

PERFORMANCE-BASED ASSESSMENT IN INDIAN CLASSROOMS

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Abstract

This project examines performance-based assessment as an effective assessment tool in Indian classrooms. Students are currently assessed by summative assessment in the schools. Such a system lacks a variety of helpful assessment strategies; it does not emphasize imparting skills and competencies among students to prepare them for the real world. The importance of formative assessment in the classrooms is addressed through the literature. The idea of using performance-based assessment resulted in a project in the form of a handbook for Indian teachers. This handbook guides teachers to how to use performance-based assessment in the classrooms by using CARE model to plan instructions, and thus assessing learning outcomes by using assessment tools which are checklists, portfolios and rating scales. It also guides teachers by providing samples of how they can assess their students' performance and can provide them feedback by and motivating them for future learning.

Keywords: Performance-based assessment (PBA), CARE, Feedback.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Many countries are putting emphasis on accountability, standards, and testing to bring educational reforms. Education has been given high priority by India's central and state Governments and continues to grow fast. Schools' assessment has been expanded by investment in school infrastructure and recruitment of teachers, but increasing the number of institutions does not insure the quality of education (Hill & Chalaux, 2011). Being part of an Indian education system, I was assessed by provincial exams where results were declared publically and more importance was given to marks than student's learning. I am a keen learner who has always tried to gain knowledge by reading different texts and reflecting on the different issues that are projected in my mind. As a person, I believe in hard work, and I show my full dedication in every task. I believe that hard situations help us to plan more about how to deal with situations. The issues surrounding current assessment procedure used in India require this hard work and full dedication.

In 2009, I completed my 12th grade in sciences from an Indian school with 70%, I was criticized by my parents for not getting good scores. My parents always evaluated my capabilities by looking at my report cards. This is a universal problem of Indian students, which they find in every class. In India, exam grade results evaluate the capabilities of the student. I am concerned about the reasons why grades are given so much importance in measuring the students' success. I am interested in this topic because, as students, we were always taught to run after the marks. We were so worried about marks that we never cared what type of learning we were doing; it was wholly crammed learning that never promoted creativity among students. One of my math teachers failed me in an exam; I just needed two more marks to pass that course. My

teacher agreed to give me two bonus marks, but my competitor in the class was against it. I felt very bad at that time and reflected on the issue of why marks were so important for me. I should have focused on my learning rather than running after the marks.

This interest has encouraged me to look for educational reforms that we can introduce in the schools to improve student learning in India. Black and Wiliam (1998) have addressed the topic of formative assessment to improve learning among students. They conducted a literature review of several articles to study on formative assessment. They conclude that with self-assessment, frequent tests, and corrective feedback students can meet their learning goals rather than performance goals. This led them to conclude that with the use of formative assessment we can meet the learning goals. MacLellan (2001) has also addressed the topic of assessment to determine the student learning goals rather than determining the grades. He conducted a study to find the different perceptions of students and tutors on formative assessment and concluded that students should be involved centrally in the process of assessment. Thus, teachers need to identify the changes in teaching with which they can make student more responsible of their own learning. But still, formative assessment is not a common practice in the classrooms of Indian schools.

I am highly motivated to see the students developing all their skills in the classrooms of India rather than preparing for exams and tests all the time. Therefore, my intent is to explore the policies that are currently practiced in Indian schools to find areas of concern in the current evaluation system of Indian schools. The goal of my project is to find different assessment strategies after considering the evaluation systems of other countries. The study will be used to create a handbook for Indian teachers that can help them to assess students more relevantly in the classrooms by designing tasks to impart skills among them. The assessment tools/strategies for

teachers will be included in this handbook—making suggestions that will encourage teachers to measure the success of students beyond a culture of testing.

A great deal of literature supports this work. Phye (1997) explained why, what and how classroom assessment could be used as a multidimensional approach for assessment. He suggested a model for assessment known as *assessment as inquiry*, in which he viewed assessment as process starting from hypothesis predicting learning goals, designs involving teaching strategies, collecting data and interpreting the evidence to find the results. Wiggins work (1993) clarified the limits of testing in an assessment system; he proved that assessment is more than testing, and intellectual performance is more than the right answers by discussing the use of feedback, authenticity, and validity in assessment for any authentic task. Adam and Hamm (1994) have suggested the components to promote active learning in tomorrow's schools. They stressed on critical thinking, cooperative learning, and electronic learning as new instructional development designs that can be implemented in the classrooms. These findings can help teachers to plan new instructional designs for students to improve their learning.

Context

The present system of assessment and evaluation for school education in India is exam based. It focuses only on cognitive learning outcomes, and—in the process—co-curricular domains are neglected. Even in curricular areas, the focus is on rote learning and memorization, and thus higher mental abilities such as creative ability, critical thinking, and problem solving are neglected completely. The National Curriculum Framework (2005) has stated that examinations require systematic reforms in the context of evaluation and assessment. The higher failure rates, increasing number of school drop outs, unhealthy competition, stress, and suicides among learners make it imperative for educators to consider the evaluation system of the country

(Kapur, 2008). The inflexible system of education is based on a “one-size-fits-all” principle wherein individuality and creativity is not considered. The pattern is followed in the school exit exams, known as board exams; emphasis is given on scores, therefore ignoring the main purpose of Education which is to prepare students for life. To correct this distortion, the National Curriculum Framework (2005) has proposed some guiding principles for school education that connects knowledge to life in the outside world, ensures a shift from rote learning methods, and enriches the curriculum to provide for the overall development of children rather than remaining textbook centric, making examinations more flexible and integrated into classroom life. However, we can still find little evidence where this theory is put into action to improve learning among students in Indian classrooms.

To make assessment useful and worthwhile, teachers need to be trained too. In an American survey of teachers to gather their perception about assessment, Plake (1993) found that, while more than 70% had coursework or training in assessment, 54% of the teachers reported that six years had passed since their most recent training. Plake (1993) summarized findings related to teachers’ perceptions of assessment and suggested that teachers do not receive sufficient training in their educational programs, and teachers do not feel comfortable making assessment-related decisions. Although the research was done in America, the context is same in the Indian education system. Therefore, project will create a resource that can help students to gain achievement in academics by supporting teacher learning. In this project, I focus on creating a resource for teachers that can help them to evaluate the students based on their performance in the classrooms, rather than evaluating their exams at the end of session.

Justification of the Project

In India, the career of any student depends upon the grade achieved by the students. Any student who qualifies with a good percentage is recruited easily. It led me to think about whether intelligence or ability is really correlated to the grades of the learners. I completed my study by giving exams once at the end of the year and tried to get good marks. Graduating students in my country prepare themselves for the exams by practicing with a question book. This resource involves the question papers of the last ten years; every student just practices these questions before appearing in the exam. This example indicates that this type of learning is merely done to get good marks in the annual exams so that they can get degrees for certain courses. Such evaluation based on annual exams does not promote creativity among students. The consequences of this evaluation method are drastic. Students develop inferiority complexes, and every year many students who are not able to pass these exams attempt suicide (Hindustan Times, 2017).

The current evaluation system that is used in the schools of my country is based on continuous and comprehensive evaluation (CCE). It involves two types of assessments, formative and summative. Undoubtedly this system has reduced the burden on the part of the students, as it divides the whole syllabus into fragments. But this evaluation system is not used by all the schools. We have basically two types of schools in my province, private and public. Private schools are established under different boards of education. These boards of education are provincial, central, and international. It makes our education system unnecessarily complex. There is no uniformity in the curriculum, evaluation systems, and teaching methods. So, under different evaluation systems, it is difficult to find which evaluation techniques are the best for the students. Students in the public schools are under the pressure of study burden because of current assessment strategies based on standardized testing.

I have experienced increasing concern about this complex system of education. My province is practicing old methods of teaching and evaluation systems. So, my focus in this project is to explore the curricula of all the different types of schools that are working under different boards. I am interested in finding out the hurdles that are in the way of student achievement. However, my major purpose of this project is to suggest possible solutions to increasing student achievement by implementing new assessment strategies and evaluation plans to improve students' achievement through a resource that provides teacher support.

Educators have a common desire to looking for educational change to meet the needs of the 21st century. If we sincerely want to promote creativity among students so they can become better learners, I believe we should look for better ways of assessing student performance. Certainly, assessment plays an important role in the learning process. But it is important to focus on the kind of assessment we should implement in the classrooms to promote creativity among students.

In my exploration of the literature and strategies that are being used elsewhere, I hope to find better ways to assess the students' performance rather than merely depending upon the grades. This would include evaluating the continuous learning of students within the classroom environment. I also want to suggest the important role of feedback in evaluating the students' performance. The feedback provided by the teacher on student learning provides motivation to students to perform well in academics.

