

# All-round Development and Comprehensive Assessment Bridging the Gap

TULIKA DEY\* AND PRACHI GHILDYAL\*\*

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## Abstract

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*This paper puts forth ideas about holistic assessment for all-round development of children. It states that comprehensive assessment has been started without ensuring opportunities for all-round development. It begins with the basic question of why should we assess and finds that the goal of assessment is to facilitate all-round development of the learner. Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) was implemented without emphasising the need and methods of all-round development. This effectively led to the assessment of abstract qualities and aspects of a student's personality without having made any prior efforts ever to develop those. Elaborating on the understanding of all-round development, the paper then discusses some strategies for assessment for all-round development. It places more emphasis on assessment of the affective domain and highlights some fallouts of a widespread misunderstanding of assessment.*

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## INTRODUCTION

In today's world, we realise the importance of turning out well rounded individuals rather than order youngsters to standardise to fit into traditional and conventional roles of the 'educated'. Therefore, the Indian education system is talking about all-round development. What

is exactly all-round development? We know about the three domains of development— physical motor, cognitive and affective domain. Till recently, all our efforts had been focused on developing the cognitive domain to the absolute neglect of the other aspects of personality. Resultant, it has created individuals

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\* Associate Professor, North East Regional Institute of Education, NCERT, Umiam, Shillong

\*\* Assistant Professor, North East Regional Institute of Education, NCERT, Umiam, Shillong

who are competitive, single minded and not prepared to delay their gratification or deal with the setbacks in life.

Confronting this lopsided development has probably made educationists understand the need for all-round development. So, all-round development refers to a balanced and integrated development of all aspects of personality—the thinking part, the acting part and the feeling part (thought oriented, action oriented and feeling oriented). Brain development has always been given precedence. We have been telling our children to 'not be emotional' and to think and decide rationally. However, we forget that when we emphasise keeping reason over emotion, we are actually developing just one half of the brain that is related with rational thought. Many teachers in the country have the misconception that emotions have nothing to do with the brain. This was evident in various group discussions with teachers during several training sessions, that there is a popularised understanding of emotions and their origin. Scientific research tells us that emotions are originated from the brain (one hemisphere of the brain). Thus, when we decide to take up all-round development of the child, we are in fact talking about complete brain development.

In recent years, there has been growing interest in studying personal qualities like self-control, grit, growth, mindset, and many others. Success and healthy social relationships are based on traits like

gratitude, emotional intelligence and social belonging are determined by these personal qualities (Duckworth and Yeager, 2015). Attributes other than cognitive ability have also been attempted to be measured and changed (Willingham, 1985; Naemi, et al., 2012; Heckman and Kautz, 2013; Levin, 2013; Tough, 2013; Stecher and Hamilton, 2014). Some researches have also proven that the personality traits strongly forecast one's academic, economic, social, psychological, and physical well-being (Borghans, et al., 2008; Almlund, et al., 2011; Moffitt et al., 2011; Yeager and Walton, 2011; Naemi et al., 2012; Farrington et al., 2012; Jackson, et al., 2015).

Student-teacher relationships as well as other child-adult relationships, which are warm, caring and supportive, result in better school performance and engagement, greater emotional regulation, social competence, and willingness to take on challenges (Osher et al., 2018). Research studies, using behaviour-based assessments with young children, reveal that nurturing relationships are critically important for encouraging motivation (Pintrich and Schunk, 2002). Furthermore, a sense of belongingness or relatedness is an their essential condition for intrinsic motivation and self-regulated engagement (Skinner et al., 1990; Deci and Ryan, 2000). Teachers' involvement with children strongly predicts their emotional engagement and motivation in school (Skinner and Belmont, 1993),

