

Impact of Self-Evaluation on the Performance of Novice Teachers¹⁶¹

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Abstract

This study analyses the effectiveness of the self-evaluation technique practised by the followers of the Higher National Diploma in English (HNDEn) program conducted by the Sri Lanka Institute of Advanced Technological Education (SLIATE), with the main objective of assessing the effectiveness of self-evaluation as a teacher evaluation technique. The effectiveness of the self-evaluation technique is measured by examining the student teachers' self-evaluation reflections and their subsequent performance. The study adopts a mixed research design in collecting and analyzing quantitative and qualitative data. Findings are analysed using statistical data analysis methods and thematic analysis. Multiple themes are disclosed from the analysis that pertain to the reflections on the problems faced by the student teachers during the course of teaching and how they try to overcome them through the practice of self-evaluation techniques. The effect of novel self-evaluation techniques such as self-monitoring, goal setting, peer/mentor feedback, and reflective journaling that can be utilized for the improvement of student teachers was also disclosed. The results of the study have pedagogical value, as they draw the attention of novice teachers who endeavour to improve through the experiences they gain in the early stages of their teaching careers.

Keywords: Self-evaluation technique; Student teachers; HNDEn

1. Introduction

1.1 Background and justification

Self-evaluation is a systematic process through which teachers observe, analyze, and make judgments about their own professional activities with the aim of fostering continuous improvement. It is widely recognized as a vital component of effective teacher assessment and professional development across the globe. In many countries, self-evaluation is considered a cornerstone of reflective teaching practices, encouraging educators to critically examine their instructional methods, classroom management, and student engagement strategies.

Globally, the importance of self-evaluation in teacher training is well documented. Educational research emphasizes that self-assessment cultivates self-awareness, promotes autonomous learning, and enhances teachers' capacity to adapt to diverse classroom contexts. Countries with advanced teacher development frameworks often incorporate structured self-evaluation tools and reflective exercises into their training programs, believing that teachers who regularly reflect on their practice are more likely to identify areas for growth and implement meaningful changes. For example, in countries like Finland, Canada, and Australia, self-evaluation is integrated into ongoing professional development, ensuring that teachers remain lifelong learners committed to refining their craft.

However, despite its recognized benefits, the implementation of self-evaluation varies significantly across education systems. Many teacher training programs worldwide—whether in the public or private sectors—still rely heavily on supervisor and peer-assessment methods. These approaches, while valuable, may sometimes overshadow the potential of self-evaluation because they depend on external judgments and may limit teachers' opportunities to develop self-directed learning habits. Nevertheless, increasing evidence suggests that self-evaluation, when effectively utilized, can complement external assessments and serve as a powerful tool for fostering reflective, autonomous, and adaptable teachers.

The present study centers on the critical aspects of self-evaluation and aims to explore how this technique can be optimized to support novice teachers. Specifically, it investigates how self-evaluation can facilitate

their adaptation to teaching environments, enhance their instructional effectiveness, and promote sustainable professional growth. By examining the role of self-assessment in the context of teacher training, the study seeks to contribute to a broader understanding of how reflective practices can be harnessed worldwide to produce more competent, confident, and effective educators.

1.2 Problem statement

The ongoing challenge in the professional development of student teachers raises concerns about their ability to achieve consistent and meaningful growth throughout their nascent teaching careers. A key issue identified is that many student teachers struggle to leave a positive and lasting impression on their co-teachers and supervisors regarding their teaching performances. This often results in perceptions of inadequacy or underperformance, which can hinder their confidence and future opportunities within the educational field.

Several underlying factors contribute to this situation. First, many student teachers have limited exposure to the comprehensive teaching-learning process, often due to insufficient practical classroom experience during their training. Being relatively new to the profession, they may lack the necessary confidence and familiarity with diverse teaching strategies, classroom management techniques, and assessment methods. Additionally, their lack of awareness about their own progress and areas for improvement—due to limited self-reflective practices—further exacerbates the problem. Without proper self-assessment tools or feedback mechanisms, they may remain unaware of their strengths and weaknesses, making it difficult to demonstrate growth or adapt their teaching methods effectively.