Definition of Terms

Assessment includes the full range of information teachers gather in their classrooms: information that helps them understand their pupils, monitor their instructions, and establish a viable classroom culture (Airasian, 1994). *Summative assessment* provides evidence of student

achievement for the purpose of making a judgment about student competence or program effectiveness (Chappuis, 2009). *Formative assessment* is designed to provide direction for improvement and/or adjustment to a program for individual students or for a whole class through quizzes, initial drafts/attempts, homework, and questions during instruction (O'Connor, 2002). *Performance-based assessment* is an assessment in which the teacher observes and makes a judgment about a pupil's skill in carrying out an activity or producing a product (Airasian, 1994), and thus it permits students to apply their skills in real life situations.

Brief Overview of Project

The goal of this project is to create a handbook that can be used by teachers in Indian schools to assess the performance of students more relevantly. This handbook offers possible solutions to improve the current evaluation system in Indian schools, and it aims to make changes in the current classroom environment by encouraging teachers to use new assessment strategies by planning instructions and designing tasks in the classrooms and thus assessing learning outcomes for the growth of student achievement. This handbook will be a step for teachers to promote better learning among students.

The handbook guides teachers to work on authenticity, context, validity, and accountability in assessing the performance of students (Wiggins, 1993). Deeper educational issues lie under these concerns. Wiggins (1993) stated that we need “a more robust and authentic construct of understanding and a more rigorous validation of tests against the construct” (p. 202). This change can be started with the aim of making everyone a competent intellectual performer and not a passive selector of orthodox and prefabricated answers. This handbook provides different assessment tools such as performance-based assessment by planning instructions for students in the classrooms which involves the use of certain performance tasks to acquire

different skills among students and the use of portfolios, checklists and rating scales in large-scale assessment. The resource will explain how performance-based assessment as a form of inquiry can help teachers develop a conceptual framework of assessment. It will also illustrate how portfolios can help teachers bring certain qualities in assessment such as validity and feasibility (Phye, 1997).

Schools in the 21st century should teach students for understanding, help children take an active role in their own learning, and value and build instruction around students' diverse cultures. The enhancement of reasoning ability, cooperation, and active communication are primary concerns in this handbook. I think learning experiences should contribute to the thinking skills of students. Teachers can involve students in the construction of knowledge by focusing on critical and creative thinking (Adams & Hamm, 1994). This handbook also focuses on new instructional developments in the areas of critical thinking and collaborative inquiry. If we want teachers to make changes in their practices, we need to give them time and training—adrecourses to help them put theory into action. The assessment strategies that will be provided in the form of handbook to the teachers will help them change their teaching techniques to improve the learning environment in the classrooms.

To create a handbook, I would like to review the literature to look how assessment works in schools, and why formative assessment is more considered than summative assessment in the classrooms. This chapter also reviews why standardized testing is not more reliable tool for assessment and thus considering performance-based assessment as a more relevant tool by reviewing the work of Airasian (1994), Darling-Hammond (2014), and Wiggins (1993). The importance of feedback in assessment is also reviewed in this chapter that can be used to improve student learning. Chapter 3 will provide a framework of Handbook and my rationale for

creating a handbook for teachers. The need for new assessment tools in India will clearly describe why we need to look for different assessment strategies. It also provides a framework for handbook discussing its major parts for planning instructions, assessing learning outcomes and role of feedback. Chapter 4 highlights a project in the form of handbook for Indian teachers encouraging them to use performance- based assessment in the classrooms.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Education is a purposeful activity. The foremost goal of education is to ensure student learning. Therefore, teachers assess students' learning to know how well these goals are met. This assessment acts as an engine that provides feedback to students, teachers, and parents. Rowntree (1987) proposed that assessment in education can be thought of as occurring whenever one person, in interaction, direct or indirect, with another is conscious of obtaining and interpreting information about the knowledge and understanding, or abilities and attitudes of that other person. But, in recent years, heavy emphasis on paper and pencil testing has met with a plea for performance assessment; this has changed the objectives of assessment (Gronlund, 1998).

The purpose of this project is to create a handbook for teachers that present different tools for assessment designed by studying the education systems of different countries. This chapter presents a scholarly literature review that is relevant to the research questions of my study. In this chapter, definitions are provided to build a base before focusing on research questions. This literature review attempts to explore the following themes: (a) overview of assessment; (b) standardized testing, and its relevance to students' performance; (c) the difference between formative assessment and summative assessment; (d) benefits of performance-based assessment. It also includes the analysis and general synthesis of the work.

An Overview of Assessment

Assessments are related to learning and grading, and are major components in a classroom. They are used to indicate students' acquisition of course knowledge. Assessment includes the full range of information that teachers gather in their classrooms—information that

helps them understand their pupils, monitor their instructions, and establish a viable classroom culture (Airasian, 1994). It provides three keywords: collecting, interpreting, and synthesizing of information to make decisions about pupils. Many researchers have defined assessment in different ways. Stiggins (2006) defined assessment as a more than one time event that is attached to the end of the teaching, and has become part of the learning process by reporting to students on their progress. Rowntree (1987) and Freeman and Lewis (1998) identified several purposes of assessment, including: selection; certification/accreditation; maintenance of standards; description; motivation; improving learning; and improving teaching (as cited in Schwartz & Webb, 2002).

However, one orthodox assessment strategy that exists in our educational world is the use of examinations, making the assessment more standardized, but not necessarily more helpful to improve student learning. Wiggins (1993) mentioned that a single numerical score cannot tell the level of progress of students and gives them no help in improving. In some classrooms, standardized achievement testing is conducted on a yearly basis. In these cases, the results are frequently used to demonstrate academic achievement of such educational units. However, a yearly assessment does not provide a clear picture of what students have learnt during the academic year.

Assessment procedures in India include standard practices of test-setting, which are adopted by most boards of education. From the set of three papers, one paper is chosen randomly for students to be tested. These papers are set by trained and experienced subject teachers. But experts should follow the guidelines provided by the Board of Education regarding the format of questions and weight-age of points relating to knowledge, understanding, and skills. After the exams, teachers are appointed by the Board of Education to evaluate the answer sheets. Teachers

are paid a stipend for their time spent on checking the papers, which has been deemed inadequate by the National Curriculum Framework of 2005 (Pal, 2005). This assessment for grades 10 and 12 informs about achievement grades and marks of students, but neither they nor the schools are given feedback on their strengths or the areas in which they need to improve. Phye (1997) suggested that classroom assessment should be multidimensional and suggested new approaches such as cognitive diagnostic assessments. Portfolios in assessment can offer much hope for promoting future learning. Advances in the assessment of learning are proving to be of value in increasing students' abilities to monitor their own understanding and refine the processes they use to learn new knowledge and skills.

Alberta Education's (2003) student assessment policy states that student learning in education programs shall be assessed to assist in improving programs, establishing and maintaining standards, and improving student achievement. Alberta educational organizations had a full range of views about student assessment policies and practices. Alberta Education (2008) stated that the Alberta student assessment programs support classroom teachers with information about students' strengths and weaknesses at the provincial level. So, the Alberta system of education is trying to focus on bringing balance between provincial exams and classroom assessment. Alberta Education (2010) highlighted the different areas of focus including improvement in numeracy, literacy of students to impart critical thinking, and problem-solving skills to make their students more creative and innovative. The system also focused on imparting competencies among students to enable them how to manage information and collaborate with others to solve the problems by using critical thinking and creativity.

Standardized Testing

According to Traub (1994), an achievement test is designed to assess the knowledge and understanding a student has acquired of a school subject. He defined standardized testing as a means of providing the scores to students to compare them one against another. However, these tests fail to measure the achievement, ability, or skills of all the students. In India, these tests are the means of distinguishing students in different categories. Their scores decide the sections in which they can sit to learn. These sections are categorized as brilliant, average, and below average. Those students who get more than 80% marks can sit in brilliant sections, while average sections involve the students who get marks between 60-80%. Other students are asked to sit in the below average sections.

Germain (1999) had explained how these standardized testing gives biased results against students and thus brings an inferiority complex among students. Germain (1999) found the reasons why standardized testing is inadequate in assessing student learning and development. Standardized tests are not able to capture all the abilities of students. The tests measure students' abilities quantitatively, but other qualities such as students' sense of citizenship, ethics, confidence, self-esteem, and self-discipline are not measured by these tests. The general nature of tests that are designed for large numbers of students leads to a mismatch between what is taught and what is tested (Casas & Meaghan, 1995). This is the reason I found why teachers focus more on completing the curriculum provided by the different boards; they want to prepare their students for standard tests, ignoring all other aspects of their development and interests. These tests particularly measure the recall memory of students, how they can define words, and perform operations by cramming the facts. Thus, these tests are not able to measure higher learning skills such as analyzing, synthesizing, and forming a hypothesis.

Moreover, tests are used inappropriately. The Common Aptitude Test or CAT in India is a prime example. This test was designed to predict students' potential initially, but now the scores of this test are used to enroll the students in the highly-reputed universities for various programs. But many people have considered these tests their source of income. The private institutions are opened for students to prepare them for these tests. They charge high fees to students (J. Kaur, personal communication, November 22, 2017). Germain (1999) concluded that there is a need to shift from the global to the classroom context, so that teachers can recognize the importance of evaluating student learning and of finding the best means of classroom based assessment to meet the education goals.