perhaps because children who maintain a close relationship with their teachers are motivated to be on good terms with their teachers (Urdu and Maehr, 1995). Emotions also influence processes associated with learning and performance (Pekrun, 2006). Campos and Barrett (1985), regarded emotions as motivational and organisational functions, and they highlighted the role of emotions as ‘crucial regulators of social and interpersonal behaviour’. Positive affect can facilitate attention, memory, and problem solving (Campos and Barrett, 1985; Carver and Scheier, 2000), whereas negative affect increases cognitive load, impairs working memory, and is thus related to less deep strategy use associated with learning and performance (Turner, et al., 1998; Forgas, 2000; Linnenbrink and Pintrich, 2000). Children who experience shame following poor performance might be motivated to succeed in the future, but might also be more conscious of the outcome and how it appears to be (a performance orientation) than being conscious of the learning process and acquiring new skills (a learning orientation) (Smiley and Dweck, 1994). Shame-prone young children and adults exhibit more anger and aggression (Tangney, et al., 1991; Tangney, et al., 1992; Dutton, et al., 1995; Tangney, et al., 1996; Bryceland and Strayer, 1999; Andrews, et al., 2000; Harper and Arias, 2004). Pride, a feeling of being good and worthy, is related to mastery motivation in young children

(Lewis and Sullivan, 2005) and to enhanced adult performance (Herrald and Tomaka, 2002). Therefore, to become productive citizens within and beyond the school, students need positive mindsets about self and school, along with social awareness and responsibilities (Stafford-Brizard, 2016).

### **WHY DO WE ASSESS?**

Having understood that the goal of education is all-round development of students, we now turn our attention to assessment. Let’s begin with asking the most fundamental question— why do we assess?

There are three ways in which assessment is generally viewed:

- Assessment of Learning— Summative assessment
- Assessment for Learning— Formative assessment
- Assessment as Learning— Formative assessment

However, we often remain confined to assessment of learning. This is done by subjecting the students to multiple tests, complicated manifold by the introduction of CCE wherein the continuous part has been understood erroneously as conducting continuous testing. The comprehensive part has remained a non-starter which has been the main issue that this paper tries to deal with—the gap between attempts at all-round development and comprehensive evaluation. This issue relates to the other two views of assessment—assessment for learning and assessment as learning.

The first point to be put forth here is that we generally assess, or at least ought to assess, what has been taught or what we expect the student to have learned. This basic assumption has been at the core of all assessments of learning. However, in case of all-round development, a major gap is seen between what has been taught or learned and what is being assessed. If we have to go for a comprehensive assessment, a major prerequisite is that we should have given a comprehensive input first, i.e., we should have catered to the comprehensive personality development of the learner. This is also understood as holistic development, which includes the development of cognitive domain (as seen in all the curricular inputs) as well as the development of the physical motor and affective domain as is reflected in our present concern with Personal Social Qualities (PSQs) (NCERT—*NISHTHA Training Package*, 2019). We have plunged headlong into assessing the PSQs of the learner without having done much to ensure their development. Thus, curricular areas could be assessed fairly but the assessment of co-curricular areas, especially the PSQs, has been difficult.

Curricular areas can be more easily mapped as compared to the PSQs. We have more or less standardised criterion to evaluate performance against Learning Outcomes and the nature of knowledge being assessed is more or less objective. However, we are stepping in an entirely different sphere when we talk about the assessment of

co-curricular aspects or the affective domain, which makes this routine task of assessment difficult.

Though the Learning Outcomes document (NCERT, 2017) includes some PSQs that need to be the outcome of the learning process, but PSQs for all levels of learning have not been stated in the Document. Further, how these can be ingrained or developed and how to assess them is not mentioned. This leads to major chaos in the education community.

For education to be holistic, we need to ensure that we give ample time and effort for developing different aspects of personality, other than the cognitive aspect. Unless there is a measurable input in terms of what learning is being aimed at, how can we measure the output or the 'outcomes'? Holistic education is rooted in the belief that the real world requires more than just marks; it focuses on the overall personality development.

The assessment of affective domain for ensuring holistic development requires us to keep the things listed below in mind.

All the aspects of personality are interrelated such that changes or problems in one aspect impact other aspects as well. We cannot ensure cognitive development while ignoring a child's affective domain, i.e., attitudes, beliefs and values. Knowledge without values can be dangerous. A child who is scared of being laughed at in the class, or is too weak in learning and finds it difficult to sit in class and concentrate on

the lesson, will hardly benefit from instruction.

Furthermore, teachers generally see their students only in the classroom setting. Behaviour can vary across contexts (Mischel, 1968; Ross and Nisbett, 1991; Tsukayama, et al., 2013), and therefore, teachers' observations may not match with those made by parents, who see their child in every context except school. However, correlations between teachers' rating of student behaviour tend to be higher as compared to parents (Achenbach, et al., 1987).

