

## A STUDY ON SCHOOL BASED ASSESSMENT IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS OF DELHI

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### ABSTRACT

*Assessment has become an indispensable part of educational process which helps in channelizing, speeding up and inspires the entire education process. In order to bring out the improvement in the quality of the education and the holistic development of the child, assessment process should focus adequately on both scholastics and co-scholastics areas of development. Assessment is a form of communication and should be seen as an integral part of teaching and learning. Assessment also provides information about students learning through a number of procedures and these procedures used to retain information about students' performance. Assessment can focus on and individual learner or group of learners, an institution or the educational system as a whole. Assessment for learning can be recognized as central to classroom practices, being the central point, teacher becomes the heart of whole assessment. Teachers need to be sensitive and empathetic as all assessments can contribute to learner motivation. Therefore it is necessary to discuss with teachers and convince them that assessing child is not a separate activity nor it is a burden which requires additional effort or time. It needs to be woven into the teaching learning process as an integral part. This study was conducted to assess the notion of teachers regarding school based assessment at elementary level; different means of school based assessment used by teachers at elementary level and purpose for which school based assessment is done.*

**Keywords:** School Based Assessment, Elementary Level, Formative, Summative Feedback

### INTRODUCTION

The school based assessment is a method which is helpful in determining the effectiveness of teaching and learning process and their assimilation by learners. The process of school based assessment requires a great amount of skills and training on the part of the teacher. The teacher should have to act as a facilitator of learning. It does not stand in isolation from other acts that are a part of the process of learning, introducing multifaceted learning strategies in class would

open up numerous avenue for learners with numerous intelligences and would certainly corroborate the process of assessment that are employed by the teachers. Children spend the best part of their young lives with teachers and it is through the assessment that their capabilities can be understood well. If we rely totally on examinations which provide only quantitative results then we will fail in discovering the creative part of the learner. SBA has been carried out for a long time but there were problems with how it has been done.

Assessment in school context includes information about students learning. These procedures are observation, rating scale, checklist, paper pencil tests, this variety of procedures used to retain information about students performance. Assessment can focus on an individual learner or a group of learners (class), an institution or the educational system as a whole.

“The purpose of assessment is necessarily to improve the teaching learning process and materials by gauging the extent to which capabilities of the learners have been developed” (National Curriculum Framework 2005). School based Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation System should be established to reduce stress on children, make evaluation comprehensive and regular, provide space for the teacher for creative teaching, provide a tool of diagnosis and remedial action and produce learners with greater skills. (Position Paper on Aims of Education-NCF 2005)

### **Purpose of Assessment**

The first and foremost purpose of school assessment is to bring improvement in the student’s learning as well as in the instructional process also. It aims to motivate students and facilitates their academic development. The primary purpose of assessment is to give feedback on the scholastic progress of student which can be achieved if teachers make themselves well prepare before the course of teaching begins not only with the teaching techniques but with the parameters of evaluation and the multiple tools and techniques that he/she will employ in the classroom. The students learning is measured for a number of reasons besides giving feedback and these purposes are discussed below:

### **Placement evaluation**

Placement evaluation is the prior evaluation of students before the starting of instruction and its purpose is to place students according to their achievement and individual characteristics.

### **Formative assessment**

Formative assessment is a tool for informal assessment and it is carried out throughout the year using a variety of techniques by the teacher or assessor. Its purpose is to provide a regular feedback to the teacher as well as the learners and this feedback will be helpful in bringing positive modifications in the teaching methods of teacher as well as in understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the learners. The effective use of formative assessment can improve students' performance and build up their confidence simultaneously minimize the workload over the teachers.

### **Summative Assessment**

Summative Assessment or the assessment of learning is carried out at end of a specific period, normally at the end of the semester to check the desired outcome. Its purpose is to measure the level of achievement of the learners i.e. how much one has learned from the course simultaneously the effectiveness of the instructions. 'It is usually a graded test, i.e., it is marked according to a scale or set of grades' (CCE manual for teachers 2010). Summative assessments are usually paper pencil test in nature and a onetime evaluation, relying on it is to check the learner's performance is completely unjustified and unfair. Outcomes from tests develop into an evaluation, such as a score in a grade book or a grade on a report card. These assessments reflect the ability level of student progress at a particular point in time (Chappuis & Stiggins, 2008, p. 12). It can also be understood as "Sum" of what students have learned at the end of the semester and what they have not learned. According to evaluation theorist Bob Stakes, "When the cook tastes the soup, that's formative; When the guests taste the soup, that's summative."

