



Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation: Challenges and Plausible Solutions

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Abstract:

Education is important for a good start in life. It forms a skeleton for the students to flesh out his/her development. But for any student to fulfill his or her potential, timely and proper assessment is even more imperative as only after this proper guidance can be given on how to move forward, improve, develop different facets of personality, polish rough edges, till the finisher product emerges. But comprehensive, proper and timely assessment is lacking in today's system, as they give value to learning by rote. Thus to improve this Continuous and Comprehension Evaluation pattern can be one way but its implementation and that too in proper way is found to be very difficult and thus some challenges and possible solutions of Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation has been presented in the present paper.

Keywords: *Challenges, Continuous & Comprehensive evaluation system, Solutions*

1. Introduction

Education is the most important and powerful instrument invented by mankind to shape and mould themselves in a desirable manner. It is the education, which not only transforms the human animal into a rational human being, but also prepares and develops him to survive and adjust with surroundings so as to lead his personal as well as social life successfully. Therefore, we may say that education is anything by which the individual personality is prepared and developed to undertake any sort of task and adjust with the varying environments in order to fulfill his basic necessities and objectives of life. In fact, education is part and parcel of human life.

Work becomes mechanical and boring if no change is brought in doing it. To seek change is to strive towards perfection. When we look back, we should be quite happy that our academic practices have been addressing these issues to a considerable extent but we cannot afford to remain contented and become complacent with the existing teaching-learning mechanism. Teaching for successful learning cannot occur without high quality educational evaluation. Therefore some innovative ideas need to be integrated with the process of teaching and learning in such a way that it provides constant feedback for growth of individual learner. Thus the CCE is an attempt to shift from learning by rote to applying one's knowledge and also it will include two areas i.e Scholastic and Co-Scholastic Areas. Scholastic area assessment is based on the student's knowledge of the portions covered by the syllabus in various subjects. This also includes Physical Education, Yoga, Gymnastics and Folk Arts. Co-Scholastic areas refer to life skills, personality development and participation in programmes like the NSS, scouts, sports, clubs, and other individual skills, including performing and visual arts.

But the process of education is shaped and melded by the human personality called the teacher, who plays a crucial role in education of country. In order to meet the demands of globalization the educational system of the country needs more efficient, as well as, competent teachers. (UNESCO Commission on Education, 2001) According to NCFTE (2009), "A teacher needs to be prepared in relation to the needs and demands arising in the school context, to engage with questions of school

knowledge, the learner and the learning process. The expectation of the school system from a teacher changes from time to time, responding to the broader social, economic and political changes taking place in the society.” On this background of demand and expectation from schools and society, semester system need to be strengthened in all aspects adding innovative ideas and practices and this is possible only by the teacher’s readiness to accept new ideas in teaching-learning process. As according to UEC (1948-49) “Until and unless we have dedicated and committed teachers, who can take teaching as a mission in their lives, we cannot have a good educational system. Teachers should be the best minds of the country.” Thus, the formal education systems tend to emphasize the acquisition of knowledge to be detriment of other types of learning, but it is vital now to conceive education is as more encompassing fashion in the light of opportunities of 21st century.

2. Concept of Evaluation

Evaluation is the analysis and comparison of actual progress vs. prior plans, oriented toward improving plans for future implementation. It is part of a continuing management process consisting of planning, implementation and evaluation; ideally with each following the other in a continuous cycle until successful completion of the activity. Thus Educational Evaluation can be defined as the process of determining the extent to which educational objectives have been achieved. Assessment has a narrow meaning than evaluation but broader than measurement. “Assess” means “to sit beside” This process of gathering the data and fashioning them into an interpretable form, judgment can then be made on the basis of this assessment. Some innovations have been included in evaluation portion like grading system, continuous and comprehensive evaluation (CCE), more importance to internal assessment than external etc.

3. Grading system

According to Gronlund et.al (2009), “Although some educators distinguish between grades and marks, most consider these terms synonymous. Both imply a set of symbols, words or numbers that are used to designate different levels of achievement or performance.” According to NPE (1986), “Use of grades in place of marks must be included in education.” According to NCF (2005), “The Examination Reforms can be brought by the Introduction of grading system.” It has also given the advantages of grading system as follows:

1. It will minimize misclassification of students on the basis of marks.
2. It will eliminate unhealthy cut-throat competition among high achievers.
3. It will reduce societal pressure and will provide the learner with more flexibility.
4. It will lead to focus on a better learning environment.

Thus, if we take a consideration of Psychology of students, their parents, then grading system seems to be better.

