

CCE Programme of States and Union Territories in India

A Review

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Abstract

With the implementation of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act–2009, it became mandatory for the States and Union Territories (UTs) to implement Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) as mentioned in its Section 29(2). Since the Act aims at all-round development of children by enabling them to learn and progress in a fear- and anxiety-free environment therefore, while prohibiting any external examination till the elementary stage, it mandates using CCE as a school-based activity to ensure the right of each child to full-time elementary education of satisfactory and equitable quality. Post implementation of the RTE Act, almost all the States and UTs initiated steps in this direction, developed a variety of material on CCE and even implemented it in schools. To understand the extent to which the CCE schemes of the States/UTs incorporate and reflect the ethos of CCE, a review of the CCE material of 22 States/UTs was undertaken. This article is an attempt to highlight the strengths and gaps to help the States and UTs improve their CCE schemes and thus progress towards qualitative improvement of elementary education as envisaged under RTE Act.

INTRODUCTION

Credible assessment and evaluation is crucial for quality education. It encourages all children to learn and progress, and discourages unhealthy

competition and labelling them. It supports each child to learn and progress without being subjected to any punitive practices. Sharing the progress report with different

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stakeholders especially parents/guardians, with information on the quality and extent of children's learning helps them support and contribute to their development.

Despite many educational reforms that happened over the last few years in curriculum renewal or revision at both the Centre and States in India, not much improvement in the assessment and evaluation practices is seen. 'Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation' (CCE) introduced decades ago, as mentioned in various national policy documents—Report of the Education Commission, 1964–66, National Policy on Education (NPE)–1986 and its modified version in 1992 was emphasised by subsequent National Curriculum Frameworks (NCFs)–2000, 2005 developed at the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), an apex body in school education in India. However, till date the students face continuous tests that haunt them, create fear and anxiety making them disinterested in activities in school. The teachers too find it cumbersome as most of the teaching-learning time is compromised for preparing question papers, marking them and observing exhaustive procedures of recording and reporting.

THE BACKGROUND

Taking cognisance of the examination reforms by the Kothari Commission (1964–66) set up by the Government of India, the NPE–1986 deliberated and considered assessment of

performance as an integral part of any process of learning and teaching. It envisaged implementation of Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation that incorporates both scholastic and non-scholastic aspects of education, spread over the total span of teaching-learning time emphasising the use of grades over marks. It also called for streamlining of the evaluation at the institutional level and reduces the predominance of external examination. The Programme of Action (PoA) 1992 brought out a roadmap for the implementation of NPE–1986 at the school level. Both the National Curriculum Frameworks, subsequent to this, developed in 2000 and 2005 recommended an evaluation system integral to the teaching-learning to avoid any undue pain, anxiety, harassment and humiliation to help children grow as social beings. The National Curriculum Framework–2000 envisaged the use of multiple techniques of measurement to reflect the outcomes of learning intervention in terms of grades predominantly as compared to marks in evaluation. The NCF–2005 portraying child as a natural learner emphasised giving space to children to find their voice and opportunities to nurture their curiosity to come up with knowledge as the outcome of their active engagement with the world around. Considering attitudes, emotions and values as the integral part of cognitive development, NCF–2005 recommended an internal school-based system of assessment that could provide information on a

child's overall development in a continuous and comprehensive manner. Continuous here refers to, during the teaching-learning process, informing about teaching and areas that need improvement in learning along with assessment at the end of the term. Comprehensiveness is seen as considering the child's overall development including spheres apart from typical curricular areas.

This system of Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) was recommended to identify the learning needs, difficulties and conceptual gaps to provide timely and appropriate interventions to reduce the stress and anxiety and enhance learning to help children progress. It was also intended to reduce rote learning, help teacher reflect, review and improve his/her teaching and provide children with the feedback to improve their learning. However, it needed to be made more credible through various means suiting the context.