In addition to acknowledging the centrality of teachers to the assessment and evaluation process, we must recognize the value of the multiple goals of education—goals that go beyond simply preparing students to enter the labour force, as important as that may be. There is also a need to evaluate evidence of these goals with a view to improving the quality of education. If student equality of educational opportunity is the primary goal of an education system, then standardized testing is moving us further away from this goal. The problem associated with the traditional assessments cannot be changed only by changing the form and content of assessment. Darling-Hammond (1994) stressed that assessment must also be viewed in terms of how it will be used, and how it will be used to support and enhance equity initiatives within the education system.

Formative Assessment and Summative Assessment

Scriven (1967) coined the terms *formative* and *summative* to refer to evaluation functions. If we use evaluation in the development or improvement of an educational process, then it is formative. If we use evaluation in bringing about the outcome of educational process, then it is

summative. Formative classroom assessment gives teachers information for instructional decisions and gives pupils information for improvement (McMillan, 2007, p. 43). Crooks (1988) determined the impact of classroom evaluation practices on pupils. He grouped the ways in which evaluations affect pupils into short-, medium-, and long-term effects. Most relevant for formative assessment is the list of short term effects. He concluded that formative assessment reactivates or consolidates prerequisite skills or knowledge prior to introducing new material, focuses attention on important aspects of subject, encourages active learning strategies, gives pupils opportunities to practice skills and consolidates learning, provides knowledge of results and corrective feedback, helps pupils see their own progress and develop skills of self-evaluation, and helps pupils feel a sense of accomplishment.

To distinguish between formative and summative assessment, I am using two metaphors. The metaphor of solar cells can be used to explain summative assessment. The solar cells consume energy from the sun, just as teachers provide learning material to the students every day. Whatever energy is stored in the minds of students in the form of content, they must transfer that stored energy at the end in the form of exams and tests. Without the sun, the solar cells cannot store any energy; similarly, students rely on their teachers for their learning outcomes.

On the other hand, the field in which a farmer works is an example of formative assessment. A farmer uses many techniques for a better yield of plants. Similarly, a teacher uses different teaching strategies to impart learning to students. A teacher looks after every student and tries to meet the needs of every individual in the classrooms, just like the farmer who knows what the needs of different plants are. At the end, if a farmer gets a lower yield from plants, he/she will cultivate the land more next time and work in the field more to increase the yield. The teachers also change their plans if the outcome of one strategy does not work well.

Brookhart (2008) discussed three points on which teachers and students work together: (a) focus on learning, (b) take stock of where current work is in relation to the goals, and (c) acting to move closer to the goal. Rowntree (1987) suggested the process of assessment that involves a cycle of questions : (a) what to assess? (b) How to assess? (c) How to interpret? and (d) How to respond? The first question is intended to set the objectives of assessment that include skills, abilities, knowledge, and understanding in which the teacher tries to focus on improving learning among students by using his/her interventions. The teacher, certainly, must plan and evaluate the assessment methods in relation to the purposes he/she is pursuing. Different modes of assessment, formative or summative, help teachers to know how they can assess their students. Interpretation begins when teachers notice something significant in what the students say or do (Rowntree, 1987).

Interpretation is not restricted to summarizing the status of students; it is also concerned with the possible causes of their strengths and weaknesses and with those dynamics features of their learning style that could contribute to their further development. The interpretation helps teachers respond with what they can say about the students' progress. Reporting is the one way to respond in which teachers can classify, label, or describe the students for the benefit of others who have an interest in the students. This process of assessment cycle provides a way for teachers to work in a systematic way in the classrooms.

Black and Wiliam (1998) reviewed literature on formative assessment. They found that students had higher gains in academic achievement when they engage in self-assessment, are tested more frequently, and are focused on learning goals rather than performance goals. This can lead to the conclusion that formative assessment can be used to improve learning goals. Black and Wiliam (1998) also concluded that teachers are not able to understand formative

assessment, and including their use in classroom grading practices requires a change in teachers' assessment practices. On the other hand, summative assessment is evaluative in nature, makes judgments about students' level of achievement, and is incorporated into students' grades to communicate their levels of acquisition of the standards (Chappuis, 2009).

Summative assessment is used currently in public and private schools of India by all the boards to evaluate the students from grades 9 to 12. Two important terms are used during an assessment, which decides students learning outcomes--*evaluation* and *grading*. Evaluation relates to collecting and analyzing information to give some value judgment about student learning (Badham & Rogers, 1992). Currently in Indian classrooms, evaluation is done to judge the level of student rather than reviewing their learning progress and developing competencies among them. On the other hand, grading is the process of judging the quality of a product, substance, or organization or the performance of an employee (*Cambridge English Dictionary*, 2018). The phrase *judging the quality of a product* assists evaluating the students' performance and then looking for the place where they stand. The grades decide what the learning capabilities of students are and where they stand in their class as comparative to other students.

Figure 2.1 indicates the grading point system currently used by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE, 1921) to evaluate grade 10 students. These grades are used to measure the achievement levels of students at state and national standards. These grades are also used to compare the progress of schools in different districts and states. The data from summative assessment such as grades and national and state exams are used for evaluating how well the schools are performing.

GRADING SYSTEM for SCHOLASTIC -A		
MARKS	GRADE	GRADE POINT
91—100	A1	10
81—90	A2	9
71—80	B1	8
61—70	B2	7
51—60	C1	6
41—50	C2	5
33—40	D	4
21—32	E1	----
20 & below	E2	----

Figure 2.1, Grading System for scholastic- A used by CBSE (1921),

Copyright, 2010, retrieved from <https://www.slideshare.net/applane/cbse-cce-teacher-manual>.

Schools as Mechanism for Sorting and Ranking

The role of schools has changed with time. It was the medium of instruction only in ancient periods. The system of grading, with variations from school to school, evolved to become the standard for sorting and ranking colleges (Vatterott, 2015). The new standards-based paradigm is a new philosophy that redefines learning. Learning is defined by the standards, not by what students know, but by what they can do with what they know (Vatterott, 2015). Now learning has moved from micro to macro, from a focus on content to a focus on skills. So, the new paradigm of learning demands that students find their way to understand so that they can apply their skills in solving real-world problems.

On the other hand, the old paradigm of learning is the bucket model where teachers try to fill the 'bucket, 'or the minds of students with information. In a standards-based paradigm, we understand different paths and varying amounts of time to learn, ideally to reach the same end.

Standards-based learning is not linear; groups of students branch off in different directions based on their learning needs (Tomlinson, 2014). So, here time varies for learning, but achievement is fixed. I believe the traditional grading paradigm de-motivates students and makes them lose their confidence, because they start thinking that they can never perform well in exams.

Vatterott (2015) suggested the learning environment, which involves teaching, checking, applying learning, and feedback. But the classroom environment that involves only teaching, testing, and grading that leads to result in the success of only a few students because students feel a lack of motivation, which they can get through the feedback from teachers. In the traditional grading paradigm, teachers grade everything—the learning, work, and behaviour of students. Sometimes points are given or taken away for behaviours such as participation, attendance, punctuality, effort, or neatness. In addition, the teacher may give points for extra credit work that is not related to the academic goals for the class. Sometimes high achieving students demonstrate mastery of content on assessment and class assignments, but receive a low grade because of poor behaviour or because some assignments are missing or have been turned in late (A. Kaur, personal communication, November 23, 2017). Grades are evaluated by considering every aspect of student performance. It leads to think about looking for new classroom learning environment which focuses on active participation of students in the classrooms, so that they can learn competencies and skills to solve real world problems. There is need of assessment that does not assess what students can cram for paper and pencil test, but assess how they are performing in the classrooms and what skills and competencies they are learning, surely performance-based assessment.

Tool for Strengths-Based Assessment-Performance-based Assessment

Darling- Hammond (2014) described the objective of assessment. To be helpful in achieving learning goals, assessment must fully represent the competencies that the increasingly complex and changing world demands. To do so, tasks and activities in the classrooms are worthwhile for students and teachers. To impart skills and competencies among students, Darling-Hammond (2014) put an emphasis on performance-based assessment. She suggested that this assessment enables students to reflect on their acquired knowledge to solve real world problems. The term performance-assessment includes authentic assessment that require students to develop a product, response, analysis, or problem solution that reflects the kind of reasoning or performance required beyond the classroom setting (Darling-Hammond,2014). The keywords that are found in the definition of performance-based assessment are “reflects” and “analysis” which can be considered as the major components in designing the performance tasks. Many educators are looking to implement performance-based assessment in the classrooms. Raizen et al. (1989) also recognized that performance-based assessments could more easily be designed to tap higher-order skills, such as problem solving and critical thinking.

