

## APPRAISAL IN SCHOOL MANAGEMENT: A QUEST FOR A SELF-REFLECTION

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***Abstract:** This paper tries to discuss the general issues and the problems of appraisal for teachers at school level. The solutions are also provided to help the teachers as well as the heads. The discussion focuses on the definition of appraisal, the benefits of appraisal for teachers, and teachers' perspectives. The good understanding on stress will enable teachers to identify the signs of stress earlier and diagnose the stress well.*

***Key-words:** Appraisal, School Management, Self Reflection.*

**WHEN** it was my first time, July 2008, assigned as a vice principal of SMP Negeri 2 Loa Janan, I was thinking that it is really interesting to take this position to enrich my own experiences in how to manage the school, influence and control teachers and another staff due to teaching learning process and material design. Anyhow, the reason is that it revealed that because of my achievement I was assigned. Then, of course it will enable me to take valuable strategy in achieving school targets. It is also an attempt to enlarge my views and awareness in daily interaction as an important part of school stakeholder. It will obviously provide me to be a professional when I am able to exercise my power successfully.

This paper will focus on one aspect of personal skills 'appraisal'. The reason is that this aspect is definitely more relevant in the days of teacher life as the agent of change. To make clear and orderly in writing of this essay, I will start it by discussing various concept of appraisal, which includes definition of appraisal, external appraisal, self-appraisal and group appraisal at the first part. Then, in the following part will present some purposes or advantages of appraisal. The next section I want to focus on the Teacher responses to appraisal. The further discussion will come to identifying problems or disadvantages. Finally I will end this paper by giving solutions to the problems.

### **Definition of Appraisal**

Everyone has different perception to what actually appraisal is. Accordingly, Wragg (1987:2) argues that “How people define and apply appraisal will depend on their own attitudes and values. Those who believe teaching to be a refuge for life’s incompetents will see it as a way of smoking out the indolent and incapable. Many who actually work in education will regard it as part of a continuous process for the improvement and extension of professional skill” (Wragg, 1987. P.2).

The secondary Heads’ Association defined appraisal (cited in NAPCE’s document 30 September 1989, p.2) as a systematic review of performance and potential as part of a full scheme of personal and professional staff development. ACAS in NAPCE (1989, p.3) defines that “appraisal is not as a series of perfunctory periodic, but as a continuous and systematic process intended to help individual teachers with their professional development career planning, and to help ensure that the in-service training and deployment of teachers matches the complementary needs of individual teachers and schools”.

Furthermore, Nathan (1991, p.155) states that teacher appraisal is a structured, agreed and confidential procedure within a school and a Local Education Authority, which assists the two way collection, sharing, evaluation and application of information about a teacher at work. The main purpose of this is to assist that teacher in improving his or her performance as a professional teacher. While, Bollington, et al (1990: vii) express that a properly constructed and presented appraisal system can improve both the professional development of teachers and headteachers that will reflect to the total quality of the management of schools.

As a teacher I absolutely believe that appraisal is the most dominant element providing up- to date data or information in educational management, which is useful to evaluate teachers personal development and increases of their quality of teaching. As it is stated in the NAPCE (1989:3) that the process of appraisal can make teachers more aware of their professional behaviour, skill, and knowledge in considering the outcomes of their practices and the means by which

their objectives were or were not achieved. It is clearly identified that teacher appraisal always reflects to improving the quality of learning experiences of pupils and the practices of teaching.

Appraisal is an essential aspect of professional development and critical evaluation in the organisation or institution. Therefore, to make easy in understanding the concept of appraisal, it will be more helpful to look closely the appraisal based on the methodology. Hancock and Settle (1990, p.20) states that there are three major methods of appraisal; the first is self-appraisal, the second is external appraisal, and the third, group appraisal.

### **External Appraisal**

When I am talking about external appraisal, it is bearing in my mind that there should be a kind of fearful examination deals with the capability and ability of teacher's personal skill to do the job. Nevertheless, after deeply comprehending about what the appraisal actually is on this module, I am aware that there are various types of external appraisal whether it is as formal means or non-formal means. Whatever their means, they are very useful for my better profession.

