconsistency, this pattern aligns with findings from the reviewed literature on assessment reform in Indian schools: teachers tend to endorse the underlying goals and general shape of an assessment scheme while simultaneously reporting practical difficulties in its day-to-day implementation.

The inferential analysis reinforces the impression that these perceptions are widely shared across the sampled teaching community, rather than being the preserve of any one group. Across all six comparisons undertaken CAP and LCAP scores tested separately by gender, by type of school, and by teaching experience none reached statistical significance at the 0.05 level (gender: $p = .462$ for CAP, $p = .493$ for LCAP; type of school: $p = .291$ for CAP, $p = .420$ for LCAP; teaching experience: $p = .105$ for CAP, $p = .993$ for LCAP). All six null hypotheses were therefore retained. Male and female teachers, government and private school teachers, and teachers at every stage of their career hold essentially the same views of both the strengths and the defects of current assessment practice. The absence of a significant experience effect is worth noting in particular: even teachers with more than twenty years in the classroom, who might be expected to have either grown accustomed to existing practices or become most critical of them, did not differ meaningfully from their more recently qualified colleagues.

Taken as a whole, the findings suggest that the defects and limitations teachers identify in current assessment practice are not a matter of unfamiliarity, inexperience, or sectoral difference, but appear to be structural features of the assessment system as it is presently implemented, features that are recognised in much the same way by teachers regardless of who they are or where they teach. This has a direct bearing on how assessment reform might usefully proceed: because the concerns are widely and evenly shared, interventions aimed at addressing them are unlikely to need to be tailored separately by gender, school type, or seniority, and can instead be designed as system-wide measures.

8.1 Limitations of the Study

The findings should be read in light of certain limitations. The sample of 80 teachers, while adequate for the non-parametric comparisons undertaken, was drawn from a limited number of schools and cannot be assumed to represent the full diversity of the teaching profession beyond the study area. The reliance on self-report also means that the study captures teachers' perceptions of assessment practice rather than direct observation of that practice in the classroom, and the two need not always coincide. Finally, the multi-item pooling of responses on the CAP and LCAP scales, while methodologically necessary given the instrument design, means that the item-level texture of teachers' agreement and disagreement, which specific practices they endorse, and which specific defects concern them most, could not be examined in this analysis and would repay closer study.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on these findings, the following recommendations are offered to school administrators, teacher educators, and policymakers seeking to strengthen classroom assessment.

9.1 Recommendations for Practice

1. Build on existing goodwill. Because teachers already view current assessment practices favourably, reform efforts are more likely to succeed if they are framed as refining and supporting existing practice rather than as replacing it outright.
2. Target the specific defects teachers report, rather than the assessment scheme in general. School-level reviews should probe which aspects of current practice teachers find most limiting, for example, time and workload pressures, the adequacy of training in assessment tools, or the clarity of guidelines for recording and using assessment data, and address these directly.
3. Provide sustained, practice-oriented professional development in assessment, rather than one-off orientation sessions, so that teachers are equipped not only to value continuous and comprehensive forms of assessment but also to implement them with less administrative strain.
4. Since perceptions do not differ by school type, professional development and support structures can be planned jointly for government and private school teachers rather than as separate, sector-specific programmes.
5. Because perceptions also do not differ by experience level, mentoring or peer-learning arrangements need not be structured as senior-to-junior transfer of assessment expertise; instead, mixed-experience working groups may be equally productive in surfacing and addressing shared concerns.

9.2 Recommendations for Policy

1. Assessment policy at the school or system level should treat teachers' endorsement of assessment goals and their reported implementation difficulties as two separate levers, and should monitor both rather than assuming that positive attitudes alone indicate effective practice.
2. Given the consistency of teacher perceptions across gender, school type, and experience, policy responses to the defects identified in this study can reasonably be pursued as uniform, system-wide measures rather than differentiated interventions.

9.3 Recommendations for Further Research

1. Future studies should examine the item-level content of the CAP and LCAP scales to identify which specific practices and which specific defects are most strongly endorsed, since the composite scores used here cannot distinguish, for instance, concerns about workload from concerns about training adequacy.
2. A larger and more geographically diverse sample would allow the present findings to be tested for generalisability beyond the study area.
3. Complementing self-reported perceptions with classroom observation or documentary analysis of assessment records would help establish how closely teachers' favourable perceptions of current practice correspond to practice as actually enacted.
4. Qualitative follow-up work, for example, interviews or focus groups with a subset of the sampled teachers, would help explain why perceptions are so consistent across demographic groups, and could surface contextual factors not captured by the quantitative scales used here.

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