Using the number of performance tasks in the classrooms fair results of students learning can be obtained (Darling- Hammond, 2014). These tasks can be designed keeping in mind the learning goals. Thus, using performance-based assessment rather than paper-pencil test more; an effective learning environment can be created. Simmons et al. (2013) also suggested the use of collaborative assessment to bring a balance between assessment and evaluation. In the clinical environment, assessment is a process as well as a product. He proposed that a balance between assessment and evaluation provides a way to reflect on the context of a situation. This idea of collaborative assessment (connections) and situational can be used to make the performance tasks more authentic. Measuring strength is an important component of a balanced assessment

and evaluation. The strength-based assessment tools educators and program evaluators can use to assess a wide array of positive attributes, including well-being, mindfulness, resilience, humor, and optimism requires a focused collaborative assessment (Simmons & Lehmann, 2013). Ewell (2002) added to this idea, and pointed out two purposes of assessment as improvement and accountability.

Feedback and its Role

Feedback consists of information about progress and next step in the student's learning process (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Feedback can be used to motivate students to become better in learning. When teachers provide students with useful feedback, students become self-motivated and engage in further learning (Hattie, 2012). Many researchers have tried to look for different forms of feedback. Gipps et al. (2004) suggested the use of evaluative feedback, which involves feelings of value or judgment that can cause emotion. Formative feedback has one of the most powerful influences on student learning (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Black & Wiliam, 1998).

Sadler (1983) saw three steps in the formative feedback loop: (a) attending to goals, (b) devising strategies to reach the goals, and (c) monitoring the discrepancy between actual and desired performance. Another type of feedback that a teacher can use in the classrooms is task-involving feedback. This type of feedback involves more descriptive feedback and it can lead to significant gains in students' performance (Heritage, 2010). When students receive tasks involving feedback, students know what they need to do to improve and how they can enhance their own learning more. Cognitively (achievement) oriented, motivational, and metacognitive are considered three important functions of feedback (Butler & Winne, 1995; Hoska, 1993; Mory, 2004). Mason and Burning (2001) suggested that elaborated feedback can improve the

achievement level of students. It helps students to know where they are, how they are doing, and what they can do next. Rheinberg (2006) showed that feedback comparing a student's performance to predefined content-related criteria has a greater impact on achievement than feedback comparing one student's performance to the performance of other students. Deci and Ryan (2000) concluded that feedback should provide information in such a way that students can feel satisfied and competent. Feedback can develop intrinsic motivation and interest among individuals.

The last function of feedback suggests that feedback should enable the students to self-assess their performance. Thus, the research reveals that students can gain their performance and achievement level by getting feedback on time. When students are aware of what they know and what they need to learn, teacher can scaffold feedback that allows them to take necessary steps to achieve the set learning outcomes. The feedback provides teachers a way to re-plan their instructions to meet the desired learning outcomes for future.

Moving Forward: Assessment, Evaluation, and Research

Assessment has become a common part of our educational system. Scholars and practitioners need to critically examine important questions regarding the future of assessment and evaluation. First, we need to think why we need assessment. As mentioned above, assessment improves student learning or measures accountability. Educational practitioners must have a clear vision of the purpose of assessment and should have knowledge of appropriate tools for the assessment. Whatever different tools in assessment we can use to improve student learning, it needs to be more focused. Performance-based assessment is one tool we can use in the classrooms to improve learning skills. Assessment tools are products of social, cultural, and education contexts. Also, professional development is a must for assessment and evaluation

professionals. Not only do they need to follow the development of assessment and evaluation tools such as new surveys and tests, but they also need to learn new statistical methods. If student learning is what we care about, we should not be reactive but proactive in assessing and improving the conditions that foster student learning and development.

Analysis

Previous literature has highlighted the different aspects of classroom assessment and their effects on pupils. Black and Wiliam (1984) described instruction in terms of differences in formative assessments. Germain (1999) clearly stated how standardized testing is not able to achieve the learning goals. Natriello (1987) studied the impact of features of evaluation processes on pupils' motivation and achievement. He concluded that these characteristics are important in classrooms: Focus on tasks that do not compare pupils, clear criteria, high but attainable standards, cooperative reward structures, sound appraisals of work, and differentiated feedback. Darling-Hammond (2014) put an emphasis on performance-based assessment to impart core competencies among students. She used reflection, analysis as a main keyword to explore performance-based assessment. As McMillan (2007) commented,

Conventionally we are using assessment practices in the classrooms that are just like filling the bucket with water without turning off the tap. The above assessment techniques can be used in classrooms to promote student learning effectively. We are evaluating our students' performance by judging their answer sheets and evaluating how many pages are used by students to answer any question. This is the present scenario of my country where pages are counted to evaluate the performance but not the content. But effective formative assessment blends assessment and instructional functions. (p. 49)

My Focus

Research supports the conclusion that formative classroom assessment is one of the most efficient tools a classroom teacher might use, and performance-based assessment as part of formative assessment is more reliable tool that a teacher can use in the classrooms. As a teacher, I want to focus on performance assessment rather than looking at paper and pencil testing. How we can plan for arranging, observing, recording, and evaluating a restricted performance task? The most important factor affecting student learning is the teacher. So, classroom assessment done by a teacher has a dramatic influence on student achievement. Also, we need to find ways that a teacher can measure growth in learning.

To measure growth in learning, we need to focus on different point scales that can be used to determine the performance levels of students. So, my key area of focus is to find various performance-based assessment strategies for monitoring student learning and thus assessing the learning outcomes by using different tools. A teacher designs his/her own instructional activities focusing on many complex decisions and how measurements and judgments influence those decisions. By implementing these strategies in the high schools of my own country, I want to bring a shift from traditional assessment to performance assessment that ensures student learning. This approach of moving to performance-based assessment is provided as my rationale in the chapter 3, which then leads to the framework of a handbook. The necessary components for planning instructions, assessing learning outcomes and role of feedback in performance-based assessment are discussed in the framework.

Chapter 3: My Rationale and Handbook Framework

The research reviewed in Chapter 2 suggests that students can learn effectively when the assessment is formative. It highlights the use of new approaches of assessment, authentic assessment and performance-based assessment (Airasian, 1991; Hart, 1994; Wiggins, 1993). The keywords such as group problem-solving tasks, constructivist approach, use of portfolios in these assessment, and planning instructions encouraged me to use these in the Indian classrooms to promote better learning. The Alberta education system (2010) planned a curriculum for its students that put the emphasis on improving student competencies. It promotes the development of different competencies such as critical thinking, problem solving, managing information, creativity and innovation, communication and collaboration, and personal growth and wellbeing.

Through these competencies, students develop and connect key aspects of knowing, thinking, and doing across a variety of learning contexts, within or outside school. When students develop competencies, they acquire knowledge, skills, and attitudes that contribute to their success as lifelong learners and active citizens (Alberta Education, 2010). The competencies are the source for students that encourage deep learning and promote lifelong learning. These key ideas of the use of performance-based assessment and its attributes and the development of competencies among students rather than making them rote learners encouraged me to design the handbook for Indian teachers that focus more on developing different skills among students.

This chapter will discuss (a) a review of the need in the Indian context; (b) the framework for handbook, (c) my rationale for choosing performance-based assessment in classrooms and development of competencies among students, and (c) conclusion.

If we want better outcomes of learning for Indian students, we need to design assessment in such a manner that it becomes a powerful source of influencing the quality of what teachers and students learn. This focus on changing the assessment is possible only when central and provincial education boards change the mode of assessment for the students. Teachers know their students more than anyone from outside; I think they are more able to meet the learning needs of their students. The need of individual instructions, No Exam Policy (NEP), and changing plans in curricula can reduce the burden of students that they are facing now. This is the reason I am creating this handbook for Indian teachers, so that by using classroom instructions and different assessment tools, they can promote learning among students. Wiliam (2011) proposed that, if teachers provide instructions according to the individual needs of every child, then the growth of every child will be proper.

The Need for Assessment Tools in India

The education sector in India is experiencing rapid expansion and change. To enroll students in classes, new initiatives and policies are implemented. But the question arises: Are these policies able to meet the quality of education? Central and state governments are giving more attention to improving resources such as schools and books for students. Education is a joint responsibility of the state and central governments of India. In 1992, the National Policy of Education (NPE) put a stress on the evaluation process and examination reform to meet the objectives of education. It stated that as a part of sound educational strategies, examinations should be employed to bring about qualitative improvement in education. Its objective is to recast the examination system to ensure a method of assessment that is a valid and reliable measure of student development and a powerful instrument for improving teaching and learning in functional terms.

In 2002, an amendment was inserted in the constitution of India under Article 21, which is the right of children to free and compulsory education until completion of elementary education to lay a foundation for education (MHRD, 2010). This indicates the stress of these policies is to ensure that all students have an equal an opportunity to access higher education that ensures quality and prepares student for their life. But these policies were restricted to enroll students in the classrooms and do not assure any quality in education.

The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) introduced several other policies such Sarv Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), mid-day meal programs to improve the level of education in India. SSA was introduced with the aim of obtaining a 100% literacy rate for elementary students by the year 2010. Because it was not able to meet its goal, it was extended until 2017. The mid-day meal program was introduced to enroll more students in the classrooms by providing them free food in the schools. The primary aim of this policy was just to increase the enrolment of students in the schools. These policies were attempting to bring change in the education system of India, but they did not aim to assure the quality of education to promote better learning among students.

