

INTERNAL ASSESSMENT IN EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION

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I. INTRODUCTION

Man has been called as 'a social animal'. It means that possessing innate qualities of an animal, he could be made a 'social being'. It is clear that he could be made 'social'. But how? and with what means? 'Man' is also the 'Best is of the Creation'. Again the question arises 'how' and 'why'? It is all because the human being by nature, at birth, possesses human as well as animal instincts. Human instincts are to be developed and enhanced through *teaching* and *learning* and likewise animal instincts can also be moulded and refined through *education* and *training*.

The human, being 'The best of creation' because he is bestowed with the best of mental capacities and potentialities among all creations. He is the best because he is given a high level of intellectual powers and potential, particularly the faculties of understanding and reasoning. Due to such high potentialities of intellectual powers, he, with the passage of time becomes quick to come into contact with the environment around him. The environment, stimulates and the new-born responds, which is the start of all teaching and learning. Learning brings *change in his behaviour* and as such he picks up and quickly learns how to adjust to the environment around him.

Briefly speaking, this is how, child starts learning and how teaching commences, resulting in the change in the behavioral patterns of the growing child. All these things when combined together can easily sit under the umbrella of what we call "Education". Resultantly, three

things emerge in our mind:

- i) *The child*, who is to learn and adjust to the environment.
- ii) *The environment*, which carries the responsibility of every child to learn, to develop and *to become*.
- iii) The process of teaching and learning, i.e. *education of the child*.

The child who is the product of human species, at birth is very weak, feeble, knows nothing, can't do anything at all on his own. The environment/the social setup around him starts taking care of him right from birth. The parents, the neighbours, the teachers and almost all concerned take care of him and smoothen his *growth and development*, and through their joint care, instruction, teaching and training, i.e. through *education* the child grows, develops and *becomes* one able and good citizen of tomorrow - the maker, the leader or shaper of the social environment of tomorrow. In all this passage of *making and becoming*, are inevitably included, the human child himself, his learning and adjusting; the teaching, training (inclusive of instruction and guidance), in other words *he and his education* and all possible *help* from the society members. The learning brings change and modifies behaviour; teaching induces learning, training and guidance refine learning. All these factors when positively fostered result in 'good education' and can definitely turn out good citizens of tomorrow.

Now we turn to the term 'education'. Education -formal and informal results in *development*; '*development that takes place within the individual*' in the shape of *learning, moulding his behaviour, adjusting and becoming*.

As we earlier said, human being by birth possesses

human as well animal instincts. We also said *human instincts* are to be positively enhanced, where-as the animal instincts are to be trained, moulded and refined so as to make a desirable personality of the child. All this job is to be taken care of by what we already discussed as 'education'. Such a process of educating the child or student needs all of us - the parents, teachers, providers of education and all others concerned to join hands for carrying on this noble task of the education of the child.

Since the child by birth possesses animal instincts, therefore, he is bound to go astray from human values. He is bound to be allured to selfish attractions. Hence, there ought to be some checks and balances from time to time. Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai - the Saint of Sindh, has put it into the following words:

وٺيو ويڃ وات، ڪنڌ مَ ڦيرج ڪيڏهين،
 لوڻيءَ ڦير لپات، سگهو لڳندو لطيف چئي!
 (شاهه)

Actually, it is the right path - the "Siraat-al-Mustaqeem" that is to be led by all the individuals - *the ultimate aim of their creation*. Only through checks and balances, in other words through continued periodical 'assessment', we can find where we are going to? Hence, 'assessment' and 'accountability' of our deeds should follow every now and then and is a *must* for we all. As such, we are bound to apply this term 'assessment' in its true sense of the word to all our deeds. In the educational process and progress of the child, the function of 'assessment' formally or informally, internally or externally becomes as such, essential in one shape or the other during his whole educational career.

II. VARIOUS TERMS USED IN EDUCATIONAL TESTING AND EVALUATION

With this brief introduction now we'll have to turn our attention to our main topic, that is, The importance of "*Internal Assessment*" in the spectrum of education.