Formal means that appraisal might be scheduled and conducted by the important line manager (e.g. Teacher appraised by the head teacher or vice principal for official administrative means). It can be categorised like in the classroom observation and interview. Non-formal tends to the system of how the appraisal is exercised, whether it is applied for administration purposes or not, and who plays the role in appraising (e.g. Teacher appraised by her/his colleagues or student in the teacher room friendly).

Based on the model of external appraisal, Wragg (1987, p.22) includes classroom observation, interview and peer appraisal. Additionally Montgomery (1999, p.16) considers that appraisal of teaching without classroom observation is problematic since teachers widely share the review that for most of them it is central activity in teachers' professional life.

As part of classroom observation activities, my head master has a very strict scheduled classroom visits within an academic year. When it would be my class turn being visited, two days or a day before my head teacher told me to be ready and to prepare everything dealing with teaching equipment and teaching

plan such as textbooks, student work sheet, etc. In the process of it, my principal just took a seat among the students for about 45 minutes. After it was finished, while it was break time he/she called me to come to his/her office to obtain direct feed back about my performance in the class and to have a short interview as well. The interview is a further process of appraisal. It was really very boring appraisal system that I ever faced.

Thereby, when the teacher is not skilful enough or hasn't a properly prepared material that is being presented or explained to the student, of course, reflectively the critical responses of the students will appear by showing their apathy to that teacher. Perhaps, it is inevitable that the noisy will happen in the classroom where that teacher is still inside. Teachers then, probably, will try to restrain this situation with the emotional expression. Occasionally, it followed by a commuted physical punishment. It is only based on what I did and saw in the school life, as a junior teacher, in the classroom but not always.

Periodically, if the pupil feel not very happy to the way of how the teacher teaches, they bring home their analytical review of teacher's performance that they faced the whole day in the classroom to tell to their parent as well. Bollington et al (1990) state that "We have only to listen our own children when they return home from school to realize that no matter how perceptive and far sighted the National Curriculum, no matter how well the school manipulates its funds under local management, the single most significant factor in a child's learning is the teacher". It shows that parents will also indirectly involve in the process of teacher appraisal.

At the same time, a teacher is regularly appraised by his or her colleagues in the teacher room. This is illustrated most clearly in a passage of Hancock and Settle's:

"As a natural part of working life all teachers (including incentive allowance holders and headteachers) continually appraise themselves and each other. On the basis of such appraisal teachers 'rate' their own abilities, performance and potential, and teacher managers 'rate' those of the staff working for them." (1990, p.1)

What Hancock and Settle's outlook stated above is definitely true that appraisal is a natural process of evaluation that happens smoothly during our life whether somebody else does it or us. It is not really possible for every single person who is involved in daily activities of organisation or institution will not be appraised. The process of this appraisal run smoothly, no one recognises it.

I conceive the main purpose of providing appraisal as a part of natural process in management setting is to evaluate or analyse the extent of ability, performance and potential personal development in the day to day work place. It can be pointed out that naturally every of us, whatever our profession, will appraise ourselves and be appraised by others around us as well wherever we are, particularly concerning with our position in the organisation. It is intended to recognise our regular improvement of performance

Since the main aim of appraising teacher is to enhance the quality of teacher performance exercised, especially in the classroom teaching. Teacher should be active participant in appraisal process. As Goddard and Emerson (1992, p. 1) stated that the capability of teaching force is the most crucial to the delivery of the school's aims, to the calibre of the education offered, and the quality of educational outcomes. Moreover, they argue that the main task of teachers is to help children to learn, to assist pupils in acquiring knowledge, skills and competencies. If pupils are successful in achieving these aims, the teacher will be judged successful as well, and then the school will flourish.

The effectiveness of teaching process is the most important thing to reach the school's quality. According to Goddard and Emerson's (1992. p.1) views that appraisal promotes quality by monitoring and improving the effectiveness of each individual teacher and the staff as a whole as well. It means that appraisal will lead to the certain level of quality.