Many educators had tried to look for the negative effects of standardized testing, summative assessment and evaluation by examining the student's experiences and doing surveys. Attempting to commit suicide is a drastic impact found in students' lives because of these firm exam policies. As a student, I witnessed a case in which a 20-year-old man attempted suicide due to his failure in exams. The *Hindustan Times* presented a report on suicide committed by the students due to failure in exams. The National Crime Bureau conducted a survey to report the suicide attempt by students due to failure in exams. The report highlighted that, in 2015, the number of student suicides stood at 8,934. In the five years leading to 2015, 39,775 students

killed themselves. The number of attempted suicides, many unreported, is likely to be much higher. The data on student suicide attempts in India is analyzed by using the source of the National Crime Records Bureau to present the change in student suicide attempt from 2011 to 2015, as shown in Figure 3.1. The figure indicates that there is an increased rate of student suicide attempts all over India due to failure in exams and burden of studies. India has one of the world's highest suicide rates for youth aged 15-29 (*Hindustan Times*, 2017), which means that we truly need educational reforms.

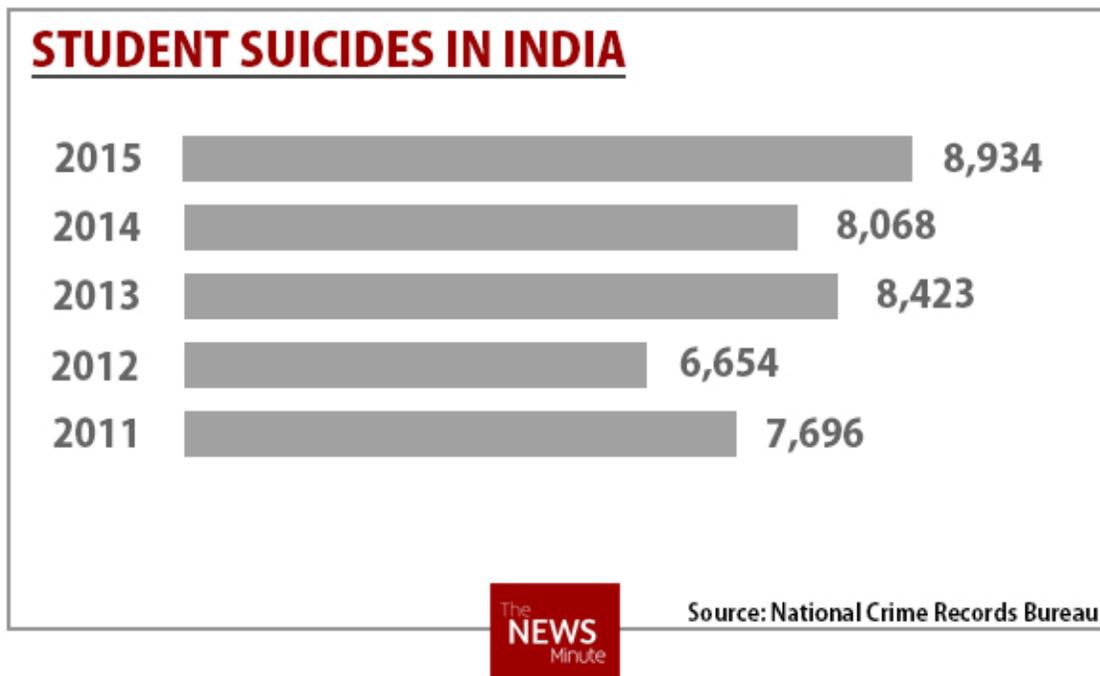


Figure-3.1. Suicide rates in India (National Crime Records Bureau)

Another problem that I found among students is the fear of enrolment in higher studies. Their marks decide their admission in universities or colleges. I applied to a university for my post-graduation degree; there were only limited seats, but the candidates who applied for admission were more than 400. Fifty candidates whose marks were good in the graduation course were selected; the rest of the students could not get any chance to show their capabilities.

This shows how the government policies of education are affecting the careers of students, too. My own learning experiences under this system pushed me forward and challenged me to look for some change in the assessment system. This hierarchy of system, which works from the top down, should be changed. We need to look for educational reforms in which the system works from the bottom to the top. The problems addressed above can be changed if we are able to shift the education system from exam oriented to instruction oriented. Wiggins (1993) proposed that fair instruction and assessment is designed to help the students make progress. These both are attempted to ensure that everyone is learning to play the “same” game so that everyone can improve at it.

The Framework for the Handbook

The handbook will be organized into different parts. These parts will be discussed after giving background information about performance-based assessment and rationale. Part 1 will explain about a process that includes the following sections: Connect; Analyze; Reflect; and Experiences—or the CARE model (Darling-Hammond, 2014; Simmons et al., 2013). The handbook will explain how to plan instructions and how to design tasks using CARE model in the classrooms. Next, Part 2 will highlight different tools to assess performances of students with sample examples. The last part will discuss the role of feedback in assessment and feedback strategy plan which is designed on the basis of domains: cognitive, motivational and metacognitive (Butler & Winne, 1995; Hoska, 1993; Mory, 2004) to improve student learning.

Part one. The handbook is designed to discuss different assessment tools in a classroom setting. The planning for this handbook is inspired by the work of Airasian (1991), Wiggins (1993), and Phye (1997) on assessment. It first describes the different phases of instructions that

a teacher needs to use in the classroom, which is planning and delivering instructions and then diagnosing the pupils' learning outcomes.

The first phase, planning instructions, describes a plan for teachers to provide instructions in the classrooms. The instructions are planned to keep in mind the development of competencies among students—critical thinking, problem solving, communication and collaboration, creativity, and innovation. I desire a classroom environment for Indian schools in which students are not passive learners but are actively involved in the classrooms to learn deeply and can easily apply their knowledge and understanding to the outside world. This phase of planning instructions also describes the methods and examples that a teacher can use to provide instructions.

The second phase, delivering instructions, encourages teachers to use an interactive method that follows the CARE context: connect, analyze, reflect, and experience. This phase involves the use of methods that involve the use of the constructivist approach (Wiggins, 1993), activities and audio visual aids to ensure the development of different competencies among students.

The third phase, which is the most important, is how to assess the pupils' outcomes encourages teachers to use performance-based assessment in the classrooms. The use of portfolios, rating scales, and checklists to measure their abilities and performances in the classrooms can be considered as better tools for assessing their learning.

Part two. The second part of the handbook focuses on elaborating on assessing learning outcomes. This part describes the role of evaluation and grading in assessing learning outcomes. It also describes the role of teachers for assessing students' learning internally in the classrooms. Rowntree (1987) mentioned that if assessment tries to discuss what the student is becoming or

has accomplished, then evaluation tries to do the same for a course or learning experience or episode of teaching. We need evaluation to see the effectiveness of teaching. We should use evaluation to diagnose the students' weaknesses rather than ranking them based on how much they have learned (Rowntree, 1987).

This handbook presents the use of internal evaluation, which is done by the teachers in the classrooms, involves assessing different competencies among students. It suggests that teachers use the evaluation cycle, which involves teaching, assessing, and diagnosing students' learning before going to the grading process. This handbook is based on the belief that tests cannot assess all the competencies among students, therefore a necessary shift away from testing as assessment is advocated. Classroom evaluation requires the use of different tools, too, and a goal of this handbook is to make the evaluation procedure clearer for the teachers. Undoubtedly, external evaluation is rooted in the system of education of India, but this handbook is an attempt to provide a solution to teachers that they can formally involve in the process of evaluation.

Students can be involved in an internal assessment till grade eight easily, but they are also assessed externally after grade eight. Therefore, the implementations we can use to make external evaluation more relevant are highlighted in this part. Moreover, how we can use analytical methods to assign grades to students after the process of evaluation is a key part of this handbook. It discusses the use of charts with examples to highlight the strengths or competencies of students. The classroom observations that a teacher can use to analyze a student's learning outcomes can also be used to assign grades to students. It suggests that teachers use the ratio scale to assign grades for making it more descriptive in nature.

Part three. The last part of the handbook highlights the role of feedback in evaluation. Many researchers have tried to look for other forms of feedback rather than grading (which is

part of written feedback). Cognitive, motivational, and metacognitive aspects are considered three important functions of feedback (Butler & Winne, 1995; Hoska, 1993; Mory, 2004). This part is an attempt to look for process-oriented feedback by considering the above three functions of feedback.

Mason and Burning (2001) suggested that elaborated feedback can improve the achievement level of students. It helps students know where they are, how they are doing, and what they can do next. Rheinberg (2006) showed that feedback comparing a student's performance to predefined content-related criteria has a greater impact on achievement than feedback comparing one student's performance to the performance of other students. Deci and Ryan (2000) concluded that feedback should provide information in such a way that students feel satisfied and become competent. Thus, feedback can help develop intrinsic motivation and interest among individuals.