This situation underscores the need for effective strategies that can support student teachers in tracking and enhancing their professional development. One promising approach is the implementation of self-evaluation techniques, which empower teachers to critically analyze their own performance, recognize areas for improvement, and set targeted goals for future growth. By fostering a culture of self-reflection and continuous improvement, self-evaluation can serve as a vital tool in helping student teachers develop their confidence, competence, and overall teaching effectiveness.

The present study aims to investigate this issue in depth. It explores how self-evaluation can be utilized as an effective method for measuring and promoting the ongoing professional development of student teachers. The study seeks to demonstrate that integrating self-evaluation practices into their training can help them better understand their progress, identify challenges early on, and ultimately leave a more positive impression on their peers and supervisors. Through this investigation, the study aspires to contribute valuable insights into the role of reflective practices in fostering professional growth among future educators.

1.3 Research objectives

The main objective of the research is to evaluate the effectiveness of the self-evaluation technique in the field of teacher education. With this objective, it is expected to assess the effectiveness of self-evaluation as a teacher evaluation technique which can be applied to novice teachers who are starting their profession as teachers.

The following specific objectives are also set in order to support the achievement of the main objective of the study.

1. To identify how far beginning teacher performance is affected by their reflections on self-evaluation. It is discussed how performance can be influenced by reflecting on and evaluating one's own behavior as a teacher.
2. To find ways of improving beginning teacher performance by way of using new self-evaluation techniques. Here, the researcher expects to reveal novel self-evaluation techniques which can be used to intensify the novice teacher's performance.

2. Review of literature

The potential of self-evaluation as a technique for measuring and enhancing teacher efficacy has been the focus of numerous research studies. As Desjarlais and Smith (2011) emphasize, reflection and self-assessment are vital practices for individuals committed to continuous growth. Self-evaluation is inherently present in teaching, whether done consciously or subconsciously, and is particularly meaningful for teachers seeking to improve their performance. Various aspects of teaching—such as classroom presentation skills, preparation of materials, subject matter competence, availability for students, and willingness to collaborate with colleagues—are all amenable to self-assessment (Shirley & Earl, 1986).

In advocating for reflective practice, Schön (1991) describes 'knowing in action' as the conscious behavior of teachers, and highlights that bringing subconscious or innate behaviors into conscious awareness requires specific techniques. Several methods have been suggested to facilitate self-evaluation in classroom settings, including checklists, student feedback forms, audio-visual recordings, collaborative observation, and reflective reports (Elton, 1984).

Recent studies continue to underscore the importance of self-evaluation in teacher development. For instance, Korthagen (2017) emphasizes the role of reflective practices in fostering professional growth and resilience among teachers, especially in the context of rapidly changing educational environments. Similarly, Chen et al. (2019) found that structured self-assessment routines significantly improve teachers' self-awareness, instructional strategies, and classroom management skills. Moreover, a meta-analysis by Lee and Kim (2021) highlighted that self-evaluation, when integrated with peer feedback and mentorship, enhances teachers' reflective capacity and efficacy, ultimately leading to improved student outcomes.

Furthermore, research by Johnson and Brown (2020) indicates that self-evaluation practices are particularly beneficial for novice teachers, supporting their transition into professional roles and promoting a culture of continuous improvement. The increasing adoption of digital tools and online platforms has also expanded opportunities for self-assessment, with studies like those by Garcia and Lopez (2022) demonstrating the effectiveness of video recordings and digital portfolios in facilitating reflective practice among teachers at various career stages.