### **Diagnostic Assessment**

Diagnostic tests are another important tool for teachers that are conducted at the end of unit or term with a purpose of finding out the reasons of poor performance of the learners in some units. This kind of assessment is followed by suitable interventions and retesting of learners.

### **Prognostic Assessment**

The word prognostic means a forecast or prediction, in term of education the prognostic assessment deals with the future development of learners through the findings of prior

assessment methods and analyse the abilities, potentials, strengths and weaknesses of learners for future development. In short it can be said that prognostic assessment foretells how well a learner is able to do in certain subject

### **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

- Is the present school based assessment system successful in assessing the overall development of learner?
- Are the stakeholders able to imbibe the true spirit of SBA?

### **OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

1. To study the notion of students, teachers with regard to school based assessment.

### **SAMPLE**

In the present study simple random sampling technique was used for selecting the sample.

The researcher selected 1 private school, 1 government school, and 1 government aided school from South Delhi as the sample for the present study.

- Selection of Teachers: Two teachers from each Private, Government and Government Aided Schools were taken, out of which one was of English subject and one was of Social Science subject respectively.
- Selection of Students: One section was selected randomly out of all the sections in each Private, Government and Government Aided Schools, the section consisted of forty students from each school.

Hence, the sample for the present study comprised of 3 schools, 6 Teachers and 120 students

### **TOOLS USED**

Researcher used two self constructed tools to conduct the present study which are mentioned below:

- A Rating Scale for students.
- A questionnaire cum rating scale for teachers

## **MAJOR FINDINGS**

Findings of the present study has been divided in the following heads

1. Notion of the Students towards School Based Assessment
2. Notion of Teachers towards School Based Assessment

### **1. NOTION OF THE STUDENTS TOWARDS SCHOOL BASED ASSESSMENT**

- Most of the students were in favour of the assessment tools and techniques used by the teachers; they felt that the use of these tools and techniques helps them in improving their learning, and they enjoy doing assignments, projects etc. collaboratively.
- Present school based assessment system has reduced rote learning, students are satisfied with the grading system, it gives satisfactory results and the formative assessment reduces fear of examination among them.
- Teachers are using easier methods to assess students which increase their self confidence; students felt that the teachers assess them precisely because teachers can find students' strengths and weaknesses well with the help of currently implemented assessment system in the schools.
- Peer assessment is another bright aspect of the current assessment system; students felt that getting feedback from peer is easier than getting the feedback from other individuals such as teachers, parents, principals etc. Students are more open to their peers than that of teachers and their parents and they grow more cohesive relationship among peers with the help of this assessment.

- Students were asked to prepare assignments most of the times for the formative assessment, only few teachers used different methods and techniques such as debate, drama, plays etc. for the formative assessment.
- Formative assessment and summative assessment helps in improving their learning at the same time these exercises are labour work oriented and demands lots of time.

## **2. NOTION OF TEACHERS TOWARDS SCHOOL BASED ASSESSMENT**

- The teachers of all the three types of schools were in support of the present system of school based assessment, according to them this system enables them to provide authentic results, reduces pressure of studies on students, leads to joyful and stress free learning as a result quality of student's work has been increased.
- Teachers felt that recent approach (grading system) is a much better than that of traditional approach (term-end examination) for the assessment of learners.
- Present assessment system has provided them the opportunity to assess and reassess the learner and provide proper feedback to the students during the session because continuous assessment and feedback improves student's learning.
- Now teachers were not bound to assess the student in term end examinations where they were suppose to announce the results of the paper pencil tests and students have to face the consequences only.
- The workload on teachers has increased but they were willing to carry this workload because they feel that it is helpful in understanding the problems, abilities, difficulties, skills, interest and views of the learners even better.

- Present system of the student assessment in schools is also helpful for students well; according to them it enhanced creative thinking, reflective thinking, critical thinking and higher order thinking skills among students.
- The limitations of the present assessment system is that current school based assessment practices reduced the fear of examination among students and students are not taking examinations seriously, students are also not making sincere efforts to study the concept and solve problems.
- Proper orientation and training for the appropriate implementation of the assessment system is required; they suggested that various workshops, symposiums and training sessions should be regularly organised in the school to keep teachers updated.