4. Internal Assessment

The Idea of introducing internal assessment was first mooted at the national level in a seminar on Examination organized in Bhopal in 1956. The recommendation was that the teacher may be given the power to contribute towards determining the final result of a candidate in an external examination by being allowed to send to a Board his/her assessment. Prior to this seminar, the Bihar Board had already introduced internal assessment to the tune of 20% in 1954. As a result of above recommendation, many other board and University also introduced Internal assessment in 1964. (Mishra,1975) Internal assessment is very important part of school activities which leads to continuous evaluation of the students and thus providing continuous feedback and thus accordingly students can go further. The number of external examination should be reduced and the element of subjectivity in essay type tests should be minimized by introducing objective type tests. In the final assessment of the pupil, due credit should be given to the internal tests and the school records of the pupil. (Kumar, 2005) Internal assessment by schools should be comprehensive and should evaluate all aspects of student growth. (Ahmed & Garg,2007) According to Adisesniah (1973), “Our current examination system is dying. Hence we have to replace it by the system of internal assessment

throughout the schools and colleges.” Thus this shows that internal assessment is not a new concept. But it is being visualized in terms of subject only instead it has to be pupil’s growth in terms of knowledge, abilities, attitudes, Interests, personal and social qualities.

5. Concept of Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation

It is a system of school based assessment that covers all aspects of student’s development. i.e it includes both scholastic (academic, work experience, physical and health education, art education) and co-scholastic (life skills, attitudes, outdoor activities)

Evaluation process has got two characteristics i.e

5. Evaluation has to be continuous.
6. Evaluation has to be comprehensive.

Thus according to Dash (2004) two types of evaluation are formative (Continuous) evaluation and summative (Comprehensive) evaluation. They are as follows:

(a) Formative (Continuous) Evaluation- It is a method of judging the worth of a program while the program activities are forming or happening. Formative evaluation focuses on the *process*. When individual is evaluated during formation of the concept for feedback purpose then it is called „Formative Evaluation“ . Here Individual is evaluated at formative stage in addition to summative stage. Moreover, Individual is provided with proper feedback of evaluation at formative stage and proper remedial measures for their learning difficulties. The organization of the end of year examinations and the sole use of results for purpose of promotion has been an item of common experience with all of us. Through continuous evaluation it is possible regularly to obtain valuable data about the strengths and weakness of the children. This is helpful in providing remedial and enriched instruction. Ramamurti (1990) report also included remarks on Examination reforms, Continuous evaluation and maintenance of Integrity of such evaluation. According to Krishnaswami (1972), “Continuous Assessment is necessary for identifying the nature and extent of educational deficiencies then only one can design and adopt remedial Programmers’ there on. For that Everyday’s work may be assessed under a system of continuous assessment by judicious combination of different evaluation tools. The single final external examination is an end process.” According to NPE (1986), “Continuous and comprehensive evaluation are that incorporates both scholastic and non- scholastic aspects of education and the de- emphasis of memorization.” Continuous evaluation will help students to have a periodical feedback to judge their achievement and failures and enable them to improve their performance.(UGC,1973) Even according to Ansari (2010), “Continuous Internal Assessment (CIA) is a system which is not time bound but it goes side by side of teaching as a continuous process for regular Improvement of teaching-learning process.”

Thus Continuous comprehensive evaluation is not an end in itself, it provides opportunities for teachers to make suitable changes in their efforts. Continuous feedback also provides direction to pupils and parents in their efforts. Feedback becomes available sufficiently early to all concerned for remedial steps

(b) Summative (Comprehensive) Evaluation –It is a method of judging the worth of a program at the end of the program activities. The focus is on the *outcome*.

When Individual is evaluated after completion of substantial portion of the course for grading and certification purpose then it is called „Summative Evaluation. One of the main short comings of the traditional system of evaluation is that its coverage is limited to academic aspects alone. The concept of comprehensive evaluation covers different aspects of pupil’s growth such as

- Personal and social qualities (regularity, punctuality, habits of cleanliness, cooperation, sense of responsibility , initiative, essential stability, sense of social service etc.)
- Interests (musical, artistic, literacy, etc)
- Desirable attitudes (Secularism, socialism, democracy, National integration, attitude towards school programmers’, school property etc.)
- Health status (Height, weight, freedom from disease, cleanliness etc.)

- Proficiency in co-curricular activities (both indoor and outdoor like debating, speech, club activities, games and sports, scouting, etc)
- Different techniques such as observation of pupil behavior in various situation real or stimulated records of interests, initiative and creativity may be used for evaluation in non-scholastic areas. Cumulative records will show growth charts of the learners. According to UGC (1973), “To Increase the reliability and usefulness of evaluation a profile of student performance on a variety of Instruments over a period of time should be provided.”