The last function of feedback suggests that feedback should enable the students to self-assess their performance. So, using these three functions of feedback, a sample format feedback strategy plan is designed for the teachers in the handbook to meet the desired goals.

Conclusion

I believe, if we are willing to bring some changes in the education system, every effort is valuable and works as a ladder for others to move forward. The learning environment that supports students' competencies can prepare students for the outside world. Teamwork and support can help individuals achieve goals more easily (Kouzes & Posner, 2010). Thus, this project is intended to provide assessment strategies for teachers in Indian schools, which requires a great deal of teamwork—and support—to accomplish the goals of learning.

John Dewey (1938) defined learning as a continuous process in which we reconstruct and reorganize our experiences of life. I believe that assessing students' abilities rather than criterion testing helps them to learn more. The growth mindset, which involves the teamwork of teachers and students, can enable them to shift from the traditional grading system to a new system. This project is an attempt to look for an assessment system that encourages a deep-learning environment for students focused on enhancing the competencies among them. It contributes a rich teaching environment in Indian schools that can motivate and inspire students to learn more in the classroom environment. The other main benefit of the handbook is that it will serve as a toolkit for teachers to make classroom assessment more productive, and thus will help them to prepare learners for the 21st century.

Chapter 4: The Handbook

PBA in Indian Classrooms

A handbook for Indian Teachers to Assess Students' Performance

Appendix A

PBA in Indian Classrooms: A Handbook for Indian Teachers to assess students'

Performance

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Part One. Background Information

What is Performance-Based Assessment?

The Indian education system is trying to focus on making assessment more quality based by using formative assessment in classrooms. The biggest challenge for educators is the lack of using different approaches of formative assessment. The written tests and providing scores or grades as an evaluation is still a part of the current system of education. This challenge to focus on bringing different approaches in the classrooms is the vision of different educators. These approaches encourage constructive learning among students and prepare them for the outside world.

Airasian (1996) defined performance-based assessment as “assessment in which the teacher observes and makes a judgment about a pupil’s skill in carrying out an activity or producing a product” (p. 252), and thus it permits students to apply their skills in real-life situations. Classroom-based performance assessment increases a teacher’s capacity to measure what students are learning and what is being taught (Shoemaker & Lewin, 2011). Hart (1994) emphasized the use of new approaches of assessment and presented that an assessment becomes more authentic if it involves students in tasks that are worthwhile, significant, and meaningful. But implementing these new approaches in classrooms completely changes the roles of teachers and students. I think there are many ways to assess students’ learning; as teachers, we can observe what they are doing, listen what they want to say, and analyze what they are producing.

Wiggins (1993) and Stiggins (1987) put an emphasis on the use of performance-based assessment. Stiggins (1987) stated that the formal performance-based assessment is used to obtain information about pupils' learning so that a grade can be assigned on some other decision. Thus, performance assessment is a method of constructing a student's response within a context. Performance-based tasks enable students to attain mastery over the core competency skills such as problem-solving skills, critical thinking, personal growth, and creativity (Wiggins, 1993).

There are a few in-depth studies of how teachers carry out performance assessments in their classrooms, even though this formal assessment method is used for collecting information about pupils. Stiggins (1987) has done the most extensive work in this area with his colleagues at the Center for Performance Assessment at Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory in Portland, Oregon. They concluded that all the teachers who were reporting using performance assessment in their classrooms were not confident about the quality of their assessment. Stiggins and Bridgeford (1985) reported that over two-thirds of the teachers were worried about their competence at formal performance assessments and about the quality of assessments.

Teachers found that formal performance-based assessment is a time-consuming process, and thus other important classroom activities are ignored. They also recognized that their lack of training in classroom assessment practices might lead to faulty assessment. The information collected by Stiggins and Bridgeford (1985) enabled them to find the different components of performance-based assessment that the teachers need to consider before implementing performance-based assessment in classrooms. They concluded that planning for performance criteria, designing the performance tasks, and planning the rating scales for evaluation can help teachers more in the classrooms.

Shoemaker and Lewin (2011) highlighted the characteristics of performance-based assessments. These tasks should require the elaboration of core knowledge content and the use of key processes. It should involve the use of an explicit scoring system and should be crafted carefully to measure students' performance. These tasks indicate how pupils use information and perform activities in situations that approximate real life.

Rationale

The students in the current system of education of India are facing barriers to implement that learning in real life. The teaching methods and paper and pencil tests are not able to promote core competencies such as critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills among students. Moreover, the assessment techniques used in Indian classrooms are so outdated that they are not able to meet the educational goals of the 21st century. We need to look for different methods and tools for assessment that promote creative learning among students and thus prepare them for the outside world. This handbook is designed for Indian teachers to enhance creative learning among students by using performance-based assessment and evaluating the students' learning by using different tools other than exams and grades.

Part Two. The Framework

The handbook framework is adapted from the work of Stiggins (1987), Wiggins (1993), and Airasian (1996). The idea of enhancing competencies among students is adopted from the Alberta education curriculum. The idea of shifting from traditional teaching and assessment to performance-based assessment came through my own experiences in Indian classrooms and experiencing the curriculum of the Pacific School of Innovation and Inquiry (PSII). The idea of promoting creative learning among students by playing the role of facilitator as a teacher and inspiring students to actively participate in the learning process motivated me to implement this

type of learning environment in Indian classrooms too (PSII, personal communication, March 1,2017). In my experience, teachers collected information only about the knowledge and content pupils had gained in the classrooms. The different domains in which teachers can collect the information about pupils during formal performance assessment are: (a) communication skills, (b) psychomotor skills, (c) athletic activities, (d) concept acquisition, and (e) affective characteristics (Airasian, 1996).

The handbook presents that, based on these domains, teachers can plan instructions and design performances tasks to deliver those instructions. This is achieved through the implementation of the CARE model. The CARE model is an interactive model that follows the following sequence: connect, analyze, reflect, and experience. This model can help teachers plan instructions more clearly. In the handbook, exemplars are given side-by-side to provide a clear picture of how to use this model; however, as a starting point, it is important to understand the main criteria for each area.

Connect. The most important thing in a classroom is to know your students first. Connecting with students helps teachers know what is happening in their minds. The students' connections with other students and with the global world can help them understand the lessons more easily.

Analyze. This stage of the model enables students to learn more deeply by exploring the content more. John Dewey (1933) proposed that students should be provided with opportunities to think for themselves and articulate their thoughts. The use of the constructivism approach (Dewey, 1933) by teachers can enable students to explore the information more accurately provided to them.

Reflect. Hedberg (2008) concluded that reflection is an important tool not just for management students but also for practicing managers, as they work in chaotic, ambiguous, and busy organizations. When students reflect, they give the learning a space to be processed, understood, and more likely integrated into future thoughts and actions.

Experiences. The personal experiences shared by the students related to discussion help them to give meaning to the information. It enables them to see how they can use this learning regarding their past experiences to make future experiences more relevant to the previous context.

The third phase of this handbook highlights how we can assess pupils' outcomes by evaluating their performance. It suggests the use of portfolios, ratio scales, checklists, and charts in a process of evaluation and grading. The last part of the handbook describes the role of feedback in evaluation. A strategy feedback plan is designed in this handbook that provides feedback to the students about what they have achieved, what they can do more, and thus motivating them by giving feedback to enhance their learning.

Part Three. Planning and Delivering Instructions (The CARE Model)

This section provides the use of the CARE model to plan and deliver instructions in the classrooms. The CARE model is designed for teachers to help them in planning instructions for students and encourages them to assess their learning on their performance at each stage of the model.

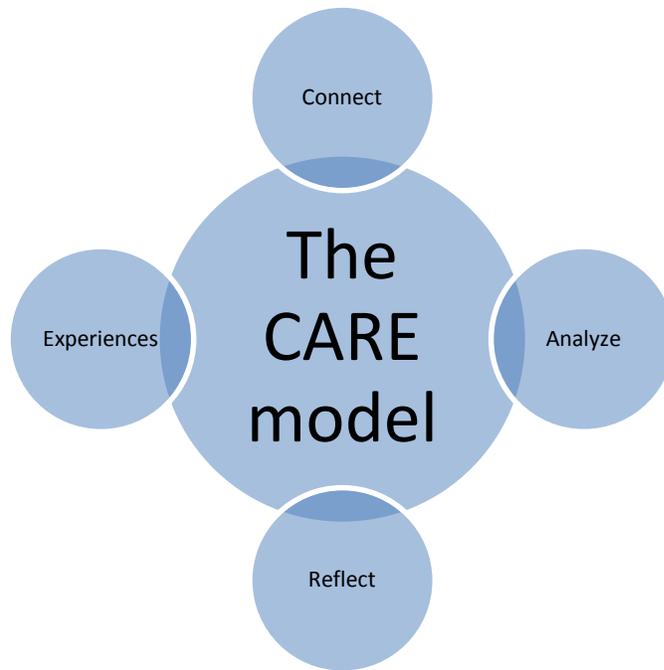


Figure-4.1. The CARE model.