However, despite the extensive discussion on self-evaluation techniques, there remains a notable gap in the research concerning their application specifically to student teachers or novice educators. While existing studies—such as those by Miladinovic and Markovic (2012)—acknowledge the importance of self-assessment in enhancing teaching skills, building confidence, and fostering teamwork among more experienced teachers, there is comparatively limited empirical evidence exploring how self-evaluation practices impact the professional development of student teachers during their training period. Moreover, most of the current literature focuses on self-evaluation as a component of ongoing professional practice rather than as a deliberate pedagogical tool integrated into initial teacher training programs.

This gap is significant because student teachers are at a critical juncture in their professional formation, and understanding how self-evaluation can be effectively employed to support their development remains underexplored. Consequently, there is a need for research that specifically investigates the role, methods, and outcomes of self-evaluation among student teachers, to determine how this practice can be optimized to foster reflective, competent, and confident future educators.

The proposed study aims to fill this gap by examining how self-evaluation can be systematically integrated into teacher training programs for student teachers, and how it influences their self-awareness, skill development, and professional growth. By doing so, it seeks to contribute valuable insights to the limited body of research on self-evaluation at the pre-service teaching level.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research design

The study adopts a mixed-method research design. The performance of the participants is assessed and

analyzed quantitatively to answer the research questions. A descriptive/qualitative approach is adopted in analyzing their reflections on the impact of self-evaluation. The discussion of the study is designed with quantitative and qualitative sections answering the research questions, which are formulated in line with the specific objectives of the proposed research.

3.2 Participants and sampling techniques

The participant population of the study is the followers of the Higher National Diploma in English (HNDEn) program conducted by the Advanced Technological Institute (ATI), Kurunegala, functioning under Sri Lanka Institute of Advanced Technological Education (SLIATE). They are learning English as their second language at the intermediate level of higher education. The participants are within the age range of 20 to 25 years. The corpus of data is particularly collected from a sample of students who follow HNDEn at two consecutive levels, i.e. the level of the second year, final semester, and the 540-hour teaching internship offered by SLIATE.

A purposive sampling technique was employed to select the participants for this study, specifically targeting teacher trainees who meet certain criteria relevant to the research objectives. From the population of teacher trainees enrolled in the program, a total of forty (40) individuals were deliberately chosen based on their accessibility, willingness to participate, and relevance to the study's focus on self-evaluation and teacher efficacy. The selection process involved identifying trainees who had completed at least one semester of training, exhibited active participation in classroom activities, and demonstrated an interest in reflective practices. This purposive approach ensured that the sample consisted of individuals most likely to provide insightful and meaningful data related to the research questions. The final sample was thus not randomly selected from the entire population but was purposefully chosen to represent a specific subset of teacher trainees who could contribute valuable perspectives to the investigation.

3.3 Procedure and methods of data collection

Data gathering was performed within three consecutive years from the participants utilizing the research methods of conducting tests, focus group discussions, and administering questionnaires in the following phases of the study.

- Tests were conducted to collect empirical data and to measure the performance of the participants. Here, data were gathered from the sample, which consists of the students of HND in English who are following the elective module of English Language Teaching Methodology-II in the HNDEn curriculum.
- A self-evaluation questionnaire was administered to the students with the purpose of collecting data on their self-evaluation reflections.
- Focus group discussions were used to gather qualitative data from the students who undergo teaching practicum as teacher trainees.

4. Result & discussion

Data were gathered from the above-stated research instruments from the students when they follow the coursework of HNDEn and when they undergo the teacher training component of HNDEn at government schools in Sri Lanka.

Gathered data were analysed using quantitative data analysis techniques and thematic analysis to come to conclusions regarding the efficacy of the self-evaluation technique. Several themes were identified and expanded, as detailed in the following section.

4.1 Analysis of quantitative data

The impact of self-evaluation on the performance of novice teachers was fundamentally measured by the evaluation of the self-evaluation reflections of the student teachers practising micro-teaching (MT) sessions. This is conducted with the main purpose of measuring the efficacy of the self-evaluation technique in the

progress of the students' teaching performance. Quantitative data were obtained on the reflections on the self-evaluation of the students regarding their performance during the micro-teaching sessions. The quantitative data obtained from the self-evaluation questionnaire are analysed, and the results are presented in this section.

