CONTINUOUS COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION –A VISION INSIDE OUT

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Abstract

It is utmost important to make continuous and comprehensive evaluation as an integral part of teaching and learning process to promote standard of Education. CCE refers Continuous & Comprehensive Evaluation, a system of school based assessment that covers all the aspects of a student's development. It was designed to reduce the student stress related to board exams, and to introduce a uniform and comprehensive pattern for student evaluation across the country. It emphasizes on two broad objectives: (a) Continuity in Evaluation and (b) Assessment of broad based learning. Clearly, it attempts to shift emphasis from 'testing' to 'holistic learning' with an aim of creating young adults, possessing appropriate skills and desirable qualities in addition to academic excellence. Therefore, the CCE scheme brings about a paradigm shift from examination to effective pedagogy. Conventionally the teacher is seen as the information giver; knowledge flows only one way, from teacher to student. In a collaborative classroom (or the CCE method), emphasis is on shared knowledge and decision making. For some teachers finding time for planning collaborative instruction is a most difficult challenge. Practicing modes and modalities of CCE is a challenge before traditional teachers. Therefore it is absolutely essential that teachers need to be provided with orientation about the CCE scheme incorporating both the scholastic and co-scholastic areas of learners' growth. In order to make CCE effective there has to be collective understanding among all concern i.e. child, teacher, parent and institutions of higher education about what is being evaluated. This paper is based on ideas and basic concepts of CCE Scheme implemented in Gujarat.

INTRODUCTION

An effective evaluation system has to be integrated with the teaching –learning process. The more effective the integration the better will be the outcomes of learning. The cognitive and the non-cognitive capacities of pupils need to be developed. The need and importance of a continuous comprehensive evaluation has been realized for a long time in India.

Some of the important recommendations of the National Curriculum for Elementary and Secondary Education – a Framework (1988) were 1)broadening the scope of learners' assessment by way of including the assessment of psychomotor skills and socio- emotional

attributes, 2).reducing undue emphasis on paper pencil tests in evaluation process, 3). using more and more informal means of testing to reduce the anxiety and fear of the examinees, 4).laying more stress on informal and child friendly methods of testing, 5) recording of evidences regarding psychomotor skills related to co-scholastic areas such as work experience, art education and physical education, 6) preparing a profile of the growth and development of every learner, 7)Participatory and humane evaluation, 8). Continuity of evaluation through periodical assessment of learning to be utilized for diagnosing the areas of difficulty and arranging remedial instruction. The National Curriulum Framework for School Education (2000) has emphasized that evaluation must facilitate all-round development of students. The National Curriculum Framework (2005)states that any meaningful report on the quality and extent of a child's learning needs to be comprehensive.

During the last 50 years, higher education in India has made great strides leading to the Indian higher education system becoming one of the largest systems in the World. Unfortunately, it is the Indian experience that this expansion in quantity has overshadowed the quality of higher education. Lately, a chorus of criticism is heard from various well-meaning quarters about the deteriorating quality of higher education. It is well known that one of the important components of higher education is the manner in which students' academic performance is evaluated. A concerted debate has been going on to determine the best system of assessment to be followed by the Universities in the twenty first century. A great degree of diversity has been observed in terms of assessment and grading of the students in the University system at present. It is desirable that a certain optimum degree of standardization in the examination system and in the assessment of students is put in place before grades are awarded to them. CONTINUOUS COMPREHENSIVE EVALUATION - The scientific method tries to determine the strengths and weaknesses of students, improves student's acquisition levels, and strengthens teamwork and societal co-operation.

We are convinced that if we are to suggest one single reform in university education it should be that of the examinations. We advisedly say reform although we know that, in India as elsewhere in the world, dissatisfaction with examinations has been so keen that eminent educationists and important educational organizations have even advocated the abolition of examinations. We do not share that extreme view and feet that examinations rightly designed and intelligently used can be a useful factor in the educational process. If examinations are necessary a thorough reform of these is still more necessary. (*university Commission 19 **)*

A good examination should satisfy certain essential conditions. It should, in the first place,

have validity. It should be able to measure what it seeks to measure. The purpose of the examination must be clear and explicit. It must be reliable; it must efficiently measure what it does measure. It must be adequate; it should sample sufficiently widely, so that the resulting scores are representative of relative total performance in the areas measured. It should be objective; it should effectively eliminate the bias or subjective opinion of the person who marks it. It should be easy to administer, easy to mark, easy to interpret.

