

Holistic Assessment in School Education: An In-Depth Analysis of NEP-2020 and its Challenges

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Abstract

Assessment in education is a continuous process crucial for evaluating students' performance and ensuring the quality of education. Assessment plays a very significant role in determining the quality of education. Holistic assessment, devoid of prejudice, incorporates diverse evidence-based methods, exploring different facets of learning including knowledge, abilities, interests, and attitudes. The assessment should be ongoing and rational. Implementing holistic assessment benefits the students, teachers and stakeholders. Educators should develop courses with diversified teaching and learning materials that enrich students. NEP-2020 emphasizes the need for a holistic, multidimensional approach to assessment, advocating for a reformation of progress cards to reflect students' uniqueness comprehensively. This paper discusses the challenges and benefits of implementing holistic assessment in schools, emphasizing the importance of engaging teachers, students, and parents in the assessment process. Furthermore, it underscores the significance of examination reform in fostering academic and intellectual development, as well as the role of parent engagement in improving learning outcomes. Ultimately, the paper calls for a shift in mindset among educators to prioritize true education and the cultivation of independent, critical thinkers. Teachers need to shift their mindset and grasp the essence of authentic education, as well as the significance of reaching the higher levels of Bloom's taxonomy. Schools should recognize that students come to learn, not just to receive grades, and their main role is to nurture critical thinkers who can work together respectfully while taking responsibility for their own growth.

Keywords: Holistic Assessment, School Education

Introduction

National Policy of Education-1968 has advocated for a shift in evaluation focus from certification to enhancing learning, (NCERT). This policy had called for a national school system, which meant that all students, would have access to education of a comparable quality up to a given level. National Policy of Education 1986 has emphasized reducing subjectivity and chance in assessment, promoting continuous evaluation, grading over marks, and introducing semester systems gradually. Use of grades in place of marks Introduction of semester system from secondary stage in a phased manner. (NCERT). The National Curriculum Frameworks (NCF) of 2005, as well as those of 1975, 1988, and 2000, have endeavoured to translate key recommendations from various committees, commissions, and policy documents into practical strategies for enhancing teaching, learning, and assessment across the entire school education system. Throughout the journey of student assessment, methods have evolved significantly, transitioning from traditional forms such as oral and written testing, public examinations, and internal and external assessments, to more comprehensive approaches like continuous evaluation and competency-based

assessment. The ongoing efforts reflect a persistent aim to move away from content-based assessment towards a focus on assessing competencies, thereby aligning with the evolving needs of education.

National Education Policy 2020 & Holistic Assessment

The NEP 2020 address these issues by introducing a multidimensional and holistic approach to assessment and evaluation. This approach focuses on assessing students' understanding and application of concepts, as well as their skills and competencies. (NEP-2020). NEP 2020 is giving emphasis mainly on formative assessment for learning as compared to summative assessment. The policy is giving important on flexibility in the curriculum, integration of vocational education in school level. NEP 2020 gives important about Holistic Assessment For each child there will be continuous tracking of his/her learning outcomes.

- The board exams will be made more flexible with assessment focus on learning of core concepts, higher order thinking skills and soft skills.
- Provision of AI based soft wares for tracking the progress of students so as to guide them in the selection of career choices according to their potentialities and capabilities.
- A standard setting body for assessment such as National Testing Agency (NTA) will conduct the joint entrance examination such as CUET of different central universities, so as to save the time, energy and money of the students and to eliminate the need of coaching for competitive exams. (NCERT). The policy gives more flexible and diversified approach to assessment which based on students' interests and aptitudes. Policy also gives important about 360-degree multidimensional report card and National Assessment Centre (PARAKH) will be established that will be measured learning outcome.

360- degree Holistic assessment

360-degree Holistic assessment is a process through which feedback from peers, teachers, supervisors, parents as well as a self-evaluation by the students themselves is Collected. (Parveen,2020). Here not only teachers will be able to assess the students but even co-students and parents or guardians will also be able to do the assessment. (Parveen,2020). The progress report will encompass self-assessment, peer assessment, and teacher assessment, reflecting the learner's development and individuality across cognitive, affective, socio-emotional, and psychomotor domains. Various methods such as project-based progress, inquiry-based learning, quizzes, role plays, group work, and portfolios will contribute to these report cards. This holistic assessment not only identifies gaps but also aids in addressing multifaceted issues within an institution, including student-teacher engagement, learning progress, dropout rates and reasons, and learning barriers. Looking at it holistically; just like the number (360), the report will give an all-round description of an individual's performance over a certain period of time, in addition to identifying the strengths, opportunities, barriers and skills or qualities that may be developed over a period of time with honest feedback and the support of training. (Parveen,2020).

Challenge faced by NEP 2020 for Implementation of Holistic assessment

Numerous researchers have extensively explored the significance of holistic assessment in educational institutions, involving students, parents, and teachers. The National Education Policy (NEP) of 2020 significantly broadened the scope of assessment practices in school education, emphasizing 360-degree holistic assessment. Williams and Chong Hin (2018) discovered that involving students in assessment processes can mitigate subjectivity and enhance their understanding. While assessment "of" learning remains dominant, there's a growing recognition for "for" learning approaches. However, challenges

persist, with teachers struggling to cover only 20% of the curriculum due to assessment demands for student promotion. Nyangarika & Nombo (2020) and Parveen (2020) identified gaps in parental involvement and the lack of clear educational policy, hindering students' academic progress. Infrastructure, IT support, and evaluators' mindsets are crucial for holistic assessment implementation. Singh & Kaur (2023) emphasized the importance of technology-based assessment and preparing students for 21st-century skills, yet challenges remain in this regard.