From the above statement can be analysed that monitoring is a part of various processes of appraisals. It is fair to say that when the teacher asks the students to write down their critical response on the piece of paper concerning to the way of how teacher explaining the subject from the day to day of teaching learning process. According to Wragg (1987):

“Since many pupils prefer to write an honest account of their perceptions rather than be asked to utter them publicly, there might be a place for some kind written feedback. Some teachers like to hand out a small slip of paper from time to time about some specific activity. It is not something to be done on every occasion, but once in a while or for special reason.” (Wragg, 1987, p.53)

Any consideration that empowering student as critical subject or audience made me more curious to what I was doing to them. However, other teachers also can apply it. Wrag (1987, p.54) states that “teacher wishing to have direct feedback about themselves as practitioners, rather than the more oblique reaction via responses to activities or project, might be hold enough to use an itemised questionnaire which focus on specific aspect of classroom life”.

At the beginning of exercising this attempt, there were various negative reactions on me of what I was doing to my students, possibly, as I was a junior young teacher. It was a very cheap gossip to talk not only among my junior colleagues but also my seniors. It seemed that it was a surprising effort for that never done before by other junior teacher. Some of my senior colleagues argued emotionally that I do not need to do things like this. “It is tremendous endeavour that I ever seen” my senior colleagues said cynically. The reason is that what I did is useless to do so in the school where it is located in the remote area. The best thing to do for me, as junior, is to keep silent and patient for a moment. It is more cultural reasons to do so. There has been a belief that it is impolite to argue or confront to older or senior persons. However, I did not feel disappointed with this situation. Conversely, it drives me to be more motivated in teaching.

McGregor cited in Bamford (1987, p.8) states that appraisal serving the three processes of administration (an orderly way of determining salary increases, deployment or transfer), information (in supplying data for training and development) and motivation (in providing a learning experience leading to improvement).

## **SELF APPRAISAL**

Hancock and Settle (1990, p. 20) view that it is reasonable to believe that each of us, as a part of teaching force, undertakes various form of self appraisal on regular basis. It is generally recognised that self-appraisal will be good effect in terms of self -development and the encouragement of personal growth. In the other word they (p.60) argue that self-appraisal is an essential part of the effective teacher's normal way of working. It reflects on the teachers' performance. It then will help them to clarify their view of the quality of their work and it will strengthen their professional resolve because they have a clearer insight into the outcomes of their teaching.

It seems that self-appraisal almost correlated with on going personal introspection in which the introspective teacher is those who are able to evaluate to what they have been doing and what they should do before appraising some others. Similarly, they should be able to manage themselves, it means they have to know their own capability and professionalism. Hancock and Settle (1990, p.28) argue that whatever the system of appraisal selected, it depend on where the teacher give commitment to and have expertise in the area of self-evaluation.

According to both of Hancock and Settle (1990:28) many schools consider that self-evaluation is an integral part of their work and they are constantly reviewing their activities and assessing their level of performance. It is absolutely true that self-evaluation as part of self-appraisal is very important for everybody not only as teacher but also whatever our profession are to reach a job satisfaction. The reason is each of us, indeed, hope to be more professional in our work field. Thereby, we should check and recheck and look closely to our failure and success.

It is obviously stated by Wragg (1987, p.19) that self-appraisal is more important than appraised by others about what we are doing. Self-appraisal or the careful private sorting out of or selecting what we are working is very useful and will be engaged in again later. I should say that keeping our feeling and mind more active to think or review about what we are doing and what we have done is a worthwhile whip for our personal development and also to reach our successful career.

## **GROUP APPRAISAL**

As it can be identified that group appraisal tends to be more group involvement. They should be not only head teacher, colleagues, teacher, non-teaching staff but also those who stay away around the school but they are very concerned to the development of school achievement also can be involved. These persons might be actively involved. It can be seen clearly on Hancock and Settle's :

“...the assumption is that the appraisal or assessment is a ‘team’ one with the constant involvement of the individual teacher concerned. Clearly teacher managers and outsider can be involved in such a process but it must be remembered here that peers and ‘subordinates’ may also be involved”. (1990, p.22)

Moreover, Wragg (1987, p. 14) believes that two people of equal rank or it can be unequal rank, say two basic scale teachers, two deputy heads, two heads of department, to appraise each other, is seen as a soft option by many people. It is believed that they will simply confirm each other's practices, engage mutual congratulation and then go on happily about their business without breaking their stride.