Hall-mark of Attainment

While objective measurements of ability and achievement, and of aptitudes and interests, will render significant service in improving the quality of teaching and attain- ment, there would still remain the demand of society for a hall-mark. A final examination award at the completion of the first degree course will, we feel, be deemed necessary. The extension of the techniques of objective testing may be considered even at this stage. As a matter of fact this is being done is some other countries. The Graduate Record Examination in the United States, inaugurated in

1936, as a joint experiment in testing achievement at degree and post- graduate levels by four universities and the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching is now used by many colleges and universities in all the forty-eight states of the United States and in the District of Columbia, and in Alaska, Canada, Hawaii, Japan, Mexico, Puerto Rico and Venezuela. But as the process of changing over to the new techniques of testing and appraisal involves a degree of technical skill and preparation, we would recommend their application at this stage only after sufficient experience has been gained at the admission stage. At this, the first public examination, after twelve years of schooling, we would do well to begin utilising objective tests as soon as possible.

One of the two chief functions of the Board of Examiners would be advising the university or college instructional staff concerning techniques in devising and constructing objective tests for their class examinations and providing criteria and material for the Periodic revision of the curriculum.

In a report based on the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), a test of half a million 15-year-old students in 65 countries, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) warned Western countries of the prospect of losing their knowledge and skill base.

At its best, this achievement-driven frenzy is analogous to offering candy to malnourished children. At its worst, the test-driven education policies and practices have in reality benefited only operators of cram courses and publishers of test drills materials.

Students who should be in the best interest of the education policy have been violated and deprived of the chances to develop their human capacity and enhance their creativity

The nature of annual examinations at universities in India often stifles the teaching-learning process because they reward selective and uncritical learning. There is an acute need to reform this examination system so that it tests understanding rather than memory. Analytical abilities and creative thinking should be at a premium. Learning by rote should be at a discount. Such reform would become more feasible with decentralized examination and smaller universities. But assessment cannot and should not be based on examinations alone. There is a clear need for continuous internal assessment which empowers teachers and students alike, just as it breathes life back into the teaching-learning process. Such internal assessment would also foster the analytical and creative abilities of students which are often a casualty in university-administered annual examinations. To begin with, internal assessment could have a weight of 25 per cent in the total but this should be raised to 50 per cent over time. (*Knowledge Commission, 2008*)

The chief purpose of the present examinations is not organically related to the actual process of education. They are a means to the giving of a hall-mark of competence which employers, public and private, may recognize as a more or less reliable indication of the possession of certain intellectual and, perhaps, moral qualities and of certain types of knowledge and skill. A university degree is a kind of passport for jobs. With the great economic pressure due to the prevailing poverty in the country, the insistence on a university degree as the minimum requirement even for posts of minor officials and clerks has put a premium on a number of evils which have come to be associated with the examination system. It has subjected teaching to the examination, made it almost impossible to provide true education and to develop wider interests, and has created temptations of cheating, corruption and favoritism. The obsession to secure, as it were, a ticket in the lottery of job-securing has over-shadowed the educational purposes which a good examination can serve.

We feel that tests and examinations should be designed chiefly with educational ends in view. They should help in the choice of students, in the counselling and guidance of students, in measuring their progress, in diagnosing present conditions and in devising remedial measures and finally in assessing educational achievement. There are a number of such tests available and we feel that their introduction in India, with the necessary modification and adaptation, will prove a great boon to Indian education. In the existing conditions of evaluation system, it was felt essential to equip the teachers with necessary knowledge and skills in planning the evaluation tools and in proper assessment of students both in cognitive

and non cognitive areas.

Since the ultimate objective of evaluation is to bring about qualitative improvement, the evaluation should be on continuous basis for improving teaching and learning or effective feedback mechanism to benefit the learners and teachers, so that time corrective and remedial measures can be carried out to ensure the expected standards by all learners. With this intention, a research project under DPEP was carried out with the purpose of training the teachers in Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation and to study the impact of the training programme over the evaluation practices of primary school teachers.

The reports and the figures suggest that with 15% dropouts 30% failure, students dropout from Class 9 to 12, India needs to equip about 1.2 Crore young people who join a work force every year with higher level of education and skills to be able to access better paying jobs.

Assessing various skills of EFL learners has always been one of the disputable factors in language testing. Considering all the skills of Listening, Reading, Speaking   and Writing in learning a foreign language, it is essential for EFL teachers or experts to evaluate the ability of the learners in their performance. Thus, they always try to find and examine different kinds of methods to assess language ability of the students more perfectly.