Despite the recommendations of various policy documents, implementation of CCE was only taken seriously at the grassroot level in States/UTs when it became mandatory with the implementation of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (2009). While mandating free quality elementary education for all children in the age group of 6–14 years, we are aware that the RTE Act emphasises on an all-round development of children, building up their knowledge, potentiality and

talent with development of physical and mental abilities to the fullest extent through activities, discovery and exploration in a fear-, trauma- and anxiety-free environment using comprehensive and continuous evaluation. To work towards its implementation, the RTE prohibits any external examination up to the elementary level. As per its provisions, Section 29(2) ensures the right of each child to full-time elementary education of satisfactory and equitable quality in a formal school which satisfies certain essential norms and standards.

ABOUT THE STUDY

Under the obligation to implement the RTE Act, the States and UTs initiated steps in this direction which included the development of CCE schemes/guidelines, teacher training material, sample report cards, etc. Many States introduced it in schools and started practicing it as well. Although the States differed from one another on the respective schemes in terms of the duration, frequency and the weightage of assessment strategies but drifting away from the spirit of the inherent purpose of CCE on certain aspects could affect its implementation. Therefore, it means taking corrective measures at the planning stage can lead to effective implementation of CCE. This requires understanding the extent to which the CCE schemes of the States/UTs incorporate and reflect the ethos of CCE, assessing

the gaps and suggesting appropriate steps for addressing them for which this study with the following objectives was taken up.

- To identify the strengths and gaps, if any, in the CCE schemes/ guidelines as per the underlying assumptions in literature related to assessment and evaluation.
- To suggest measures to address/ overcome these gaps.

Method and Instruments

The study being qualitative in nature was aimed to evaluate the underlying assumptions of the CCE programme of the States/UTs, through document review approach. The CCE material from the following twenty-two States and UTs were procured and analysed using a document review template (Sharma, 2015a, 2016) which had

items looking for the evidence related to some general aspects (Section A; 6 items), detailed information on CCE related guiding principles, the purposes of assessment as per literature (Section B; 21 items), the extent of usage of the document(s) (Section C; 2 items) and some overall comments (Section D; 3 items) from the State CCE documents. The items for Section B were based on the CCE Framework (Sharma, 2015b) which incorporated the guiding principles of assessment as identified under global literature (Black and William, 2009; Chappuis and Stiggins, 2002; Crooks, 2001; Dunn and Mulvenon Sean, 2009; OECD, 2005; Koller, 2005; Shepard, 2000) developed during the study—Theory Evaluation of CCE programmes of Mizoram and Chhattisgarh. (NCERT, 2013)

Table 1
CCE Material of the States and UTs

Region	States/UTs	CCE Material
East	Odisha	Source Book (Classes I–VIII), Training Module for Trainers, Handbook on CCE for Teachers
	West Bengal	Peacock Model (CCE Training Module for Teachers)
	Jharkhand	<i>Prathamik kakshaon ka mulyankan</i> (Classes I–II and III–V)
	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	Teachers' Manual on CCE for Classes I–II (Levels–I and II)
North East	Meghalaya	Handbook on CCE for Teachers
	Mizoram	Source Book (Classes I–VIII)
	Manipur	Manual on CCE
	Nagaland	Teachers' Manual and Pupil Cumulative Record Book

	Assam	Handbook on CCE for Teachers, Two Training Modules (Primary and Upper Primary Level), Academic Calendar for Teachers and Trainers
	Arunachal Pradesh	Separate CCE Manual for Teachers teaching Classes I to V and VI to VIII A Training Package on CCE (Elementary Stage)
	Sikkim	Revised Guidebook on Continuous Comprehensive Assessment (CCA)—Classes I–VIII
	Tripura	Teachers' Diary, SCERT, Tripura
West	Madhya Pradesh	Manual on CCE
	Gujarat	CCE Scheme, Evaluation Formats
	Chhattisgarh	CCE Scheme and Subject-wise and Class-wise Modules
	Maharashtra	Teachers' Handbook on CCE developed by MSCERT-2011
	Goa	Handbook for Teachers on Active Learning and Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE)
South	Karnataka	Modules on CCE for Teachers, Progress Report Formats
	Kerala	CCE Guidelines up to Elementary Level
	Tamil Nadu	CCE Guidelines and Subject Specific Manuals up to the Elementary Stage
North	Uttarakhand	Manual on CCE
	Haryana	Handbook for Teachers for CCE — Elementary Stage, Evaluation Sheets, Report Card

Limitations

The study was restricted to only document review and did not take into account the field situation. Only main documents of CCE provided by each State or UT were reviewed.

