



A New Trend In Educational Evaluation

D.D.Gaikwad

Dept of Geography
D.B.F.Dayanand College of Arts and Science,
Solapur. (Maharashtra)

Abstract:

Education plays a significant role in the life of a nation. The character and quality of people greatly depend on the education that is imparted to them at different levels. Knowledge and wisdom have always been regarded as the highest virtues of man. Evaluation is a part and parcel of our lives. We evaluate every activity, not only in terms of its product, but also in terms of its process. Education is an activity, which is aimed at modifying the behavior of children in desired direction. Educational evaluation is an integral part of teaching-learning process. Every teacher working in an educational organization needs to be trained in the technology of the test development and their application. The term "measurement" refers to quantity of physical or psychological traits and answers the question 'how much?', the term 'assessment', on the other hand, refers to the act of judging the progress of an ongoing activity and answers the question "how well?". "Evaluation" refers to the quality of results through the process of measurement and assessment or otherwise. It involves some kind of value judgement or tends to answer the question "how good?". Evaluation may be defined as a systematic process of placing a value judgement on available information or data with reference to predetermined standard or criterion for the purpose of making significant decisions about individuals. Validity, reliability, objectivity, fairness, usability, etc. are some essential features of evaluation.

In our current education system, we conduct examinations after one full year of instruction. There are certain problems with this annual examination system. Many developed countries of the world have overcome these difficulties by implementing semester system. The reading material is specially meant for the evaluation the semester system of educational evaluation.

KEYWORDS:

Evaluation, Measurement, Assessment, Semester, Validity, Reliability, Objectivity, Usability, Fairness.

INTRODUCTION

Prior to the advent of the skills of reading and writing, society could be classified as being pre-literate culture stage. The change from pre-literate to literate society is said to have begun somewhere during the fourth millennium B. C. through a gradual transition from pictography to use an alphabet (Golden Hilda)¹. Since then the relevance of the literacy and education to the cultural advancement enhanced significantly. Educational attainment is one of the important indicators of the social development. Education is also important variable affecting demographic behavior concerning marriage, fertility, mortality, migration as well as participation in the labor force. Education plays a significant role in

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the life of nation. The character and quality of people greatly depend on education that is imparted to them at different levels. Knowledge and wisdom have always been regarded as the highest virtues of man.

BASIC CONCEPTS

A. EDUCATION:

The word 'Education' has very wide connotations. Scholars have defined it in the variety of ways (Khan)². Depending upon the context it has assumed several meanings:

Education...

- i. Is fundamental to all round development.
- ii. Is a quest for vision.
- iii. Is a tool for self empowerment.
- iv. Is a crucial factor for survival.
- v. Is a unique investment.
- vi. Is a guarantee for national self-reliance.
- vii. Is the basis of dignified existence.
- viii. Broadens our outlook.
- ix. Sharpens our mental faculties.
- x. Teaches tolerance.
- xi. Leads to dignity and prosperity.
- xii. Eradicate illiteracy.

B. MEASUREMENT:

Sometimes, we use the terms like measurement, assessment and evaluation interchangeably. But, this is not right practice. Although, these terms are closely related, yet, communicate different meanings. Measurement refers to quality of physical or psychological traits and answers the questions 'how much?' It is the process of assigning numerical to objects according to some rules so as to present quantities of traits. In education and psychology, teachers and researchers use numerous tests in order to measure various traits such as intelligence, interest, personality, creativity, reasoning etc.

C. ASSESSMENT:

It refers to act to the act of judging the progress of an ongoing activity and answers the question 'how well?' However, in this process also numerals are assigned to activity being assessed so as to represent the level of progress at particular point of time. It may be seen here that there is very thin line of demarcation between the meanings of measurement and assessment.

D. EVALUATION:

Evaluation refers to the quality of results obtained through the process of measurement and assessment and otherwise. It involves some kind of value judgement and trends to answer the question 'how good?' Its results are expressed in terms of their adequacy or suitability for some purpose. It is characterized by an element of decision making. Assessment of quality is evaluation, which may or may not be preceded by measurement. Evaluation has three basic characteristics (Chauhan)³:

- i. It requires information about the subject.
- ii. There is predetermined standard or criterion with reference to which value judgement is made.
- iii. It involves some kind of decision- making about the subject.

DEFINITION OF EVALUATION:

“Evaluation may be defined as a systematic process of placing value judgement on available information or data with reference to pre-determined standard or criterion for the purpose of making significant decisions about individuals” (Chauhan)⁴.

ESSENTIAL FEATURES OF EVALUATION

We conduct examination because we want to know which students have benefited more from the teaching – learning process than the others. We also want to decide as to who should be declared successful (pass) and who should fail. A good examination and evaluation should have a few characteristics, which are as below

:

A.VALIDITY:

Validity is a relative term. An instrument may be highly valid for measuring one trait but completely invalid for measuring another. Evaluation is used for various purposes. As validity is associated with the purpose of evaluation, there are as many different kinds of validity as there purposes of evaluation. They are:

- i.Content Validity,
- ii.Concurrent Validity,
- iii.Predictive Validity and
- iv.Construct Validity.