We are obsessed with numbers and quantifications. We feel that once we quantify a dimension, we become scientific in attitude. However, the values and emotions that the affective domain deals with are not always amenable to quantification. Also, numbers do not give us any understanding of the child's emotions. Several disciplines like Psychology that used quantification of human traits and values because of having scientific quality, have realised the fallacy of quantifying things. Descriptive, in-depth understanding of a person as a whole is more valuable and useful than mere quantification of the things that the child knows.

We also need to understand that unlike the assessment done using paper-pencil tests based on a measurable 'curriculum' or 'syllabus', the assessment of personality characteristics requires methods that involve several levels of personal interaction.

The personal and social qualities and their assessment, therefore, are neither confined to a particular subject nor do they require to be allocated a specific time. These are integral to all curricular areas and hence need to be assessed through them in various situations during the teaching-learning when children are engaged in different individual or group learning tasks, which can be indoor, outdoor, within or beyond school. (NCERT, 2019).

### **Strategies for Assessing the Affective Domain and Other Aspects of Personality**

An attempt is now made to suggest some strategies for assessing the affective domain. The very first thing to be done here is to ensure that we provide learning experiences for the development of affective domain. This means we need to ensure that children get the opportunity to develop the right values, attitudes, and behaviours. Emotions need to be addressed and training provided for effectively managing them. Rather than focusing on Intelligence Quotient (IQ), it is imperative to focus on Emotional Quotient (EQ). Before we assess, ample scope has to be provided for the desired qualities to be internalised and enough motivation for it to be reflected in behaviour. The qualities that need to be developed would be determined by the overriding aims of education that a society or collective mass has.

For developing personality traits in the affective domain, some of the

common principles of learning can be used. A basic way of learning is through reinforcement—behaviour that is followed by positive or desirable consequences (rewards) is repeated while that followed by negative or unpleasant consequences (punishment) is extinguished. It thus helps to provide appropriate learning experiences to instil values. Similarly, enough motivation is required to inculcate the internalised values and behaviours, which would depend upon the expected positive consequences or actions likely to be.

These values are then absorbed. This means that a person needs to be embedded in an environment suffused with the right values and behaviours so that these can be imbibed. Infusing the environment means that all those around the developing child need to reflect and demonstrate the desired qualities, values and behaviours. This is also important since a major part of our learning is social learning. A discrepancy between what is being professed and practiced is detrimental to the learning of values.

After ensuring that all-round development is taking place, we can now discuss about how to assess the learner holistically.

Assessment needs to have a positive focus. There are several qualities that a growing child may be expected to have. However, while assessing we need to emphasise the qualities that they are demonstrating and not the ones that are missing. For example, in 'The Animal School'

story, the animals organised a school to help their children deal with the problems of the new world. However, the teachers focused on making each animal excel in things they were not born for, in the process destroying forever their innate talents and abilities.

Therefore, a better approach is to invest time to improve the areas that are already relatively strong and find ways to compensate for the gaps. When the system allows the children to pursue what they are good at, they develop mastery in that particular field. It builds their self-esteem and gives them a sense of purpose in doing the specific task.

It is also imperative to keep in mind that the overriding goal of all these efforts is to bring up children who are well adjusted, have a sense of well-being, happy and resilient enough to withstand failures and stress in life. Failures and stress are inevitable and education should prepare a child to accept them and move on. Also, they should not get demotivated nor turn to ineffective ways of mitigating stress like drugs and withdrawal.

The purpose of comprehensive assessment should not be to label the child. Rather, the focus should be on progressive development of the child keeping in mind their needs, interests and abilities.

Some core psycho-social competencies need to be identified specific to each age or developmental stage and the child's progress in terms

of each may be recorded. This record should avoid focusing on the absence or presence of such competencies but the child should be graded in terms of their varying levels. Work done in terms of psycho-social competencies that are expected in a child after certain years of schooling need to be taken up along the lines of Learning Outcomes that are mostly curricular in their present form.

A few suggestive personal social outcomes relevant to particular stages of development are presented below as an exemplar of what may be taken up on a large scale in future.

Note: A number of PSQs start developing ever since the child's first interactions with others. Here we are focusing on those PSQs that can be developed in the school setting. In the process of developing PSQs, the school and family both need to share the responsibility of turning out well-adjusted, happy and resilient children

with a strong sense of self and sensitivity towards the community.