It is sometimes argued that the established means of assessment may not measure the actual learning of some students. Therefore, we can conclude that finding an appropriate method to estimate the language ability of EFL learners is one of the crucial factors in language testing and teaching.

Based on the literature, there are a lot of techniques for assessing the skills in a foreign or second language context. However, none of them can be accepted as a perfect method to evaluate language ability. The present paper tries to introduce different assessment means along with the objectives, procedures, tools are discussed in the rest of this paper. In other words, this paper is a brief review on the most common techniques and their strengths and weaknesses in evaluating the language ability of our students.

Concept of Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation

Evaluation is continuous and comprehensive. When we have it fully internal without the hand of the external agencies, it is called internal evaluation. All types of achievements of the students, scholastic and non-scholastic are evaluated continuously for the whole session.

Continuous comprehensive internal evaluation is different from internal assessment. Internal assessment is just a part of external examination. Some people might argue that in internal assessment our educational institutions have no good experience and that way internal evaluation may prove a farce. Continuous comprehensive internal evaluation covers up

the deficiency because non-scholastic areas of child's growth and development are given due importance.

WHY CONTINUOUS INTERNAL ASSESSMENT?

Assessment in one sense is an analytic process. The basic argument for continuous internal assessment arises out of the rather fragmentary nature of much of our present day assessment. In order to evaluate each individual student as objectively as possible, it is necessary to breakdown the student's total performance or total behavior pattern in relation to a particular course of study. This effort is performed through a precise statement of objective which sets down the abilities, skills and behavior expected to be developed in students at the end of the course as a result of having followed them. The error in this approach is that it implies that the whole person is made of isolated reactions. Anyhow, it is a known fact that no student's behavior can be understood without reference to the total behavior pattern. i.e. without reference to the whole person. For the sake of validity, it may be argued that the process of assessing a student's progress should be continuous. In this sense, written test, oral questioning and discussion, projects, reports, class work and homework are all considered assessment measures. Therefore, records need to be maintained. Continuous assessment in one sense simply means gaining more and better information about the student's behavior modification in due course.

Teachers should be aware of the positive aspects of continuous assessment. This kind of assessment is so valuable on educational grounds, that teachers should desire its adoption as method of measuring attainment within the context of an external nationally recognized examination. In observing the student, the teacher had to take into consideration the student's characteristic and qualities.

A Monograph on internal Assessment for Universities (1984) emphasizes the following fundamental characteristics of internal assessment:

1) Internal assessment is continuous, periodic and internal. This means that assessment is carried out in relation to certain abilities and skills in certain subject areas periodically and continuously. This has to be made at the time of curriculum development, interpretation of syllabus and clarifying objectives of learning. This is clearly internal in the sense that the teacher/instructor is to assess and there is no provision for external agency to come in.

2) Internal assessment should not be taken as something that replaces the end examination. Both have a role to play in the carefully planned evaluation system. Most often, the end examination is to be taken as a part of the internal assessment.

3) Internal assessment does not mean a few midterm or unit examinations in place of a final examination.

4) The main purpose of introducing internal assessment is to incorporate teaching and evaluation and to test those skills and abilities, which cannot be tested through a written examination at the end of a course.

Many teachers believe that a realistic measure of attainment is possible when such an assessment is based on the student's work performed during the normal period of the course. Certain questions framed by the external examiner take into account the weight-age to the content of this syllabus. Students respond to these questions at the time of examination. Until that specific circumstance the only item common to both the examiner and the student is the course syllabus. Assessment is generally done in relation to certain abilities and skills in certain subject areas periodically and continuously. This has to be planned at the time of curriculum development, syllabus interpretation and clarifying the objectives of learning.

Internal assessment should not be taken as something to replace the final examination. Both have part to play in the best planned evaluation system. Very often, the final examination is to be taken as a part of the internal assessment. Internal assessment wants that the outcomes of learning a particular subject must be spelt out first and then there is the choice of suitable, meaningful , valid and reliable evaluation tools to match these abilities and skills.

The main purpose of introducing internal assessment is to integrate teaching and evaluation and to test the skills and abilities, which cannot be tested through one written examination at the end of a course. For this teachers should identify the abilities and skills they are expected to develop in their students in their own subjects areas. They are also expected to make a choice of method design the schemes taking into consideration the possible limits of time effort, finance and acceptability.

WHY COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT?

"Examination is the most pervasive evil of our educational system", opined the University Education Commission (1948-49) and educationists wanted to give up examinations altogether. Examinations had been denounced for reducing students to new machines of memory and for making educational synonymous with cramming of large amounts of knowledge. Many education commissions and committers expressed dissatisfaction with the present examination system in colleges and Universities and suggested drastic changes in the objectives and methodology of examinations.