Reflections on the achievement of lesson objectives during the MT session and the students' ability to conduct the lesson as planned were checked initially, with the questions "Were the lesson objectives achieved?" and "Did the lesson go as planned?". The objective of these questions was to check whether the students can self-measure their performance in terms of the achievement of lesson objectives and the lesson plan. Out of the 100 respondents to the questionnaire, 92 (92%) identified that they could achieve the lesson objectives during the MT session. And, 83% of the total number of respondents have acknowledged that they could conduct their lessons as planned. The respondents who acknowledged vice versa are significantly less in number, which shows the fact that the students have prepared for the MT sessions well and they are aware of the fact that their performance was up to the expectations of the students in the class as well as the supervisor of the MT session.

HNDEn student teachers had reflections on the problems that arose during their teaching performance. They reflected on the nature of the problems and how they managed them during the teaching sessions. 67.5% of the total number of participants had responded to the questions formulated on the issues and problems they came across in the course of teaching their peers. The relevant questions are "Did I expect any problems during planning the lesson or were they unexpected problems?" and "Did I manage the problems successfully?". 22.5% of the total number anticipate that there could be problems in the prospective teaching sessions, while the rest (45%) acknowledge that they were unexpected problems. However, 33% of the total number of respondents had not reflected on the problems that may come their way during the teaching process. The query on whether the students could manage the problems successfully was reflected by 55% with a positive response, while 37.5% did not have any idea in that regard.

Regarding reflections on self-evaluation on MT, a significant inquiry would be to consider what could be changed if the lesson is conducted again by the student teacher. Eleven variables have been given in the question, out of which 14% is allocated for the variable "No changes". The distribution of participants' choices among the variables is indicated in Table 01.

Table 01: Distribution of participants' choices among the variables

	Variable	Percentage
1	Content of the lesson	6%
2	Language (grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation)	13%
3	Delivery of the lesson (speed, style, time, etc.)	16%
4	Organization of the lesson	10%
5	Visual aids	12%
6	Use of body language	6%
7	Eye-contact	5%
8	Interaction with the class	8%
9	Confidence	10%
10	Dress	0%
11	No changes	14%

The use of body language and maintaining eye contact are considered to be less important in terms of importance.

Self-evaluation was reflected by the student teachers regarding their improvement of teaching skill/s from the MT session. This was achieved with the question "What is the teaching skill I improved during my micro-teaching session?". Figure 01 illustrates the responses of the participants to the above question. Many have

improved the skill of explanation (44%), whereas the skills of stimulus variation (3%), the skill of blackboard writing (3%), and the skill of achieving closure (4%) have not been considerably improved by the students. Introduction skills (27%) and the skill of asking questions (18%) are moderately improved as revealed from the students' reflections.