Before we talk about "Internal Assessment" as such, we should also briefly look at various other terms in its neighbourhood-like Tests, Educational Testing, Measurement, Assessment, and Evaluation. These terms have such a very deep inter-relationship that they sometimes become very confusing and may be used for one another. As a matter of fact, they are different and they mean different. By understanding these terms, we can easily go and follow what 'Internal Assessment' means and what it requires. Let us examine the following terms:

i) TEST

A 'test' can be 'an examination'. A 'test' can be 'a set of questions'. A 'test' is defined as 'An instrument or a tool or a systematic procedure for measuring a sample behaviour. (Answers the question - "How well does the individual perform - either in comparison with others or in comparison with a domain of tasks"?. (4, P.1).

"It is subjection to conditions that support to show the true value or nature of a statistic with reference to some theoretical standard". (6, P.82).

Morgan and King define *Test* as, "a standardized sample of the performance of a person on a task or a set of tasks". (1, P.57).

Almost every examination is a '*test*'. We are every now and then confronted with one sort or another of test.

A test has also been defined as "a systematic procedure for comparing the behaviour of two or more persons (Cronbach) or to compare an individual's

behaviour on one occasion with his behaviour on another occasion". Tests are first steps towards making decisions. Tests help in making decisions of some kind. Most decisions involve prediction or forecast about the individual's future behavioural performance from the assessment of his present standing on some trait or behaviour. Tests require 'A Testing Programme'.

ii) A TESTING PROGRAMME

Dr.R.A.Shah, present Vice Chancellor of the University of Sindh, speaking on our system of examinations long ago, had rightly warned in the following terms:

"Our practice of examinations besides dominating the curricula does not test pupils in the application of the acquired knowledge and information to new life situations. Thus pupils pass out from schools and colleges without showing their ability to adapt to novel situations. Hence, mal-adjustment is the result in the case of many graduates when they enter life". (5, Pp.83 & 84)

He strongly recommended introduction of a well-thought and well-planned Testing Programme in all the schools and post-school educational institutions of our country.

A testing programme means "total pattern or procedure of making, or constructing or selecting a test or tests, conducting, measuring results, or collecting resulting data (measurement), analysing and interpreting the results or data and finally reaching certain conclusions or decisions (Evaluation)". This whole coverage comes under what is called '*a testing programme*' of any school, college or any other institution.

iii) EXAMINATION

Examinations are conducted to test the ability of a

student and find out if he has reached a certain standard of academic learning and knowledge. They scrutinise and measure the student's capabilities against a required standard, and determine his skill in answering a question under the conditions imposed by the examiner. These examinations are of various kinds, like objective tests, and the traditional essay type examinations, and the internal and external examinations The internal examinations indicate to the teacher as to how much has been retained by the student from what has been taught to him in period preceding the examination. (4, P.297)

iv) ASSESSMENT

Procedure or way of 'checking' or 'finding out' so as to fix the rate or assign a numerical value or to appraise is what we term 'Assessment'. "As far as possible, the term 'assessment' should be reserved for application to people. It covers activities included in grading (formal or non-formal), examining, certifying, and so on Throughout the world, most educational systems find it appropriate to record student achievement in some way, whether with a number, a letter code or a comment such as "satisfactory" or "needs improvement". Such assessments are based on the informal synthesis of a wide variety of evidence, and although they often include test results, they rarely have much in common with scientific measurement. Such procedures are increasingly being labelled as '*student evaluation*'. (11, P.1747)

v) MEASUREMENT

The term '*Measurement*' means, "The process of qualifying the degree to which some one or something possesses a given trait, quality or feature". It is the process of obtaining a numerical description of the degree to which an individual possesses a particular characteristic. (Measurement answers the question: How much?)" (4, P.1).

E.L.Thorndike says, 'All measurement assumes that "If a thing exists, it exists in some amount, and if it exists in some amount, it can be measured". When things are measured they put up difference. As such, measurement deals with *individual differences*.