The University Education Commission (1948-49) set up to investigate into the conditions of the system of University education gone deep into the matter. This was followed by one of

the most powerful criticisms of the examination system by the Secondary Education Commission (1952). The commission reported, "the examinations today dictate the curriculum instead of following it, prevent any experimentation, hamper the proper treatment of subjects and sound methods of teaching, foster a dull uniformity rather than originality, encourage the average pupil to concentrate too rigidly upon too narrow a field and thus help him to develop wrong values in education. Pupils assess education in terms of success in examinations. They are forced to attend to what can be examined, and to do that with success they often have to feed the pupils rather than encourage habits of independent study. This system is not so uncommon as we would wish to imagine".

In this context, it is noteworthy that several changes were introduced to improve the conventional system of examination. One such change or strategy is the introduction of Continuous and Comprehensive Internal Assessment.

According to the report of the Education Commission (1964-66), internal assessment should be comprehensive evaluating all those aspects of the student's growth that are measured by the external examination and also his personality traits, interests and attitudes which cannot be assessed by it. Internal assessment should be built into total educational Programme and should be used for improvement rather than for certifying the level of achievements of the student".

On the other hand , comprehensive evaluation implies that it will cover all the aspects of curriculum and will assess the scholastic and non-scholastic potentials of the students. Our system of examination tends to measure the scholastic ability of the students only and that to the degree of the accuracy can't be ascertained. In Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE), the emphasis has been shifted from classifying the learners into classes or division in the examinations to their all-round development.

Education aims at all-round development of the personality of the child. Keeping this goal in view, various learning experiences are provided in the school. Hence expected outcomes of learning cannot be confined to the cognitive domain only. Other domains like affective and the psycho-motor are equally important. Comprehensive evaluation seeks to include all those aspects and areas of personality which are amenable to evaluation such as :

1. Personal and social qualities (regularity, punctuality, habits of cleanliness, co-operation, sense of responsibility, initiative etc.)

2. Interests (musical, artistic, literary,etc.)

3. Desirable attitudes (secularism, socialism, democracy, national identity and national integration, attitude towards school programmes, school property etc.)

4. Health status (height, weight, chest expansion, freedom from disease, cleanliness, etc)

5. Proficiency in co-curricular activities (both indoor and outdoor like debating, dramatics, speech, club activities, games and sports, swimming etc.).

TOOLS FOR CONTINUOUS AND COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT

Different techniques can be used by the teacher to observe both scholastic and non-scholastic performances of pupils. The following tools can be used for continuous internal evaluation:

(a) Quizzes (Scheduled/Unscheduled)

(b) Written and Oral Tests (Objective, Short Answer, Long Answer, Problem Solving)

(c) Assignments

(d) Laboratory/ Field/Practical/Project Work

(e) Term Paper/Dissertation/Thesis

(f) Tutorials/Group Discussions/Seminars

Unlike the cognitive outcomes, affective qualities cannot be effectively assessed through paper-pencil tests. The teacher should depend greatly on personal observation of pupil behaviour and draw conclusions about the satisfactory development of qualities. For carrying out such observations our teachers should be thoroughly oriented. They should maintain records of periodic observations of their pupils. Variety of evaluation techniques may be used for the evaluation of non-cognitive areas. It may not be the single responsibility of one teacher. All teachers must jointly endeavor for assessment in the non-cognitive areas. It also solicits the involvement of parents and community in assessing the non-cognitive aspects of learning.

CONCLUSION

There is no point in an innovative approach being adopted unless it can be proved that it works. The effort of this study had been fruitful in improving the evaluation skills, which is a very important competence expected to raise the standards of achievement in pupils by constant feedback, remediation, and improvement of classroom instructional strategies based on the evaluation results. In consonance with the recommendations made for improving evaluation system, there have been efforts in few states to introduce grading system. Nevertheless, it is essential to equip the teachers with the essential skills and competencies of evaluation so that they would be able to integrate evaluation well with their teaching-learning process, assist students in the attainment of required standards through proper guidance, feedback and remediation. So far we have been trying and testing our approaches to find a system of accountability that work for our mission. By emphasizing streamlined system and team involvement, many institutions have found that effective assessment can be

a strong catalyst for positive change. Once the faculty and administration realize the power of assessment data, say many expert, they become more animated about the prospect of improving their teaching, their programme, and their graduates.

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