It is really true that this model of appraisal is more conducive and harmony. That's why this kind of appraisal is also applied in some schools in my district, particularly in my school. On the other hand, sometimes the team is involved the chairman of parent children association and teacher-subject supervisor from the regional office of National Education Department.

### **The Advantages of Appraisal**

Refer to the phenomenon at the previous paragraph, we can identify clearly that there should be various factors of why appraisal should be introduced in educational setting. Bollington, et al (1990, p.2) argues that there are three factors. First, appraisal can be regarded as a response to the desire to bring a greater degree of accountability into public services. Second, it can be seen as the culmination of a series of moves designed to improve professional development



of teachers and to identify more precisely their in service training needs. The third, appraisal is also linked to attempts to develop the management of schools.

Nathan (1991, p.156) says that appraisal gives some benefits of appraisal not only for school but also for teachers themselves. The benefits of appraisal for school level will include such as; the existence of accurate information, reference of inset policy-making decisions, the extent of teacher professional development, encouragement on teacher motivation, and potential identification as well.

Then, the benefits of appraisal for individual teachers, Nathan (1991, p.156) assumed that it tends to create self- confidence and personal morale improvement that lead to enhancing job satisfaction and opportunity for career development. In addition, it will help to identify the probabilities of the appropriate teacher training needs refer to the areas of strength and successful practice and the areas of their weaknesses as well.

Additionally, Nicholson points out (1989, p. 84) that at the end of appraisal process, the appraiser will gain knowledge of colleagues, curriculum in practice, pupils and be able to strengthen the relationship and morale improvement. On the other hand, the appraiser provides feedback on the team leader performance in terms of management function encouragement and team spirit stimulation as well as determining the appropriate approach and methodology.

### **The Staffs' Perspectives to the Implementation of Appraisal.**

When the senior persons, line manager such as; senior teacher, the head of department, head school or supervisor who have obligation to conduct teacher appraisal, involved in the range of appraisal process. It will be very stressful and hostile among teachers and other staffs are going to be appraised, particularly for those who have not experienced it at schoolwork. There is implication in which the term of appraisal can cause several reactions to the candidates of appraisee. As a matter of fact, whether the appraisee has very serious counteraction or not is depend on how it is being applied.

In some cases, it shows various reactions from the teaching staff and non-teaching staff to the process and the results of appraisal itself. Some of them who

have been involved in appraisal think that appraisal is positive thing, because they believe in its benefits rather than disadvantages. Nevertheless, it is the change most feared and opposed by staff which has had little contact with it (Nathan, 1991:156).

Evans and Tonlimson (1989, p. 8) argue that “Most teacher are opposed to appraisal for purpose of merit pay, dismissal or (direct) promotion but not for purposes of professional development, institutional improvement, an improvement of the quality of teaching and learning and indirect promotion such as better informed references”. It can be identified that teacher are very concerned to the appraisal when it is used to achieve the desire of professional development rather than personal promotion or career.

It is, therefore, when appraisal used as a legal requirement in schools in England based on the Education Act of 1986 welcomed with very serious action. As Montgomery (1999, p.12) described that large numbers of teachers began to leave the profession early, it is because some of them did not wish to work on the National Curriculum, others on the grounds of ill health and stress. It shows that appraisal is like a ghost: it is fearful; it is threatening; and it is stressful for those are going to be appraised, particularly teachers.

It is really true that most organization or school community have different response to appraisal. In some schools in Indonesia, teachers often feel very fearful of being appraised eventhough it is done by the head teacher yearly. It also might be done by group or team, which involve by head teacher, senior teacher, supervisor and senior school administrator. I think the reason why some teachers feel apprehensive is because of the system or the approach of appraisal implemented by headteacher is not flexible and friendly for the teacher. It seems that the heads try to remain a threatening image about appraisal through the teacher. In order to avoid bad image on what really appraisal is to the teacher, the principal should introduce the importance of appraisal for teacher non-teaching staff.

On the right hand, it doesn't make surprised to the senior teacher and those who consider appraisal as a routine process of day to day life at schoolwork. Disappointingly, some of them underestimate to the process of appraisal itself at

school. It tends to give nothing to their personal development or career promotion. It is more formal or official means rather than the main purpose of the appraisal. It just provides satisfactory report on the provincial government administration.