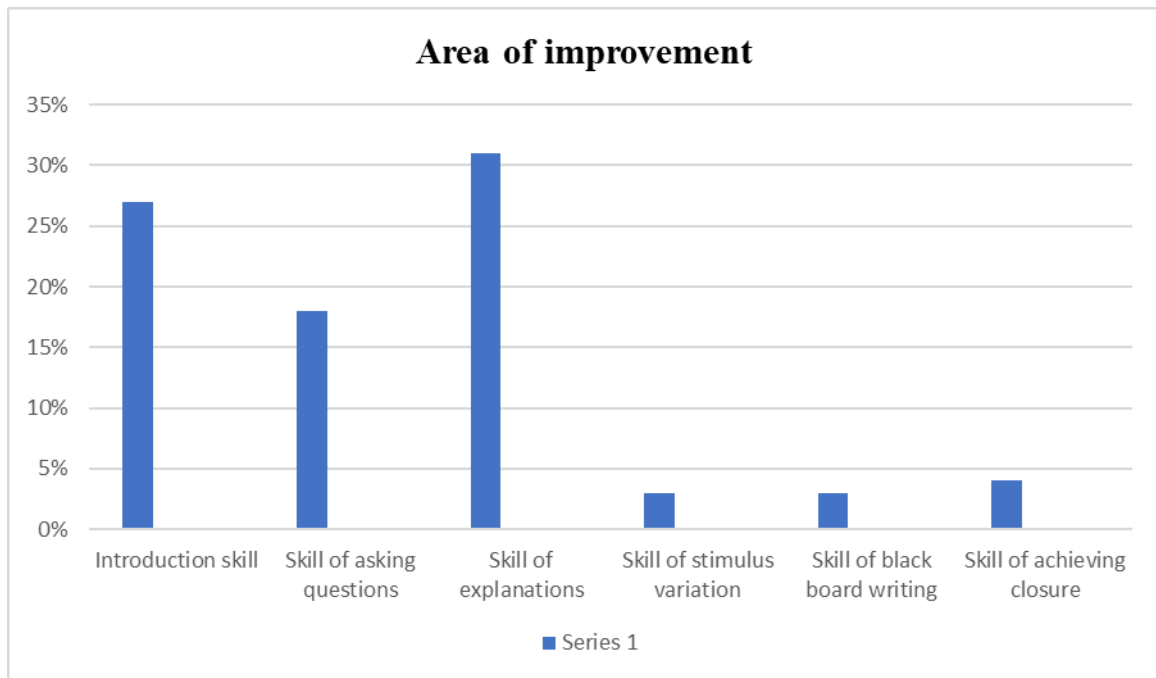


Figure 01: Area of improvement

The students reflected on which skill they needed to improve more considering a set of skills given to them in the self-evaluation questionnaire. They are the skill of introduction, the skill of asking questions, the skill of explanation, the skill of stimulus variation, the skill of blackboard writing, and the skill of achieving closure. In this query, the highest value of responses has been indicated in the variable, skill of stimulus variation. It has received 20.6%. The lowest value is reported by the introduction skill (11%). According to the highest and lowest values, it is clear that the variations among the factors are remarkably less. This implies the fact that the students reflect on the improvement of nearly all the skills required for teaching. This is a significant feature manifested in the self-evaluation reflection of the students.

An important question in the self-evaluation questionnaire was “How do I consider my teaching?”. The objective of this question was to allow the students to reflect on their teaching as a means to generate an overall understanding of their performance. 47.5% of the total respondents recognize that their performance was ‘good’, while 7.5% admitted that they need improvement (See Figure 02).

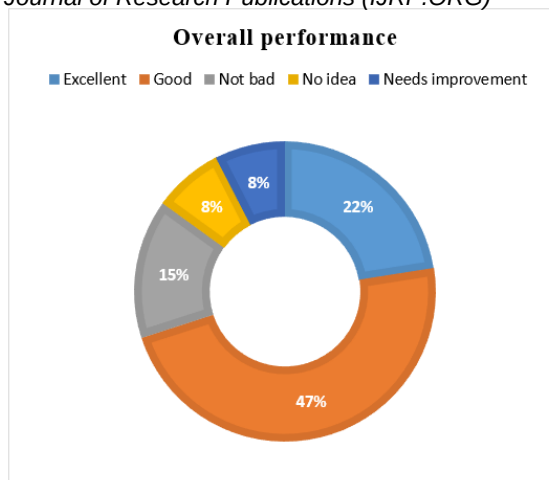


Figure 02: Self-reflection on the overall performance of students

The performance of the same sample of students was measured during their viva voce examination, which was held after the completion of the first three months of the teaching practicum. By the time the viva voce examination was held, the students had gained practical teaching experience as trainee teachers, and they have been involved in the teaching-learning process in their respective training schools. According to the marks obtained from the viva voce, the majority of the students scored above 76% for their teaching presentations. This indicates the fact that the students have improved during the practicum, which is based on their self-identification and the consequent self-evaluation of the performance of MT during the coursework.