Guilford defines *Measurement* as "the description of data in terms of numbers Measurement permits accurate, objective, communicable descriptions that can be easily understood".

vi) EVALUATION

Word '*Evaluation*' in place of the word 'Examination' is now being increasingly used in current educational list. The evaluation process is not "restricted to the result of tests and exams, scales and inventories and such other gadgets as conceived and employed by the teacher but it has a wider meaning and in that sense it includes the learner's own estimate' and appraisal and that infact is the truly significant and the most important evaluation (4., P.275).

According to C.V.Good, "Evaluation is a process of ascertaining or judging the value or amount of something by careful appraisal". (Ibid., P.276). Others define evaluation as:

1. "The process of assessing the over-all worth of an individual or activity. Many facts are investigated and many measures are employed so that a broad or comprehensive assessment is achieved". (7, P.405).
2. A cognitive process which involves making judgements about the value of ideas, works, solutions, methods, materials, etc. for some specific purpose.

A series of activities designed to measure the effectiveness or value of a course, instructional programme, exercise, etc. (2, P.196)

3. "A process of collecting relevant data for decision-making. (Colley and Lahanas, 1976)". (8, P.97)
4. "The process of determining to what extent the educational objectives are actually being realized". (Tyler, 1950) (11, P.1772)
5. Some perceive evaluation as "providing information for decision-making "(as Stufflebeam et al. 1971) or as "a systematic examination of educational or social programmes (Cronbach et al., 1980). Still another group of definitions - the judgemental definitions - point to the judgemental nature of evaluation and define it as the assessment of merit or value or worth (Seriven, 1967, House, 1980, Joint Committee, 1981) or as a combination of both description and judgement. (Guba & Lincoln, 1981)". (Ibid., p.1772).

The judgemental definitions of evaluation call for an evaluator with the nature of a judge, a referee, or an art critic. (Ibid., p.1772)

Some of the decisions of evaluation in education pertain to the following functions:

- Selection
- Classification
- Instructional improvement
- Diagnosis and guidance
- Motivation to improve study habits, etc.

III. SCOPE PURPOSES AND TYPES OF ASSESSMENT

For taking good as well as wise decisions, we in any educational setup need to have accurate data. This is necessary to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, and progress of students in educational settings. This is often

collected through tests, work samples, interviews, observations, and anecdotal reports from numerous individuals. Data gathered in these ways may then be used to assist in making educational decisions that may affect the student.

Assessment, however, involves more than just administering tests and tabulating results. *Assessment* should not be imposed on people, but rather approached as an interactive process involving parents, students, and school personnel. It is a method of inquiry, 'an ongoing process that results in all parties giving and obtaining information about the strengths, weaknesses, and expectations of a student and his or her environment. (3, Pp.1 & 2).

The Scope of Assessment in Educational Evaluation

The scope and form of assessment are necessarily dependent upon the many purposes of educational assessment. *Assessment* may be done to screen a group of children and identify those who are considered at high risk for developing learning problems. *Assessment* may be done for classification purposes, to determine if a student is eligible for a special programme. If a student is placed in a special programme, further assessment is necessary to develop long-range goals for an Individualized Education Programme (I.E.P). *Assessment* is also used to evaluate educational programmes and teaching methods. An *assessment* may be used on a continuous basis to monitor students in order to make daily instructional decisions. (Ibid., P.2).

Types of 'Assessment'

Historical precedents and concern over a variety of issues have influenced the development and use of assessment procedures. This has given rise, in the first

instance, to: (i) Formal Assessment, and (ii) Informal Assessment. These two types can further be sub-divided into two more types of assessment, i.e. (iii) External Assessment, and (iv) Internal Assessment. Let us briefly examine each one of these types.

i) Formal Assessment

Formal Assessment procedures use standardized, or norm-referenced tests - that is, tests that compare an individual's performance to the performance of a peer group on which the test was standardized. Norm-referenced tests usually include only a sample of skills, and the skills included may not necessarily be those emphasized in the student's typical performance.