A checklist for observable outcomes can be prepared by teachers. These observable behaviours may occur at several times. The teachers may need to design the learning space in such a way that it gives opportunity to children to engage in the activities to bring forth their PSQs. The strategies listed in the table below are some ways of doing that. The teacher can tick mark a behaviour if it occurs. However, not being able to observe a behaviour may not always reflect the absence of that particular PSQ.

Remember that while trying to develop a PSQ, though the aim will be achieving one particular quality, several others may become a by-product. For example, a person with honesty has implicit courage. A child who refuses to cheat in tests also has the courage to go without getting high marks.

**Table 1**  
**Suggestive Exemplar for Stage-wise Personal and Social Qualities (PSQs)**

<b>Stage of Development</b>	<b>PSQs to be Developed</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Observable Outcomes</b>
Pre-school	Positive sense of self	Give doable tasks followed by appreciation of efforts and results.	The child initiates conversations, asks questions and volunteers for tasks.
	Trust in those around	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be sensitive and accommodating to the child's needs, imperfections and fears. Talk to the child about his fears and anxieties.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The child asks for help with personal or classroom tasks.</li> <li>• The child shares his feelings with the teacher or even with the classmates.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Let children work in small groups on simple tasks where each child has an assigned role that helps in task completion. After the task, give a brief winding-up talk on how we all need each other's help and will get it when we ask for it.</li> </ul>	
Sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage group work and provide tasks that require two to three children to work together.</li> <li>Organise picnics where not only food but also responsibilities are shared.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share eatables with friends during tiffin break.</li> <li>Share ideas in group work</li> <li>Shares responsibilities for any assignments.</li> </ul>
Impulse control	<p>Encourage participation by all children in activities following a rule that a second chance will be offered only when everyone in the group has got the chance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waits for his turn in games and activities.</li> <li>Eats tiffin or drinks water only at scheduled times.</li> <li>Does not pick up other children's belongings.</li> </ul>
Gender equality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be aware of gender stereotypes.</li> <li>Avoid using statements like 'brave boys do not cry'.</li> <li>Avoid colour and toy stereotypes in classroom activities.</li> <li>Encourage role plays with boys and girls playing each other's roles.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Freely plays with all kinds of toys and does not show any preference to 'gender appropriate toys' like guns for boys and dolls for girls.</li> <li>Expresses emotions and does not try to hide pain and hurt.</li> </ul>



Primary School	Honesty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow up honest confessions not with punishment but with appreciation.</li> <li>• Reward the acts of honesty.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The child accepts responsibility for a mistake.</li> <li>• The child does not make excuses for not completing assignments, etc.</li> </ul>
	Courage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage children to volunteer for tasks that look difficult and tedious.</li> <li>• Encourage them to express their viewpoints and ideas freely even if they are different from others.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteers to help others</li> <li>• Volunteers to give up one's advantageous position or role for another child, for example, offers to give the main role in a skit to another child.</li> <li>• Owns up mistakes.</li> <li>• Does not hesitate in expressing views different from the majority.</li> </ul>
	Sensitivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expose children to the difficulties faced by people (like the old, destitute, etc.), by organising visits to related institutions and encouraging children to volunteer for at least one task in one school session.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Show acts of kindness to other children in the class.</li> <li>• When projects are being discussed, suggest taking up volunteer activities for the disadvantaged children.</li> <li>• Donate toys and personal possessions during such campaigns in school.</li> <li>• Is careful about saying or doing things that may hurt the sentiments of classmates, teachers, etc.</li> </ul>