4.2 Analysis of qualitative data

The role of self-evaluation among novice teachers was examined through a qualitative approach, primarily relying on descriptive data collected from focus group discussions. These discussions provided rich insights into how student-teachers perceive and utilize self-evaluation as part of their professional development during their teaching practice. Several critical areas emerged from these discussions, shedding light on both the challenges faced and the supportive functions of self-evaluation.

One of the central themes was whether lessons proceeded according to the lesson plan during micro-teaching (MT). When deviations occurred, participants discussed the specific difficulties encountered by students, such as misunderstanding instructions, lack of engagement, or external distractions. They also explored the underlying reasons for these issues, which often related to nervousness, insufficient preparation, or unfamiliarity with certain teaching techniques. Importantly, the discussions highlighted how self-evaluation served as a reflective tool, enabling trainees to recognize these problems early on, analyze their causes, and develop strategies for improvement.

The participants emphasized that self-evaluation was instrumental in supporting their growth as future teachers. By critically assessing their own performance, they gained awareness of their strengths and weaknesses, which facilitated targeted development. For instance, identifying issues like poor time management or difficulty handling visual aids prompted them to seek specific solutions or adapt their teaching methods. Many trainees reported that this reflective process contributed to their overall confidence and effectiveness in classroom management and instructional delivery.

Several common problems identified through self-evaluation included time management difficulties, feelings of nervousness or excitement, challenges in efficiently utilizing visual aids, external disruptions during lessons, and incomplete coverage of lesson components such as homework or classroom activities. Additionally, grammatical mistakes and language errors were recognized as areas needing improvement. Trainees acknowledged these issues during their micro-teaching sessions and found that regular self-assessment helped them pinpoint these shortcomings. As a result, they could implement corrective measures

in subsequent lessons, leading to noticeable improvement in their teaching performance during the practicum phase.

The students' collective perspective was that self-evaluation had a positive and supportive role in their professional development. They believed that engaging in reflective practices allowed them to become more conscious of their teaching behaviors and adapt accordingly. This process not only improved their immediate teaching skills but also fostered a mindset of continuous learning and self-improvement, which is vital for their future careers.

The focus group discussions revealed that trainees employed a diverse array of innovative techniques to evaluate their teaching performance, thereby enriching their self-assessment practices with multiple approaches. These techniques included self-monitoring and goal setting, seeking feedback from peers or mentors, recording teaching sessions for later review, and engaging in reflective journaling.

Self-monitoring was frequently highlighted as a central method for tracking personal progress. Trainees reported that by establishing specific, measurable teaching goals before lessons, they could systematically observe and evaluate their own performance. Many kept detailed journals or notes, where they documented their teaching experiences, reflected on successful moments or challenges faced, and used checklists to facilitate structured self-evaluation. This process helped them stay focused on their objectives and provided a tangible record of their developmental journey over time.

Goal setting complemented self-monitoring by enabling trainees to define clear targets for their teaching practice, which they periodically reviewed and adjusted based on their self-assessments. By setting achievable objectives, they fostered a proactive attitude toward their professional growth. Seeking feedback from peers or mentors added an external perspective to their self-evaluation. Trainees often engaged in peer observations or discussions with mentors, receiving constructive insights that informed their self-reflection and helped identify blind spots.

Recording teaching sessions through audio or video recordings was another technique frequently reported. Trainees reviewed these recordings to analyze their instructional delivery, classroom management, and student engagement, which provided a more objective basis for reflection.

Reflective journaling emerged as a vital practice, where trainees regularly wrote about their teaching experiences, challenges, and successes. This reflective habit encouraged deeper thinking about their instructional choices and their impact on student learning.