Table 4.1

Planning performance tasks

Stages	Planning questions for teachers	Performance-based tasks	Activities	Examples
Connect	What skills or attributes do I want my students to develop? e.g. To communicate effectively	Role playing	Students can play the assigned roles in different subjects.	Conduct a play on the William Shakespeare play “The merchant of Venice”. Assign your roles by discussing and plan and practice your dialogues.
		Event tasks	Design an event that involves discussion with the community people.	Find out the reasons why students in slum yard areas do not want to attend the schools. Prepare a questionnaire for those kids which you will ask to them. Write down their answers. Analyze their answers to find the themes from those reasons.
		Pair and share activity	Ask students to discuss in groups then	What are the most important things that you need to survive in this world? First find which things you require to survive,

			share with the whole class as a group.	then discuss why those are the most important.
Analyze	What meta-cognitive skills do I want my students to develop? What concepts and principles do I want my students to be able to apply? e.g. Problem solving, managing information	Experiments Media analysis	Ask students to experiment certain things in the classrooms and thus form a hypothesis and make conclusions by analyzing it. Students are provided with a web series or new articles for analyzing and thus finding the results.	Ask students to plant different plants in their home and put them in different places like one in the sunlight, one in a room and one covered with container. Ask them to wait for two days and analyze it and thus record their interpretations. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Ush6PqZe Ask the students to watch the video, and discuss what it was about, their focus, interpretations and what they learned and observed.
Reflect	What are the cognitive skills that I want to develop in my students? e.g. Critical thinking, creative thinking	Open-ended questions Reflective essays Case studies	Ask questions in the classrooms so that students can think and present their views on it after discussions. Pick a topic for each student and ask them to write what they about that and why that is important. Ask students to give their perceptions on	What would you do in following cases if you met natural disasters? (a) Earthquakes (b) Storms (c) Floods Think in each case how will you protect yourself and others, and then discuss with your group. How does the culture and diversity in culture impact your life? Discuss the values you learn from it. How it affects your learning? https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK44917/

			enthusiastic to know why that happens.	
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The above table highlights the planning instructions using performance tasks in the classrooms.

Different types of tasks can be performed in the classrooms to develop different skills and competencies among students. The examples are presented to provide some ideas to the teachers regarding how they can use these performance tasks in the classrooms.

Part Four. Assessing the Learning Outcomes

Planning instructions by using performance tasks in the classrooms also requires gathering information through classroom observations. The information gathered in the classrooms does not require only formal ways; it can also be collected informally. The information collected during instruction is mostly used to guide learning rather than to give any judgments and are often part of formative assessment. Airasian (1994) found another form of assessment that is more formal and systematic, called official assessment, which involves observing the students during performance. This assessment involves collecting the information regarding daily classroom activities that as a teacher we can design in the classrooms. The decisions from the official assessment are used to measure the learning level of students and thus in promoting. Thus, making observations regarding students' performance and learning is more important in classroom assessment.

Wiggins (1993) highlighted that, if performance is used to measure large purpose learning goals, then they require good judgment by using more than one observation. Airasian (1994) also concluded that more than one instance of the observed behaviour is necessary for a teacher to give good judgment. Thus, our main purpose of making observations during

assessment is to diagnose students' difficulties or to certify pupils' mastery of performance criterion. The decisions are taken based on recorded observations to rate or score the pupils' performance. There are many methods to record observations of students from which checklists, portfolios and rating scales are the common one (Airasian, 1994; Zemsky, 2013; Meyer, Paulson, & Paulson, 1991). These observation techniques are discussed below.

Checklists

A checklist is a written list of the performance criteria associated with a performance or product (Airasian, 1994). Checklists help you to focus on the important aspects of their performance. They contain detailed information about pupils' performance—what they did and what they can do to improve in certain areas. It focuses on behavioral aspects and provides diagnostic information. If we use the same checklist to diagnose and provide information about a pupil's improvement, then there are more chances to improve the student's learning. Different checklists can be used by teachers for observations: Checklists for skills in presentation, checklists for showing competencies in group activities, and checklists for reading and writing skills. We need to establish standards before summarizing students' performance; it can be presented in the form of present/absent or True/False. A sample checklist that can be used to observe the competencies among students is given in table 4.3.

Primary objective: To develop skills, attitudes, and behaviours among students that is effective for learning.

Subsidiary objective: To make the classroom environment pupil-centered.

Table 4. 2

Checklist for group activities

Checklist to Assess Group Activities

Name _____

Date _____

(a) Collaboration (Alberta Education, 2010)

_____ divide the work properly in the team.

_____ coordinate between the group members.

_____ actively involve students in the discussion.

_____ define their responsibilities clearly.

_____ clear, loud voice during presentations.

(b) Managing Information (Alberta Education, 2010).

_____ Information collected by using different sources.

_____ Use of visual aids to support information.

_____ Questions asked in between to lead to next information.

_____ Use of effective vocabulary while speaking.

(c) Creativity and Innovation (Alberta education, 2010).

_____ Use of innovative ideas to present information to students.

_____ Concludes with some final product that is creative.

_____ Involves use of relevant examples where required.

_____ Uses real-life examples to show their creativity.

(d) Personal Growth and Wellbeing.

_____ can speak confidently in the class.

_____ can respect others' thoughts.

_____ can answer the questions of students easily.

_____ has a mastery over the content.

_____ can motivate others also.
Notes: Needs to work on

Thus, using a checklist as an assessment tool requires a description of the components on which you want to measure the success of students. It should be short enough and involve a sequence of steps that can be observed easily.

Portfolios

A portfolio is a purposeful, interrelated collection of a student's work that exhibits his/her efforts, progress, and achievements in one or more areas. The collection includes student participation in selecting content, criteria for selection, and evidence of student reflection. It communicates what is learned and why it is important (Meyer, Paulson, & Paulson, 1991). Thus, portfolios provide students an opportunity to grow, show their proficiency over time, and build a sense of responsibility among students for their learning. These can be used throughout the year to assess the performance of students by clearly defining the focus and purpose. We can construct portfolios for their subjects, or they can specify the portfolios based on skills, too. We can put videos, self and peer reflections, pictures, charts, assignments, awards, and medals in the portfolio that means anything that provides information about the strengths of students (Hebert, 2001). We can ask students to collect all these things in a folder and thus prepare a portfolio evaluation sheet and to give their reflections on their portfolios to assess themselves what they are good at, and in which areas they need to improve. A portfolio that is created based on multiple intelligence theory given by Gardner (1983) can be used as a sample for students in which they can reflect on their performance tasks by doing self-reflection for them.

Broad categories	Examples
Spatial (visual)	<p>Am I good at art work? How can I use my art skills in the classrooms?</p> <hr/> <hr/> <p>Note: Attach your work related also.</p>
Linguistic or Verbal	<p>Am I able to read the things on the computer and understand them?</p> <p>How carefully do I listen to speakers in the classroom?</p> <p>How do I interpret the readings from the books?</p>
Interpersonal skills	<p>What did I do in co-operative learning tasks?</p> <p>What was my role in group projects, group presentations, discussions, or pair and share activities?</p> <p>How did I perform in extracurricular activities?</p>
Musical Rhythmic	<p>What did I learn in music classes?</p> <p>What did I do in the role-playing</p>

Bodily Kinesthetic	assignments? Describe what you learnt on field trips. Am I able to set my goals? What is my goal? What will I do to achieve it? Reflect.
Intrapersonal skills	What competency skills did I learn in the classrooms? Am I able to solve the puzzles and find patterns and their relationships?
Logical-Mathematical	Am I able to construct mind maps?

Figure 4.3

Using multiple intelligences to organize portfolios

This portfolio can help students organize their work under different categories. We can also ask them to prepare a self-reflection sheet from the portfolio they maintained. The self-reflection sheet will enable the student to answer how they organized their portfolio. What was included in the portfolio? What does my portfolio shows about me? What abilities do my portfolio reflects the most? Which things do I need to watch? We can use all this data to evaluate students' strengths and weaknesses, and can plan the next tasks to enable them to work on their weaknesses.

Rating Scale

Airasian (1994) defined rating scales as similar to checklists, but also allows the observers to give judgments on their performance along a continuum from adequate to inadequate. The only difference found is that, in checklists, a teacher can use only two categories for judgment; but, in rating scales, categories can be more than two. Airasian (1994) found three

main types of rating scales that can be used to rate pupils' performance and products: numerical, graphic, and descriptive. These scales describe a student's performance ranging from "good" to "poor" or from "always" to "never."

We can use these scales to observe a student's performance and compare it to standard norms. The numerical scale provides a point on the rating scale; on the other hand, the graphic scale requires the observer to mark a student's position on a line. Descriptive scales are marked with stating their actual performance. We need to make some rules before using a rating scale. There is a need to choose several categories for rating and making the scale better. Moreover, using the same rating scale to rate performance each time can make assessment more accurate. Thus, we can easily use these scales to diagnose the performance of students. Figure 4.5 shows a sample rating scale for observing student performance during presentations in the class.