On the basis of related literature Holistic assessment in school education reference to NEP-2020 faced many challenges in different aspects. These major challenges are very important to identify and should give suggestion.

- 1. Absence of Formative Assessment:** The shift towards holistic assessment challenges traditional methods, as formative assessment, which provides continuous feedback for student improvement, is often overlooked. Establishing new parameters for assessment that incorporate formative elements is crucial but challenging.
- 2. Lack of Parental Involvement:** Effective academic performance enhancement often necessitates parental involvement. However, engaging parents in their child's education poses a significant challenge due to various factors such as busy schedules, differing priorities, or lack of understanding of their role in supporting their child's learning journey.
- 3. Implementation of AI-Based Tracking Software:** Management boards face challenges in providing AI-based software solutions for tracking student progress accurately. This includes ensuring the availability of reliable technology, addressing privacy concerns, and effectively integrating such tools into existing educational systems.
- 4. Training Requirements:** Addressing the training needs of educators at all levels of school education is essential for successfully implementing holistic assessment practices. This includes training teachers in new assessment methodologies, digital literacy skills, and strategies for fostering a diverse range of student talents and interests.
- 5. Insufficient Digital Resources:** The inadequacy of digital resources poses a significant challenge in delivering holistic assessment in schools. Access to technology, reliable internet connectivity, and appropriate software tools are essential for conducting assessments that encompass various skills, interests, and learning styles.
- 6. Adjustment to Existing Practices:** Implementing competency-based assessment on a large scale requires significant adjustments to existing assessment practices. This includes redefining curriculum standards, modifying teaching methods, and providing continuous professional development opportunities for educators to adapt to the new paradigm.
- 7. Subjectivity in Assessing Life Skills and Values:** Assessing life skills and values such as empathy and integrity can be inherently subjective and challenging. Developing assessment tools and methods that accurately capture and evaluate these qualities is essential but complex, requiring careful consideration of cultural, social, and individual contexts.

Role of stakeholders in Implementation of Holistic assessment

Role of teachers for improvement of holistic Assessment in School Education

Teachers have to first change their mindset and understand what true education is and what it means to achieve the higher segments of Bloom's taxonomy.

He will need to focus on upgrade a student's real potential to create something new rather than on what

they are told to do. It's essential to assess the educational environment within school institutions to ensure it fosters an inclusive learning community that encourages individuals to engage creatively and curiously with the world around them. Teacher is assuming to set clear, inspiring and attainable prospects on the holistic growth of the learners and provide opportunities to improve students 'growth in all aspects. He must develop the correct procedures for students to be involved in the assessment tasks by producing appropriate rubrics and also training them to be a part of the assessment. The use of holistic assessment appeared to complement teachers' use of instructional strategies centred on students' group work, classroom presentations and individual growth.

Role of Peer for improvement of holistic Assessment in School Education

Peer Assessment will help students to become realistic judges of their own performance, by enabling them to monitor their own learning, rather than relying on their teachers for feedback. The peer-assessment also exposure nurtures the students to be evaluative of their peer's work by giving them some feedback on how they can improve their weaknesses provided if the teachers have trained and exposed students to peer-assessment. It should allow learners to practice making reasonable judgements about the extent to which their peers have achieved expected outcomes. Empower students to take responsibility for and manage their own learning. Enable students to learn to assess and give others constructive feedback to develop lifelong assessment skills. Peer Assessment will motivate students to engage with course material more deeply and Enhance students' learning through knowledge diffusion and exchange of ideas.

Role of Parents for improvement of holistic Assessment in School Education

Parental involvement should be at every stage of the child's academic development and developing a good relationship with teachers and the school, as well as monitoring, supporting and advocating all aspects of children's academic achievement. They also characterized by the values and attitudes that the parents infuse in children regarding education. Though values and attitudes might not directly influence academic outcomes of a child, but they indirectly enhance academic achievement by promoting the child's persistence and motivation in carrying out challenging educational tasks. Parent must Coordinate with teachers; Parents will be made aware if there are problems that may be hindering learning and student achievement.

He must Attend Parent-teacher Meetings: Parent-teacher associations take an active role in developing programs that support the educational needs of children. Parent should have Participate in School Activities: Through which Children naturally want to exhibit their talents and skills for everyone to see, especially their parents.

Role of Management for improvement of holistic Assessment in School Education

The Management will be made more flexible with assessment focus on learning of core concepts, higher order thinking skills and soft skills. Management board Provide of AI based soft wares for tracking the progress of students so as to guide them in the selection of career choices according to their potentialities and capabilities. It advocates for a more flexible and diversified approach to assessment and evaluation, which takes into account students' interests and aptitudes. School management board will be provision of 360-degree multidimensional report card. Management will help for Extensive use of Technology to encourage talented/Gifted Children. It should give efforts for intervention in rural areas & in regional languages to ensure widespread participation.

Conclusion

This study is exclusively reflecting the challenges and remedies regarding holistic assessment in school education according to NEP-2020. Various policy shows importance of holistic assessment and NEP-2020 are suggesting various ways for holistic assessment. But lack of in implementation makes always gaps in assessment process. NEP-2020 give importance by shifting the focus from rote democratization to holistic learning, promoting critical thinking and nurturing creativity, these reforms aim to prepare students for a dynamic and rapidly changing world. Need of stakeholders are in the focus by this policy as it reflects on challenges and remedies of the assessment process.

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