B.RELIABILITY:

There is always some kind of errors involved in the process of measurement. Perfect measurement for true score is a hypothetical concept, which cannot be achieved in practice. Reliability refers to the lack of variation in the repeated observed scores obtained under the same conditions. It may be defined as the degree of agreement among repeated observations obtained by the same instrument applied under the same conditions. A good examination and a good evaluation should have a high degree of reliability.

C.OBJECTIVITY:

Researches have proved that in essay type examinations the variation in marking differs from subject to subject, but it is an inseparable part of marking behavior. This variation is entirely due to the factors associated with the evaluators. This inter-evaluator disagreement in marks accord to the some written response is termed as 'subjectivity'. If, on the other hand, several examiners agreed on marked awarded to an essay answer, it is said that marking has been 'objective' and require highly skilled examiners. Objectivity is, therefore, the degree of agreement on marks awarded by different evaluators to the same answer. It is a desirable characteristic of a good evaluation process. It is oblivious that multiple-choice test items can be scored more objectively than the essay type questions.

D.FAIRNESS:

An examination should be fair to all the examinees. Technically, we can say that examination should be 'culture fair', that is, its contents or subject matter should represent the common culture of all the examinees.

E.USABILITY:

Evaluation procedure should be realistic, efficient and practical in terms of time taken, cost involved and ease of application. There are evaluation techniques, which are very good in terms of theoretical and statistical considerations, but very difficult to use in practice. The original intelligence scaled and all its revisions developed by Binet (1904) were administered to one person at time, and as such, were time- consuming and required highly skilled examiners. Such tests have low level of usability. A good test is one for which the procedure of administration, scoring of responses and interpretation of results is relatively easy, and no special training is required for this purpose.

SEMESTER SYSTEM:

In our current education system, we conduct examination after one full year of instruction. This is true for all stages of education and almost all courses. The period of approximately one year between two

successive annual examinations is called an academic session. After teaching work of one academic session, examination is conducted either by the institution itself (school or college) or by an external examining body (board or university). There are certain problems with this annual examination system.

PROBLEMS IN ANNUAL EXAMINATION SYSTEMS:

1. Too Large Subject Matter:

The subject matter to be examined after one year of teaching work is too large for the students revise before the examination within the limited available time.

2. Slower Coverage – Greater Stresses:

Both teachers and students, feel relaxed at the beginning of the academic session because examination appears to be far away. This slackness results in slower coverage the courses and consequently, greater stress and strain among the students as the examination draws nearer.

3. Rote Learning and Cramming:

Courses are covered hurriedly within a few weeks just before the examination, which results in poor performance of the students and encourages rote learning and cramming.

4. Hampers Good Instructional Approaches:

Many good instructional approaches such as continuous evaluation, tutorials, projects, assignments, group discussions etc. are not arranged due to shortage of time and entire teaching – learning process becomes written examination oriented.

Many developed countries of the world have overcome these difficulties by implementing 'Semester System', in which each academic year is divided into two equal parts of about six months each, each part being called a 'Semester'. Examinations are conducted after the end of each semester. This means that under this system following changes are brought about.

CHANGES IN SEMESTER SYSTEM:

1. Division of Course :

Breaking down the subject matter of each course / paper into two or more meaningful, self-contained well-organised and internally homogeneous parts.

2. Regularity and Comprehensivity:

Carrying out the teaching work more regularly and comprehensively approaches, mutual co-operation and new instructional strategies.

3. Broad-based Syllabus:

Making the syllabus more broad-based with the inclusion of main and subsidiary subjects including core courses and electives.

4. Variation in Subject Matter:

Providing for greater variety of subject areas suitable to the intellectual, motivational and occupational requirements of the learners.

5. Pleasant and Joyful Activity:

Reducing unnecessary stress and strain before and during teaching and examination period and making learning a purposeful, pleasant and joyful activity.

6. Effective Teaching – Learning Process:

Making teaching - learning process more broad – based by including class discussions, tutorials, assignments, library work and educational excursions as integral components.

7. Improvement in Efficiency:

Introducing a system of formative evaluation in order to receive continuous feedback for improvement of learning experiences so as to make them more effective and efficient. Although many countries of the world adapted the semester system long ago, yet, it is still a new idea in India. A large majority of institutions of higher education are yet to consider it for implementation.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In the present education system, the examinations are conducted after one full of instructions. In this traditional examination systems numerous difficulties are faced not only by students but also by teachers, such as, too large syllabus; relaxations at the beginning and stress & strain at the end of academic session; encourage the students rote – learning and cramming ; difficulties in conducting tutorials, projects, assignments etc. To overcome these drawbacks semester system is suitable in teaching-learning process and hence, in educational evaluation process.

In the semester system examinations become a part and parcel of the daily routine and so they do not produce stress and strain among the students. The external examinations become more valid and reliable measure of performance due to continuous internal evaluation being carried out as an integral component of the system. The teaching and examination are spread over a shorter period, and hence, the tendency of rote-learning and memorization is discouraged. Greater emphasis is laid on teaching than on examination. Each semester has a specified number of working days, which helps in better budgeting available time and resources. This system does not allow any kind of slackness on the part of teachers and students, as there is no extra time to waste. This introduces seriousness and study-culture in the universities.

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