Participants expressed that these diverse techniques collectively empowered them to take greater ownership of their professional development. They believed that such multifaceted approaches fostered a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of their teaching practices, promoted continuous improvement, and cultivated a proactive, reflective mindset essential for becoming effective educators.

5. Conclusion

The study has provided new information on the utility of the self-evaluation technique by novice teachers. The findings are related to the main area of the efficacy of the use of the self-evaluation technique that was analysed through the self-evaluation reflections and performance of the students during their teaching presentations.

Regarding the self-evaluation reflections measured quantitatively, it is revealed that the students have obtained an opportunity to progress by evaluating themselves as indicated by the reflections on their performance. The majority of the students acknowledge the fact that they could improve by considering what and how they have performed during MT when they are involved in the practical teaching process as trainees at a later stage in the course. This is evidenced by the successful performance, as reflected in the scores of their viva voce examination.

The descriptive analysis of the qualitative data reveals the challenges faced by the students during their MT in multiple ways. Findings further indicate how these problems affect the teaching performance of the students and how they can be overcome during their function as teacher trainees with the experience of self-

evaluation. Accordingly, self-evaluation is perceived to be helpful in highlighting one's own strengths, correcting weaknesses, and developing unused skills and abilities, and it has lots of implications in training students to be teachers too. It offers teacher students a realistic opportunity to look at themselves without being prejudiced about their behavior and change their role from passive observer to active participant.

Novel self-evaluation techniques like self-monitoring and goal setting, getting feedback from others, recording their own teaching, and reflecting on that later are discovered to be effective by the student teachers. Therefore, it is noteworthy to admit that such techniques can be used in the MT sessions as well during the coursework.

The following recommendations for teacher training programs can be considered based on the above findings.

- Given the positive impact of self-monitoring, goal setting, feedback, recording, and reflection observed in the study, educational institutions should incorporate these techniques systematically into the training programs. This can be achieved through dedicated workshops and practical sessions emphasizing these methods.
- To maximize the benefits, future teacher training should include explicit instruction on how to effectively utilize self-evaluation techniques. Providing training materials, checklists, and guided reflection templates can help students adopt these practices confidently.
- Establish continuous opportunities for student teachers to engage in self-evaluation throughout their practical teaching sessions, not just during initial training or assessments. Regular reflective journaling and recording sessions can foster a sustained reflective habit.
- While self-evaluation is valuable, combining it with feedback from peers and experienced mentors can provide a more comprehensive view of teaching performance. Institutions should facilitate peer observation sessions and mentor-mentee discussions.
- Future studies should consider larger, more diverse samples across different regions or institutions to enhance generalizability. Employing mixed-method approaches—integrating qualitative insights with quantitative measures—can provide a more holistic understanding of the effectiveness of self-evaluation techniques.
- To understand how self-evaluation influences teaching development over time, longitudinal research should be conducted. This will help determine whether these techniques lead to sustained improvements in teaching practices.
- Recognize and mitigate possible challenges such as students' initial resistance to self-assessment, lack of self-awareness, or limited access to recording equipment. Providing ongoing support and creating a culture that values reflective practice can overcome these barriers.

5.1 Limitations

The sample of research participants is restricted to the students of the Advanced Technological Institutes of Kurunegala based on convenience in data collection. Due to this restriction, the research outcome of the study will be less generalizable. Therefore, opportunities to apply the implications of the study will be limited. Additionally, relying on self-reported data introduces potential biases, such as social desirability bias or inaccurate self-assessment, which may affect the validity of the findings. The small sample size further constrains the ability to draw broader conclusions or identify patterns applicable to larger populations.

To address these limitations, future studies could incorporate larger and more diverse samples across different regions or institutions to enhance generalizability. Employing a mixed-methods approach that includes observational data or objective performance measures can help mitigate biases inherent in self-reporting. Longitudinal studies could also provide insights into how self-evaluation practices evolve over time, offering a more comprehensive understanding of their impact on teaching effectiveness.

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