Data Collection and Data Analysis

The qualitative data, item-wise, on all the four sections using the document review template was compiled. This was categorised into the following 10 attributes on understanding and

implementation of CCE. A colour code was used during this process to highlight and separate specific points under different categories.

1. Continuous (Formative, summative, assessment, evaluation)
2. Comprehensive (Holistic assessment of curricular, other curricular, Personal Social Qualities [PSQs])
3. Criteria for assessment (Learning indicators/outcomes)
4. Addressing learning needs of all children (Styles, developmental level, inclusive aspect)
5. Multiple evidence based (Tools, techniques of assessment)
6. Process of recording (Frequency, ways, log book, teacher's diary, number of entries to be made per subject/per child/per quarter)
7. Feedback mechanism (clear, specific, timely, use for different stakeholders)
8. Reporting (Effective communication to different stakeholders—child, parents, teachers, educational functionaries) (frequency, at what time, reporting formats—simple/elaborate, qualitative/quantitative reporting, extent of usefulness for different stakeholders)
9. Flexibility (Non-threatening, adopt/adapt at the school level)
10. Implementation (Training modalities, feasibility)

The observations helped to identify the common features uniform across the States and also the gaps

concerning the conceptualisation and planning of the CCE, which could eventually affect its implementation. The following are some common features followed by a sub-section on the findings related to gaps and the suggestions for improvement of the CCE documents of the States/UTs.

MAJOR FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

Some Common Features

- Most of the States initiated their efforts on CCE initiatives post implementation of the RTE Act-2009 and some of them have carried out revisions in the light of new developments at the State and National level.
- The documents on CCE include manuals, source books and modules for teachers that range from one comprehensive document at a particular stage to subject-wise for each class in some of the States. Some States developed separate reporting formats whereas others included them in their manuals, source books or other material.
- Almost all the documents were on same lines with respect to the theoretical elucidations of CCE, i.e., aptly interpreting the terms continuous, comprehensive, evaluation, assessment, summative, formative, etc.
- In some documents examples are provided for the teachers to understand how to integrate assessment with teaching-learning, identify learning gaps and address

them suitably to help children learn and progress.

- Alternative modes of assessment, such as debate, theatre, oral, art and open-book examination, etc., which vary across States, are suggested by all the States and UTs.
- The documents are suggestive in terms of these tools and techniques to be used for assessment with examples across different subjects to map the learning progress.
- Rubrics for evaluating the learning progress have also been suggested by some States. Teachers have also been given flexibility to choose the tools suited to the need of the learners.
- The propositions such as not to label children, threaten or compare them with others also find a place in the States' documents. The comprehensive aspect of CCE has been addressed by including the assessment on Personal Social Qualities in addition to that on the cognitive aspects.
- Guidelines for the teachers also include as to on what kind of information needs to be recorded about children's learning progress.
- The frequency of the recording and reporting of the learning progress varies from three to four cycles of Formative Assessment to two cycles of the Summative Assessment.
- A few schemes recommend integrating art education, physical and health education and work

experience with other subjects but also envisage assessment of socio-emotional qualities in an integrated manner with them and not to assess, record and report them in isolation thereby making an attempt to address the issues of inclusion in assessment.

GAPS AND SUGGESTIONS

In spite of the appreciable efforts towards implementation of CCE, there are some gaps that are required to be addressed by reviewing/revisiting the existing practices of CCE given in the States' CCE material (Table 1) in the light of the following suggestions, which can help them plan and implement assessment not only in a learner-friendly but also in a teacher-friendly manner and as per the intent of the RTE Act.

As per the CCE material, most States are either yet to initiate or have partially accomplished the development of learning indicators and learning outcomes against which a learner's progress could be mapped. The inclusive aspect of assessment especially for Children with Special Needs (CWSN) has not been paid adequate attention by majority of the states.