Furthermore, Nathan (1991:157) gives additional proofs about controversial responses against the implementation of term 'appraisal' in England by telling that some of the management team, particularly the staff of Development Officer in the UK give very positive views about appraisal. Some others tend to be more apprehensive and unconvinced of any benefits. Conversely, the head teachers have decided to go ahead on the grounds that they strongly support appraisal scheme. Additionally, Nathan does believe that once it is in place a lot of the opposition will melt away. She recognised that there have been sufficient pilot schemes to provide models from which to work. As a consideration, the school should introduce appraisal within a year or so anyway, because it has been already in government legislation and begun to appear in LEA priorities.

Nicholson (1989:80) states that Government of Britain, therefore, launched the regulations in autumn 1989, which, of course, would require local authorities to introduce programs of teacher appraisal over a four-year period. Then, currently six pilot programs were running and many other individual schools had developed their own or were developing them before appraisal became such a controversial term. The Consortium of School Teacher Appraisal Schemes cited in Nicholson (1989:80) suggests that:

1. each teacher should be appraised by a single appraiser while each head appraisee should be appraised by at least two appraisers;
2. the frequency of the appraisal should be once a year for teachers and once every two or at more three years for the heads;
3. An individual appraiser should not normally be involved in more than five appraisals in any years.

### **Problems of Appraisal**

It is inevitable that some problems will come up in the process of appraisal.

According to Bollington et al (1990):

“Appraisal is, of course, a particularly sensitive initiative. In part this reflects the way it has times been presented; for example, as device for ‘weeding out weak teachers’ work or a means of assessing suitability for merit pay’. The sensitivity also reflects the focus of appraisal, which is concerned with matters of professional and career development and goes to the heart of teacher’s work. (Bollington et al, 1990, p.4)

It is clear that as a sensitive mechanism, it needs to be a more careful and properly prepared to undertake the appraisal (e.g. interview, classroom observation). Possibly, it can be easily to create some various problems not only for appraiser and appraisee but also for school as educational institution when it is conducted by superordinate of the school.

Fidler, et al (1988:14) argue that it was interview appraisal reported to be generally problem oriented with a joint problem-solving style of operation rather than being evaluative and judgemental. Additionally, they found some weaknesses in surveys of the on going interview process. The weaknesses are as follows:

1. It tends to provide unequal standards of assessment amongst different appraiser;
2. Some lack of commitment to the process among line managers;
3. Some lack of follow-up action on training and development.

Furthermore, Fidler et al (1988, p.16) State that there are seven potential problems found in the appraisal; firstly it is problematic to implement appraisal when it is known that many professionals as independent operator. It means that there are boundaries to carry out the appraisal to the whole level of person. Secondly it provides unclear result which is caused by the unclear purpose. The third is no certain reward whether it refers to financial, career, promotion or other benefits. The fourth is difficulty of assessing teaching, because there is no general agreed criteria for good teaching. The fifth is too many bosses. It can be seen that there is no direct superordinate. The sixth is consuming time. The seventh is lack of infrastructure in LEAs. It is true that all of the weaknesses mentioned above still happen in the field.

### **Solution to Problems**

Normally, my experience has shown that the effective things to do to cope the complicated possibilities are having a proper preparation and making sure that teachers already gained appraisal training for certain period. The positive ideas frequently recommended coping and solving the problems are that as follows:

1. Bring some guidance and guideline through the teachers as active participants;
2. Determine the clear and prospective objectives or the purposes of doing appraisal;
3. Provide basic standard of appraisal for the appraiser;
4. Create optimal commitments among the superordinates;
5. Arrange the perfect follow up on the process of appraisal;
6. Deliver counselling schemes.

Additionally, Suffolk LEA (1988, p. 282) recommends that there some ideas should be fashioned as follows:

1. provision by the LEA of a manual detailing the philosophy and procedures for the appraisal process;
2. training courses for appraisers in interviewing and classroom observation techniques;
3. staff briefing by headteacher before each appraisal cycle begins;
4. adjusting the school year by a sufficient number of days to allow adequate time for staff development.

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