Thus, in order to find out the pupil’s all round progress and to determine his future, a proper system of school records should be maintained for every pupil indication the work done by him from time to time. In recent years, there has been a growing concern for improving the quality of achievement of all learners at elementary and secondary level. But this aim to improve learners’ quality and to universalize the improved quality is not being realized totally due to imperfect teaching – learning processes and improper evaluation practices which are conventional and narrow in their scope. In order to bring about some quality improvement, the National Policy of Education (1986) recommended that minimum levels of learning (MLL) be laid down at each stage of primary education and that steps be undertaken in terms of teaching and evaluation to ensure that all students attain minimum levels of learning. As a follow-up, the MLL for each subject at primary level were stated in terms of competencies, which constituted an expected performance target lending itself to criterion- referenced testing which is continuous and competency based.

It is a very well known fact that the evaluation practices carried out in schools aim to measure the knowledge and understanding outcomes of learners, neglecting the evaluation of skills and higher mental abilities. While one of the major areas of school education is towards the all round development of the child, least attention is paid to the educative process involved and to the assessment of students’ personal development. The National Policy on Education (1986) and the Programme of Action (1992) followed by the National Curriculum Framework of School Education (1988 and 2000) reiterated the need for developing the personal and social qualities in learners. They stressed the point that the evaluation should be comprehensive in nature, wherein all learning experiences pertaining to scholastic, co-scholastic and personal and social qualities are assessed. The comprehensive evaluation necessitates the summative assessment of cognitive abilities as well as the assessment of health habits, work habits, cleanliness, cooperation and other social and personal qualities through simple and manageable means of tools. The comprehensive evaluation not only helps in checking all the standards of performance in both scholastic and co-scholastic areas, but also in decision making regarding various aspects of teaching- learning process, promoting the students, increasing quality, efficiency and accountability. Continuous and comprehensive evaluation necessitates the use of multiple evaluation techniques and tools in addition to certain conventional ones. Along with the emphasis on introducing the Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation, the grading system was also recommended.

The comprehensive evaluation not only helps in checking all the standards of performance in both scholastic and co-scholastic areas, but also in decision making regarding various aspects of teaching-learning process, promoting the students, increasing quality, efficiency, and accountability. Continuous and comprehensive evaluation necessitates the use of multiple evaluation techniques and tools in addition to certain conventional ones. This is required because different specific areas of pupil growth need different types of evaluation through certain techniques. The teacher has to select the most appropriate technique for a situation and develop the necessary tools for the same, and decide upon the periodicity and timing of evaluation. Scenario of evaluation practices in schools certain empirical studies conducted at Regional level in schools (Rao Manjula, 2001) and other studies reported reveal the following:

- Evaluation practices carried out in schools are still conventional in their nature and purposes.
- Continuous assessment is not followed systematically in those schools where teachers are

trained in in-service programmes.

- Competencies are not assessed through planned procedures of evaluation.
- Assessment of wrong things or the same range of things too often is carried out. One doesn't get a fair and realistic picture of what students have actually mastered.
- Undue reliance on recall is found, rather than enabling the students to transfer and apply what they have learnt to different concepts and problems.
- Formative feedback is not provided. Learning difficulties are not identified.
- The personal and social qualities are totally ignored due to lack of awareness of what to be evaluated and how to evaluate.
- Remedial instruction is not provided.

Some of the tensions and constraints influencing teachers' evaluation practices are:

1. lack of knowledge and skills related to evaluation
2. lack of facilities and time
3. expectations of the Head teachers and the colleagues to complete the syllabus in time
4. the social requirement of information and
5. external accountability.

Furthermore, the in-service programmes planned for the teachers have inadequate inputs in evaluation and do not create avenues for practical exercises during the training sessions. Implementation of continuous and comprehensive evaluation. The role of continuous and comprehensive evaluation becomes very important when our aim is to improve learners' quality in the cognitive as well as in the non-cognitive domains. It would be reasonable to regard continuous assessment in the context of school as a continuous updating of teachers judgments about learners that permit cumulative judgments about their performance to be made. Some important points to be considered for implementing continuous and comprehensive evaluation are:

- Careful examination of the course, and specification of competencies to be attained by the learners in terms of knowledge, understanding, application (analysis, synthesis, evaluation for higher grades) and skill performance.
- Knowledge and ability to construct assessment tools that are criterion based appropriate for assessing the competencies.
- Careful planning of the competency based teaching procedures. There should be congruence between teaching and assessment without which assessment would become distorted.
- Comprehensive evaluation of competencies as well as personality traits and attitudes.
- The maintenance of records.
- Requirement of knowledge and skills of evaluation, commitment, and assistance to provide remedial teaching on part of the teacher.

In the existing conditions of evaluation system carried out in schools, 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.

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