It is crucial to devise learning indicators and learning outcomes that can help teachers design, review and direct their teaching-learning as per the intent of each curricular area. These should encompass different domains of development and be inclusive in terms of catering

to the individual abilities of each child. Appropriate adaptation of the tools, techniques with suitable accommodation in provision of time, special aids, etc., is also needed to accommodate the disadvantaged sections especially CWSN.

The terms 'continuous', 'comprehensive', 'formative' and 'summative' are defined appropriately but these definitions do not reflect aptly in the strategic details of CCE implementation. Lack of understanding of the terms 'formative', and 'summative' reflects in the manner in which formative assessments (FAs) and summative assessments (SAs) are dealt with. For example, continuous assessment through three to four FAs and one to two SAs makes the assessment highly rigid and cumbersome for both teachers and children. The recording and reporting on FAs and SAs emphasising the cumulative performance of children in grades or percentiles leave little scope for assessment during learning or assessment during the formative period, which is meant to identify gaps and offer timely feedback and support for further learning.

More clarity for the terms 'continuous, comprehensive, formative, summative', is required for their implementation strategies. The continuous aspect needs to be clearly spelled out especially with respect to recording and reporting. There is a need to do away with giving any weightage to the formative assessments (FAs) and adding it to SAs for the cumulative overall assessment. The documents

need to bring better clarity on formative assessment that primarily aim at assessment for learning and not frequent or periodic testing.

The comprehensive aspect has been misconstrued to the extent that most documents offer little scope of gathering information on Personal Social Qualities (PSQs) as an integral component of assessment of different curricular areas, while a child is engaged in different learning tasks like how he/she was working in groups, doing paper-pencil test, drawing and reading pictures, expressing through different means, composing a poem/song, etc., are provided. The assessment of PSQs in isolation from that of the curricular areas is inapt to holistic assessment. Further, the grading of the PSQs completely demean CCE as some States have either given criteria to convert the assessment on PSQ into grades and others recommend absolute grading. This quantification of the PSQs is highly unjustified and unreasonable. Provision of a prescriptive list of the PSQs is also inappropriate as there will always be a scope of their addition, merge or overlap. There is a danger of a misinterpretation by different stakeholders that each child needs to be evaluated against each of the qualities with suitable activities, which would not just be tiresome for both teachers and children, but also a futile exercise towards obtaining 'comprehensive' picture of a child's learning and development, no way in tune with the ethos of CCE.

Compartmentalisation of the curricular areas into scholastic and co-scholastic ones or those testing cognitive areas and PSQs separately are against the perspective of holistic education. It creates dominance of the cognitive attributes over PSQs in assessment making socio-emotional qualities as not just secondary to the cognitive attributes affecting their assessment and eventually the teaching-learning as well. No demarcation in scholastic and co-scholastic areas should be encouraged. The socio-emotional qualities need to be evaluated in an integrated manner with teaching-learning of different areas. Their compartmentalisation into curricular/co-curricular or scholastic/co-scholastic needs to be re-looked into from the perspective of holistic development. The preference of quantification over qualitative assessment is merely because of the comfort of the evaluators to award marks or grades in comparison to writing four sentences about the learning progress after deeper analysis of children's performance on different learning tasks. This can be encouraged with including suitable examples in the CCE material and building the capacity of teachers through appropriate trainings.

In spite of citing different tools and multiple sources of assessment, weightage given to the paper-pencil tests is exceptionally high. Moreover, alternative modes of assessment, i.e., assessment based on different activities in addition to the paper-

pencil tests are suggested primarily for Formative Assessments whereas Summative Assessments are mostly written exam-based only. This difference between formative and summative assessment is neither reasonable nor justified. So it is difficult to accept the claim made by most States that dominance of written examinations has been done away with. Besides this, gathering information of a child's learning progress through different cycles of FAs is only being used to label children with marks or grades and assign level thus beating the purpose of Assessment for learning.