## **CONCLUSION**

It can be concluded from the findings of the study that students and teachers have differences on some issues but most of them are in favour of the currently implemented school based assessment system by the CBSE, they felt that CCE has been a revolution in the assessment of students and this could be carried forward with some necessary changes such as in the record keeping exercises as it is a major hindrance in the original idea of implementation of the scheme, and these exercises takes so much of time. The teachers are left with limited time to provide proper feedback to the students, however it is necessary for the accountability of the teachers, but these things should be reduced to a minimum. The most frequently used mode of assessment by the teachers are projects and paper pencil tests from all the three types of schools and the findings also revealed nearly similar results of the teachers, the science teachers of all the three types of schools always use the method of observation, test and inventories, examinations and paper pen tests but sometimes they also use questions, anecdotal records, portfolio and checklist. In English subjects examinations and paper pen tests are always used but rating scale, test & inventories, portfolio analysis, anecdotal records, checklists, questions, group projects, group discussions and portfolio are used sometimes.

The prime purpose of school based assessment as revealed in all of the three types of schools is to give feedback which helps the learner to overcome doubts in the lessons, students feel more comfortable in asking questions, feedback always shows improvement among students as they get personal attention by the teachers sometimes it is provided in the form of remedial classes so that the weaknesses of the students can be reduced, teachers also involve parents through PTMs. In government aided schools, it is provided as per the requirement of students, and given orally, positive and in motivating manner; moral support is given to students as feedback. Teachers felt that providing feedback is not always helpful and doesn't show any improvement in students' academic performance, while some teachers also felt that it sometimes shows improvement.

In the context of rote learning it can be concluded that there is a difference in the views among the teachers of all the three types of schools. The present school based assessment is helpful in reducing rote learning among students as they are learning through other ways but in all the types of schools it is not helpful in discouraging rote learning as students have to learn and memorize things for some subjects such as in English, Social Studies etc. specially they do rote learning in board exams. The system is so flexible that indirectly it is making students careless towards studies because usually they come without preparation for tests and exams as they are aware of the fact that they will be promoted. Diagnostic assessment in all the schools is done through different methods like regular class test and oral test, by doing group activities such as project work and individual activities, by constant observation, by oral assessment, written evaluation, assessment during the interaction between teacher and student, through UT's and F.As', by asking questions on the topics taught, by organising various activities in class, a role play or write a review of the lesson, formative or continuous assessment, through oral conversation, assignments, through project works, class tests performances and through students' involvement in class and other activities. Constructivism which could be achieved through the involvement of students in more and more group projects, by collecting pictures and pasting, model making, power point presentation, visit to book fair, educational trips, formative assessment (F.A.), newspaper reading, by surfing internet and read articles and many other activities that help students in preparing for competitions, showing educational movies, documentaries and group discussions.



It can be concluded that teachers do not use any other new alternative assessment techniques for students' assessment. In private schools, sample papers, worksheets, oral tests, blackboard tests, organisation of quizzes twice or thrice a month, unit tests, formative assessments (F.A.), brainstorming questions, written revision tests and class revision of difficult topics, creative writing, organizing quiz, organizing plays workshop, debates, practical application and skills, group discussion, projects, practical exams, model making completion, magazine, books and newspaper reading were used. In government schools, quizzes, oral testing and comprehension exercises were used it was also revealed that no alternative technique for assessment was used as there are already many prescribed techniques. U.Ts, quiz, M.C.Qs., random oral tests, projects , viva-voce, brainstorming, assignments, practical, experiments, projects , group discussions, debates and surprise testing were also used.

In government aided schools alternative assessment methods such as group discussions, presentation by the students, projects, Listening, Speaking, Reading & Writing (LSRW) activities, debates, writing newsletter articles, extra classes in which simple oral exercises are being done, observation, test-retest, projects making once in a term or after formative assessment grading, role plays, question answers, Dramas, PowerPoint (ppt.) presentations, poster making, skit plays, quizzes & puzzles, quizzes on smart boards, oral tests, group discussions, worksheets, project work, testing reading skills, recitation and extempore were used. It can be concluded clearly that the assessment techniques which teachers are using in all the three types of schools are no different from those which are prescribed in the CBSE manual. The teachers are not motivated to use alternative assessment strategies because they feel that the prescribed assessment strategies are enough and they also do not have time to implement other assessment strategies.

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