Formal tests and evaluation procedures are best used for classification and placement purposes, as well as for the measurement of long-term objectives. These procedures may be used to measure learning processes and intellectual, sensory, and academic abilities in order to determine if a student meets the eligibility requirements for placement in a special educational programme. When used for this purpose, testing often is completed in several sessions, and the results are then evaluated by a team of professionals that may include teachers, a psychologist, counsellor, and principal..... The assessment data are judged in relation to a pre-established programme eligibility criterion. (3, P.7)

ii) Informal Assessment

Informal procedures sample skills and behaviours relevant to curriculum with the use of teacher-made and criterion-referenced devices. A continuous, fine-grained analysis of the student is the goal, and normative comparisons are not made. Thus results from informal tests may be used to assess long or short-term specific curriculum objectives.

Informal assessment procedures may consist of tests, rating devices, checklists, and observation systems. Many of the items on informal devices are selected from instructional materials such as worksheets, games, reading and math basal programmes, and flash cards. Each skill that is evaluated in a

teacher-made test may be sampled with several items or questions. Student responses to these questions are then judged in relation to criterion of mastery. This criterion is generally established by the teacher and reflects what is thought to be a minimum level of accuracy needed to succeed at the next level in the curriculum. Typically, criteria are expressed as a percentage of correct answers and/or rate of correct responses and incorrect responses (3., Pp.8 & 9).

iii) External Assessment

The *external assessment* is one which is conducted by some authority such as Directorate of Education, Board of Education or Technical Board or University or some other organization, frequently or perhaps generally outside a school or college or likewise other such institutions, either as a means of determining the award of scholarships for entrance or as a means of awarding certificates more or less of a standard character. The candidates are generally examined and assessed at an age in the near neighbourhood of 11 or 11+ years. Such assessments are concerned not so much with what candidates have done in the past as with what they can do in the future. Such assessments are not meant for knowledge, but for capacity; not for what a candidate has been taught to do, but for what he can do by his own native ability. *External assessment* is organized and conducted by the persons (authorities outside the institutions-schools/colleges, wherein the pupils or students are being schooled or are studying). External assessments are thus *assessments or checkings or findings, conducted by outsiders*, that is to say that *people who are not directly connected with those being assessed*.

IV. INTERNAL ASSESSMENT - ITS NEED AND IMPORTANCE

Need, Importance and other relevant matters

As we already said 'Education' as *whole* and *wholesome* is not only concerned with the acquisition of knowledge but also aims at developing in the pupils the desired interests, appreciations, habits, attitudes and personal qualities. Written examinations fail to assess these qualities. The teacher's observation and other

informal techniques are used internally to mitigate the evils of traditional examinations.

Internal assessment mitigates the defects of the external examination/assessment. In place of basing results on the assessment at any one time, *internal assessment* should be continuous as far as possible. (4, P.282)

One thing must necessarily be remembered that the *internal assessment*, is to be conducted by *the people (the teachers and other staff) who are inside the institution*; that is to say that *they are directly connected with those being assessed*.

Internal assessment should be conducted from time to time and should as such, be a continuous process. The purpose is neither to test the intelligence of the pupils nor to measure the efficiency of the teaching, though information regarding each of these may be obtained. It is rather to find out the use or advantage which the pupil/student has made of his opportunities during the period, with his reaction to the organized quantities of knowledge which have been presented to him. It is intended to place him in free competition with other pupils upon ground with which all are, or should be familiar, and to spread out the pupils/students in an order which shall indicate the relative values of their responses to the particular experience with they have been presented.

Internal assessment enables us to dialogue pupils' difficulties in learning. It points out the potentialities of an individual pupil/student and provides opportunities to find out the needs, goals and interests and aptitudes of an individual pupil/student and shows him/her the way for

his/her development. This has motivating effect and this in turn induces him/her to utilise his/her resourcefulness which is otherwise cramped. (4, P.282)

Internal assessment should be a continuous sort of process so as to build regular study habits among students.