To obtain an authentic picture of a child's learning and personality, an evidence-based assessment procedure using multiple use of resources needs to be in place not just for the formative but also the summative assessment, i.e., information needs to be gathered using various modes besides the written examination.

Some of the State documents mandate selection of a particular number of tools and techniques of assessment out of a specific number provided, for example, any three out of the given list of five. However, the choice of tool(s) for both assessment and teaching-learning depends on the context, resources, needs of children and the curricular area/topic. Some of the documents even allocate a particular time and subject area to assess some of the attributes of a child's learning and personality,

for example, morning assembly/zero periods and art and physical education to assess PSQs. This makes CCE a burdensome, rigid and prescriptive activity for especially the teachers and children.

It should solely be the prerogative of a teacher and his/her children to select/adopt/adapt the tools, administer them at the convenience of his/her children besides giving flexibility to decide any time/duration to record and report assessment on socio-emotional attributes without compromising the quality of teaching-learning and assessment. In no way it should be a prescriptive activity.

Recording and reporting of the assessment seems to be more tiresome activity for teachers. Report cards are to be filled predominantly with quantitative description of the learning progress which itself is a cumbersome activity as the teachers need to keep records of the performance of children in multiple tasks across different curricular/co-curricular areas and the assessment cycles. The quantitative information completely shadows the qualitative progress if at all captured at any level as the CCE material lack strategies to systematically collect and report such information.

The process of recording requires a critical contemplation by all the States. There is a need to reduce the burden on teachers by doing away with formal, prescriptive and rigid recording procedures of the FAs described in the CCE material of most States. There is a serious need

to build a common consensus and understanding on informal and formal recording of children's progress where the former intends to help the teacher identify gaps in children's learning in order to review, reflect and modify her teaching-learning whereas the latter is aimed at communicating to different stakeholders about children's performance and seek their involvement to help children develop. This gap needs to be addressed giving appropriate examples making the process of recording less cumbersome.

The documents also lack the space for a constructive feedback mechanism especially between children and a teacher and among other stakeholders, i.e., parents, other teachers and even authorities at different levels where the latter are only at the receiving end with no major role beyond signing the report cards. The overemphasis on quantification of the achievement through marks/percentage/grades does not rule out the labelling of children as claimed by almost all States. In addition to this it limits the crucial role and contribution of the qualitative component of assessment towards improving and enhancing children's learning.

Suitable opportunities need to be suggested for effective communication among different stakeholders for reporting the learning progress and involve them to contribute towards children's learning and development. The documents need better clarity towards the involvement and support of different stakeholders for identifying

and addressing the learning needs and gaps of children. The documents need to elaborate reporting component of CCE so that not only the progress report conveys useful information on children's learning that helps each stakeholder, i.e., parents/guardians, other teachers, authorities besides the learner herself to act and improve it. Better elucidations on the approaches suggesting better communication among teachers, children and parents/guardians to help them understand and perform their roles meaningfully.

Self- and peer-assessment have not been fully utilised in the assessment strategies of various curricular areas.

Although these notions are defined yet guidelines for self-, peer-assessment and assessment by parents and community members should be explicitly stated and elaborated.

It is good that the States developed the recording and reporting formats but rigidity for adopting them uniformly for each child and each school makes the whole process centralised and authoritative.

Flexibility to adopt/adapt/design the reporting formats at the school level as per the contextual needs is to be provided.

Combining performance of different curricular areas to take out the average or cumulative grade is against the notion of CCE.

Reporting formats need to be simple and clearly reflecting the child's progress, strengths and gaps both qualitatively and quantitatively wherein the qualitative reporting actually helps both children and parents to gain an insight on the existing level of learning and take steps to improve it further.

CONCLUSION

In the light of the above and the fact that education being on concurrent list, it is the mutual responsibility of different stakeholders at both the Centre and the State or UT level to address the crucial issue of assessment as it holds the key to quality improvement in education. The gaps at the level of planning in any educational reform will reflect in its implementation which could be dear in terms of time and resources, therefore, it is important for the States and UTs to review and modify their CCE schemes in the light of the suggestions given above and thus implement and use it as an effective tool to bring about quality improvement in education.

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