Name _____

Date _____

Directions: Indicate how pupil performs each of these behaviours while making an oral presentation. For each behavior, circle 4 if the pupil always performs that behaviour, 3 if usually performs that behaviour, 2 if seldom performs the behaviour, and 1 if never performs that behaviour.

(1) Verbal Expressions

- | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | A. Chooses simple and precise words to describe. |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | B. Organizes information logically. |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | C. States all facts with complete thoughts. |
| 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | D. Summarizes main points at the conclusion. |

(2) Physical Expressions

4	3	2	1	A. Stands straight and faces audience.
4	3	2	1	B. Maintains eye contact with audience.
4	3	2	1	C. Changes voice tone with change in tone of presentation.
4	3	2	1	D. Shows necessary hand movements during presentation.
(3) Vocal Expressions				
4	3	2	1	A. Speaks in audible and clear voice.
4	3	2	1	B. Speaks taking pauses where required.
4	3	2	1	C. Varies tone to highlight points.

Figure 4.5

The numbers circled on the rating scales can be added to find the scores. The highest possible score on the above rating scale is 4; it is the sum of the entire “always” rated criterion. Thus, using the rating scales, we can judge students’ performance in the required criterion and thus can give remarks to students accordingly.

In summary, performance assessments work with a clearly defined purpose that needs to be done with proper planning to make this assessment more valid and reliable. It requires setting the performance criteria to assess learning outcomes that can be used to rate the students’ performance, and thus diagnose their difficulties with learning using checklists, portfolios, and rating scales.

Part Five. Role of Feedback

As a teacher, we can use feedback in the classroom to provide information regarding aspects of students’ performance-based on observations, checklists, and portfolios that were produced during the assessment of learning outcomes. Students require performance feedback to regulate their behaviour, achieve goals, and maintain performance levels. Feedback provides a

framework for students to see what they are doing and how they are doing. We can use feedback strategy plan in the classrooms that puts emphasis on providing feedback to students related to their cognitive & metacognitive skills and thus motivate them to improve their learning. It also involves student self-assessment and peer assessment that satisfies students' needs of satisfaction and makes them feel more competent. Constructive feedback by peers and teachers can work as a building block for the future learning of students. Figure 4.6 describes the feedback strategy plan, which provides feedback to students in different domains to improve their learning.

Domain	Self-Assessment	Peer assessment	Teacher feedback
Cognitive (achievement oriented) (Butler & Winne, 1995)	What skills/ attributes did you learn during task? Did I work hard to do quality work? Did I make a good use of available resources? Did I ask questions if I need help?	How he used his cognitive abilities to perform the tasks?	Very impressive in_____ Needs to improve_____.
Motivational (Hoska, 1993)	What factors encouraged me to complete this task?	How did he take your guidance in tasks when needed?	Your work is motivating for others because_____

<p>Metacognitive (Mory, 2004)</p>	<p>Did I set my standards? And am I able to meet those standards? What this task leads me to think about? What is your reflection about your work?</p>	<p>How did his inspire you? How his work is reflective?</p>	<p>_____ Reflection about work_____ _____ _____ Other Remarks:</p>
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Figure 4.6. The feedback strategy plan

Thus, using feedback, we can enable students to think about their work more critically. It is an essential component of learning, providing a vehicle for thinking about one’s own thinking. Providing strengths and weaknesses to students enables students to reflect on how they thought through a task and how to constructively modify their approach in future work.

Part Six. Concluding Thoughts

This handbook was created with the idea of finding new approaches to assessment from traditionally-based to performance-based assessment. It is one method to impart competency skills among students by performance tasks to plan instructions. The different tools to assess learning outcomes with sample examples enable us to design our own tools for assessing our students. This assessment will inspire students to learn more actively in the classrooms and thus

increase their learning achievement level. Undoubtedly it needs more revisions by working on other assessment tools, and other sample plans for using tools can be added in this handbook to improve student learning.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

This project is designed for teachers to assess the performance of students in Indian schools in order to promote creative learning among students. My own learning and teaching experiences in Indian classrooms encouraged me to design this project to find more relevant tools of assessment. As a masters student in VIU, I learnt how to reflect on the things that are important for to me as a leader. I also learnt how to work as a researcher to accomplish my goals. Thus, the learning environment during my masters at VIU encouraged me to design this project for the teachers and thus design a handbook for them to use in their classrooms.

The core competencies of the Alberta education system and the idea of using performance-based assessment in classrooms is used in this handbook, which prepares educators to use some different techniques of assessment rather than standardized testing. The CARE model is designed in context to ensure that students are able to develop core competencies among them during the classroom instruction. This handbook also encourages teachers to use different evaluation tools such as portfolios, checklists, and rating scales to assess the performance of their students in the classrooms. The research reviewed during the project reveals that learning becomes more effective when teachers use formative assessment in the classrooms. Designing performance tasks in the classrooms can develop core competencies among students, but still there is not much research into designing these performance tasks in the classrooms.

The competency skills in the Alberta education system are creative thinking, creativity, communication, managing information, problem solving, and collaboration (Alberta Education, 2010). This handbook is designed to promote these skills among students by planning

instructions using the CARE model and designing performance tasks. Furthermore, for assessing their learning outcomes, this handbook focuses on internal evaluation by using portfolios, checklists, and rating scales to reduce the burden of exams on students.

The role of feedback in students' learning is highlighted in this handbook, too. It aims to provide a sample feedback strategy plan that motivates students to consider what they have achieved and what they need to do more to improve their learning. The goal of this handbook is to provide educators a relevant assessment tool that they can use in the classrooms to prepare their students for the outside world. Many researchers are focusing on redesigning the curriculum to meet the needs of students in Indian schools. This handbook is a possible solution for teachers to make students' learning more effective.

The tools presented in this project can be implemented to promote creative learning among students. Though it has many implementations, the foremost implementation of this handbook is to promote competitive skills among learners by planning instructions. This handbook can change the teaching-learning process from the traditional paradigm to a new learning process. After researching performance-based assessment, I became more interested in bringing this assessment to the classrooms as a teacher to prepare the students for real situations. The performance tasks can be assigned in all subjects to promote different skills among students during a different time span. The students will be provided feedback during all the instruction, and thus evaluation will be considered as a continuous process rather than giving exams at the end of class. Thus, students will get more opportunities to improve their learning by improving their skills and competencies.

The use of formative assessment in the classrooms can help teachers plan their instructions and give information about how pupils can improve. Moreover, they can see their

own progress and develop skills of self-evaluation and can have higher gains in academic achievements. With the implementation of these assessment strategies in the classrooms, we can measure students' performance rather than measuring and comparing schools' performance-based on grades in summative assessment.

In an ideal sense, this handbook encourages the use of performance-based assessment as a formative assessment to promote skills in the classrooms. But in a real classroom situation, it is a time-consuming process for teachers to plan performance tasks and motivate students to solve those tasks. Moreover, it encourages teachers to consider evaluation as an internal process, and thus use rating scales, portfolios, and checklists to evaluate students' performance. But still, this cannot be implemented in all the grades, as in Indian schools, assessment become a part of external evaluation after grade 8. Then, teachers must meet the needs of the standard curriculum assigned by the Ministry of Education.

If teachers start using this assessment in the lower classes, then students will realize the importance of this kind of learning in the classrooms. The suggestions from teachers to change the evaluation process in the higher classes can be considered by the Ministry of Education. Another limitation of this project is that it is designed for an ideal situation by reviewing the literature and using my own experiences as a student. It can be made more effective if it is done as a part of study where students can participate to discuss their problems with the current assessment in Indian schools, and asking them what type of assessment they want for their effective learning.

Looking forward, still it would be an excellent online resource for teachers to consider in their classroom assessment. The students can reflect on their learning skills by getting feedback from teachers and through the internal evaluation. As active learners, they can learn more by

solving problems, connecting with others, reflecting on their experiences, and analyzing their own learning experiences. This project can be expanded more by looking for other assessment tools that can be relevant for students to promote competencies skills among them. It requires open discussions, seminars, or conferences planned by teachers to look for a forward vision and find other tools and strategies for assessing student learning. Reconstructing and reorganizing new ways of assessment can improve this handbook for future student learning. The handbook can be revised from time to time with new assessment strategies and innovative methods suggested by other teachers too. I hope this handbook will work as a useful source of assessment for Indian teachers.

Performance-based assessment can help teachers design performance tasks and assessment for use in their classrooms. It has several positive features. It engages the learners more in the classrooms rather than teacher-dominant classrooms. It also illustrates how instruction and assessment can be integrated. It teaches students the kind of skills and knowledge that we want them to master. This assessment is a necessary aspect of a teacher's classroom assessment practices because much of what teachers want pupils to learn is best assessed by observing the pupils' performance.

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