By entrusting the responsibility of *internal assessment*, the teacher feels much more confident and motivated towards his job.

The internal assessment, by assessing both the tangible and intangible attainments of pupils/students ultimately prepares the pupils/students for external assessments in the years to come, and also supplements the cause of external assessment.

In our educational institutions, under the instructions of the Commission on National Education, 1959, the use and importance of internal assessment was introduced and emphasized by allowing the teachers of schools and colleges to hold periodic tests and assess the class work and performance of individual pupil/student. Such an assessment carried 25% of the marks whereas the Board or University examination, i.e. external assessment carried 75% marks. Pass marks in each category were necessary, and were to be shown in the pass certificates alongwith the name of the institution. (9, P.11).

It was a very a good suggestion and had manifold advantages, such as finding learning difficulty problems of the pupils or students while being educated within their own schools; classification of various categories of students; providing personal and group guidance, so on and so forth. But such sort of assessment needed sincere, objective and rational thinking and 'will' on the part of

teachers. Moreover it needed maintenance and use of record like result sheets, progressive reports and especially the maintenance and use of *cumulative record*. This was a good activity on the part of teachers and schools, which later seemed failed due to selfish motives of most of the concerned teachers.

Recently during the last two decades or so with the introduction of semester system which comprises mostly of the internal tests, measurement and evaluation; more opportunities and authority have been given to respective teachers at school, college and also at the University level. It is a very good omen but still there exist ever-increasing complaints of mis-use and of selfish motives of the concerned teachers with regard to their *internal assessment* and evaluation. Actually, this is a sacred job of accountability to Almighty Allah. The teacher should be honest, sincere, and also devoted and guidance-minded to the cause of education and educating the pupils/students at all levels. Much more is in their own hands, and much more they can do in this respectful, noble and national endeavour.

Internal assessment is a challenge for teachers of all categories. "Internal assessment pre-supposes responsible teachers. It takes for granted that they will realize the sanctity of the trust reposed in them. They must discharge their responsibilities with impartiality and equity. They must rise above their prejudices and petty selfish motives. The success of this scheme depends upon their sincerity, honesty and integrity. They should have courage enough to face the challenge of favouritism and nepotism. They should work honestly and should not cook figures". (4, P.168)

Individually or collectively, we, as teachers,

should care significance and sanctity of this sort of assessment. Let us pledge today, that we'll henceforth be honest to both the sorts of assessment, i.e. internal as well as external where-ever we are involved. Not only this, but we'll also be undertaking our own *self-assessment* every now and then.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

As we have discussed above, the component of *Internal Assessment* occupies a key position in the process of measurement and evaluation at all levels of learning and examinations particularly at the school and college level. We can't go for taking any realistic decision concerning the achievement, progress and personality characteristics of pupils and students, without conducting assessment. We should also care the following points in this regard:

1. Teachers should be trained and experienced. They should be given short period opportunities to undergo well-organized, training courses and workshops time and again.
2. A well-thought and well-organized programme of testing and evaluation should be introduced in all secondary schools/colleges.
3. As far as possible standardized instruments of testing be developed.
4. Proper methods and techniques be introduced for gathering all relevant data for inducing growth and development of the pupils/students.
5. Internal assessment should pertain to the various aspects of pupil's/student's growth and development such as his/her achievement, scholastic abilities, interests, attitudes and other personality traits, etc.

6. There should be separate marks for internal as well as external assessment/evaluation. The result should be announced on the basis of his/her record of achievement in both the categories of assessment.
7. Certificates showing the achievement of students both at the external and internal assessment should provide better scope to the employer for making the choice or at the time of next entrance to higher education.
8. The required material, stationery and other facilities be arranged and provided to concerned teachers to carry on the job of assessment and evaluation in their respective institutions.
9. For the above sufficient funds and cooperation be made available.

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