	Personal hygiene		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is neatly dressed</li> <li>• Trims nails and hair regularly</li> <li>• Washes hands before eating</li> </ul>
Elementary School	Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give all children a fair chance in all the activities.</li> <li>• Give children a reasoning activity where they are prompted to use logical reasoning to arrive at just solutions for justice related conflict situations or moral dilemmas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The child draws attention to another child who has been missed or sidelined in a group activity or distribution of responsibilities or distribution of privileges.</li> <li>• Stands up for the rights of classmates.</li> </ul>
	Protecting environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sensitise the child to the need for conserving the environment by giving basic facts and data about the dangers of not doing so.</li> <li>• Show them documentaries and films on the negative effects of environmental degradation and how some parts of the world are struggling for basic things like clean air and potable water.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Puts off lights and fans before leaving the classroom</li> <li>• Doesn't waste water</li> <li>• Throws wastes in dustbins only</li> <li>• Appreciates the beauty of nature</li> <li>• Is particular about people not burning the wastes and plastics that would lead to air pollution.</li> </ul>
	Protecting the school property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish clear rules and consequences related to the misuse and destruction of school property.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Takes care of the physical infrastructure of the school.</li> <li>• Prevents others from damaging the school property.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give responsibility to each child to take care of school property in turns.</li> <li>• Allow all children access to school resources like books, play and sports equipment, etc., with the condition that they will be responsible for its upkeep.</li> </ul>	
Empathy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conduct role plays where children get to play the part of people facing a problem, or in a disadvantaged situation.</li> <li>• Conduct quizzes on feeling words to enable children to learn emotional vocabulary.</li> <li>• Organise activities for recognising feelings through facial expressions and body gestures.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understands the feelings of others.</li> <li>• Does not hurt or bully animals like stray pups in and around the school campus.</li> <li>• Is able to express feelings accurately</li> <li>• Is able to understand what another child is trying to express in class.</li> </ul>
Accepting failure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't give the same group of children all the responsibilities and prominent roles in the class or activity.</li> <li>• Identify children who are competitive and give them roles where they have to work under another child's leadership.</li> <li>• Motivate children who struggle with class tasks and pair them up with the highly competitive ones (for some activities only, not always).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open to trying new things especially difficult ones.</li> <li>• Participates in activities without any expectations of winning or to be the best but just for learning and experiencing.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold regular motivational talks with children to discuss the uniqueness of each child and failure as only a step in the long journey to get success.</li> <li>• Be available for children who face difficulties in accepting failure. If required, arrange counselling sessions for them.</li> </ul>	
Accepting the self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give each child unconditional positive regard, i.e., respect them for the kind of person they are.</li> <li>• Avoid comparisons with other classmates or telling them to become like another child.</li> <li>• Avoid portraying any one child as the 'perfect' child.</li> <li>• Remind the class often that each person is unique with abilities that others don't have. Also remind them that we can always change and grow if it is really required but all of us have a role in the world— we just need some time to find our special purpose.</li> <li>• Counselling sessions, especially to prepare them for adolescence, may be arranged.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is not unduly bothered about what they cannot do or be.</li> <li>• Takes pride in one's own work or creation</li> <li>• Accepts one's physical appearance</li> <li>• Not clamouring to be like others in the class or owning and doing things like others.</li> <li>• Accepts one's feelings and manages the emotional experience and expressions appropriately.</li> </ul>

	Dignity of labour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage children in the routine activities of the school by encouraging them to spend a day with the school staff like gardeners, cleaners, etc.</li> <li>• Give the children responsibility to clean the classroom, maintain the school kitchen garden, help in the cooking of mid-day meals for the smaller children or serving them meals, etc.</li> <li>• Encourage children to share the household chores with their mothers and take the responsibility of doing at least one daily chore at home.</li> <li>• Teachers need to demonstrate the same positive attitude towards these activities and towards the people engaged in doing those activities, as expected from children.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addresses the peon, guard, helpers of school with politeness and in the same way as they do with their teachers, (e.g., wishing them).</li> <li>• Willingly takes up cleaning of the classroom, watering the plants, etc.</li> <li>• Shares how they help at home</li> </ul>
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Stories and skits or dramas can be very effective ways of communicating values at the preschool stage, so they should be used often. The child experiences the importance of a value by dramatising it.

Most values originate in the preschool years. However, different stages of development some are more apt to emphasise some specific values.

## CONCLUSION

We may conclude by reiterating that the current need of our education system is to focus on the development of affective domain in order to make the process of education meaningful. One step towards achieving that is to organise the learning environment in such a way that children get the chance

to practise appropriate behaviours, which would help in the development of the desirable PSQs. An important understanding that needs to be developed is that these PSQs should be gradually inculcated in the child at early stage. Preschools and preschool facilitators have a major role to play in this. Assessment

should be aimed at assessing child's all-round development after some efforts have been made for the child to absorb values from his environment. Assessment and all-round development need to go hand in hand to enable children and youth to be grounded in their values.

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