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# INDIA'S *QUALITY* ASSESSMENT IN SCHOOLS: A PERSPECTIVE TO IMPROVE STUDENT STANDARDS

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**ABSTRACT**

Teaching cannot be successful without high-quality evaluation, thus teachers must combine the teaching and learning processes. A high-quality evaluation always improves learning results. This must be built in such a way that it can be utilized to significantly influence the quality of what professors teach and what students learn. The focus here should be on the methods chosen that are humane and allow the learner to develop into a responsible and productive citizen.

**Key words:** teaching, high-quality evaluation, learning process, teaching strategy, productive citizen etc.,

In a larger sense, assessment entails gathering data on students' learning progress via processes and then evaluating their performance using the data gathered. It's critical to remember that the goal of assessment is to change from giving grades or assigning marks to providing constructive feedback and assisting students with the learning process. Because assessment is an important aspect of the learning process, it should be included in learner-centered teaching. In today's Indian educational system, scholastic features take precedence over co-scholastic ones. Higher mental activities such as problem solving and creative thinking are overlooked in favour of memorising information, which kills the child's true potential. In the Indian context, the current research provides some of the most significant strategies for continuous assessment.

**Quality of Assessment**

The importance of assessment in making teaching a successful undertaking cannot be overstated. It must be adaptable to the individual scenarios that arise and the needs of the various learner groups. Assessments should stimulate pupils rather than demoralize or discourage them. It is important to note that the teacher's assessment has an impact on the students' life, either directly or indirectly. It has the potential to alter their life. Assessment should meet the needs of students, pique their attention, and provide them with useful direction and meaningful inputs.

The terms evaluation and assessment are not interchangeable. While evaluation is the process of acquiring and analyzing specific information as part of the evaluation process, assessment is the process of gathering and analyzing particular information as part of the evaluation process. Content, classroom method, and individual learner improvement are all part of the evaluation process. Continuous feedback to the learner, on the other hand, is critical in assessment to ensure that the course is effective.

**The Current Evaluation Situation in India**

Exams are used in India to test and evaluate students in schools. It concentrates primarily on cognitive learning outcomes, neglecting co-curricular domains in the process, despite the fact that co-curricular fields are an important element of a child's growth. Higher mental qualities such as critical thinking, problem solving, and creativity are neglected in favour of rote learning and memorizing what is taught in class. Exams necessitate systemic adjustments in the framework of evaluation and assessment, according to the National Curriculum Framework - 2005 paper. According to the survey, the number of school dropouts is on the rise, as is unhealthy competition, stress, high failure rates, nervous breakdowns, and suicides among students. The true picture of the students is neglected, and the board examination pattern is adopted in schools, emphasizing results and therefore destroying the very purpose of education. As a result, it is now mandatory for Indian educators to investigate our country's evaluation system and reform the current examination-based evaluation procedure.

The National Curriculum Framework of 2005 recommended a few guiding principles for school instruction to remedy this misconception. Other than what is taught at school, connecting knowledge to life

- Ensure that rote learning methods are no longer used.
- Instead of keeping youngsters textbook centric, enrich the curriculum to find total development in them.
- Exams should be more integrated and exciting in the classroom.
- Within the democratic polity of the country, cultivate an overarching identity shaped by caring concerns. National Curriculum Framework (National Curriculum Framework, 2005, p. 5)

It is clear that there has been a significant transition in the approach to teaching and learning from traditional approaches, i.e., from behaviourism to constructivism. However, this shift in perspective necessitates a significant shift in assessment procedures. NCF – 2005 advocated a change in strategy. Constructivism, on the other hand, believes that learning is an active and continuous process in realistic situations that promotes social interactions with authentic learning tasks. The behaviourist theory determines the student's achievement based on memory, while the meta-cognitive skills such as critical and problem solving are completely ignored. Students are encouraged to talk to their teachers, ask questions, and think for themselves. Students are asked to participate in open-ended inquiries, and their responses are valued. They are encouraged to work in groups and pairs so that they can share their ideas and build their knowledge. Learners would be able to embrace new learning strategies if given the correct opportunity and environment. The Central Board of Secondary Education in India evaluated the results and reported that the two subjects with the highest number of failures are Math and English.

Language learning and instruction have changed dramatically in recent years. The assessment and evaluation of English language instruction has had a significant impact on language policy, curriculum and syllabus design, and language teaching practices. It's past time for reforms in evaluation to become a need. We must realize that, in addition to language, the assessment process is as significant. It's crucial to understand how people learn languages before deciding on assessment criteria. Summative, formative, and diagnostic assessments are all possible.

Summative assessment is used to provide grades to students at the end of a course or academic session. Competence, grades, levels, and scores are all taken into account here. Formative assessment, also known as "educative assessment," is frequently done throughout the academic session. This assessment aids in the teaching and learning process. Feedback on students' work may be taken during the process, but it will not be used for grading.

Formative assessment includes diagnostic testing. This aids in determining a student's current knowledge and skills in order to determine the most relevant syllabus or learning resources. During this process, a thorough examination of a student's problems is conducted, and appropriate educational support and counselling is provided. Individuals' general competency in a second language is measured via proficiency and achievement exams. A student can become self-sufficient in any course and can measure skills directly or indirectly.

Learners of English as a second language are exposed to a variety of texts and materials in the classroom, and a communicational atmosphere is created through activities and real-life situations. Learners should be actively participating in the language learning process while also reflecting the course or syllabus aims. Because English language competency is considered essential in all elements of education, evaluation must be based on a thorough examination of language concepts and proficiency. Students may be encouraged to give

oral presentations, participate in peer evaluation activities, submit portfolios and projects, and participate in activities and debates.

> ‘Language evaluation must be reoriented to measurement of ‘language competency,' rather than ‘achievement' with relation to specific syllabi.' (NFG – English Teaching, p.15)

Assessment in accordance with the NCF – 2005 should be ongoing. From the first day of their encounter, the teacher should begin assessing the pupil. All four skills — hearing, speaking, reading, and writing – must be taught in a holistic manner while teaching a language. The emphasis in the Indian educational system is solely on writing skills.

> “It is meaningless offering kids vast experience in reading, writing, listening, and speaking if we simply assess their work,” Pauline Chater writes in Marking and assessment in English. (Pauline Chater, 1984, p. 3)

Assessment is insufficient on its own. It should allow learners to push beyond their current abilities while also providing constructive feedback on their strengths and flaws. Students should be given the option to self-assess and track their goals. Peer learning activities enable kids to learn more quickly while also developing social and cooperative skills.

> “Assessment must, first and foremost, inspire students to think productively on their own reading and writing, to evaluate their intellectual growth, and to create goals.” Joint Task Force on Assessment, IRA/NCTE, 1994, p. 13).

In a language classroom, students must be encouraged to come up with a variety of solutions, whether correct or incorrect. Assessment should be based on their ability to respond logically and coherently, with language precision and proper grammar, spelling, and pronunciation. It is permissible to ask open-ended questions that depict real-life circumstances. Learning should have a higher value and be more focused on the process of learning. Different points of view, as well as the creativity with which they express themselves and think, should be fostered. The goal for students should be to acquire confidence and improve their literacy skills.

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