
Social Issues and Public Examinations

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Abstract: *The present examination system stinks and past experience has amply proved that it is hopeless pattern of assessment and evaluation. We are now dragging with it fruitlessly. This is gross injustice to the students. It is also enemy of creativity; instead, we should immediately shift to the system of Continuous and Compulsory Evaluation (CCE) as suggested in the “Report of the Committee for Review of National Policy on Education: Towards an Enlightened and Humane Society (1991) as well as NCERT Report (2003). The researcher conducted an analytical study and found that the existing stock system of examination must be replaced with CCE in the interest of young generation.*

Keywords: Social Justice, Continuous and Compulsory Evaluation (CCE).

Introduction: We are a knowledge society and hence, we need to acquire innovative skills to gather and disseminate knowledge and information to effectively grow in

professional, social and personal life. The existing examination system is stale and does not let our young generation grow in right direction. Such examination system leads to rote memorization and fails to test the skills like reasoning, analysis, creativity and critical judgment. They are based on one size jacket for all which can't fill all and can never yield desired results. Such examination system also includes anxiety and stress leading to exam induced suicides and nervous breakdowns so often reported by mass media and psychological counselors. There is also total lack of disclosure or transparency in the existing examination system.

Board examination system prevalent in most of the education boards in our country are unfair at least to the extent that they do not sufficiently address the entrance needs of the next level of education. Such system leaves much scope for so called coaching classes to flourish and leaves the students confused about the real purpose of

Board Examinations. In fact, the need of the hour is keen and questioning minds with rigorous thinking who could solve problems and process information judiciously. India has a big bag of problems which need immediate answers viz poverty, caste discrimination, rural-urban gap. The present system is not much helpful in finding sustainable answers to these problems. Larger sections of our population possess rote knowledge which does not help them to make headway in absence of analytical and critical skills. India's complex social fabric needs creative visionaries who could attempt solutions individually and / or collectively.

Moreover, the existing examination system does not even perfectly judge the academic abilities; examinations do not provide a standard evaluation. The new rules, termed as soft skills, predict who is most likely to become a star performer and who is most likely to fail or partially succeed. These new rules, apart from measuring intellectual ability and other technical skills, lay emphasis on personal qualities, like initiative and empathy, adaptability and persuasiveness. The research studies conducted in this field on human abilities indicate with unprecedented

precision the qualities that mark a star performer i.e. the ingredients which are required for excellence at work. In these hard times with no jobs and also no job security- when the concept of job is converted into portable skills- the soft skills and competence only make you employable.

Discussion: Education is the basis of economic mobility. So, we need an academic performance evaluation system that can produce students with required skill sets and value patterns. The existing system hardly provides any tenable basis for skill development. Moreover, if we accept the claims that excellent education and evaluation system is in place in many urban schools, we feel compelled to add that it would mean 20% of Indian population is progressing and 80% still goes unattended which results in heavy wasteful burden on Indian economy. Those 20% elite Indians, with all the might of their critical and reasoning skills, cannot convert India into an intellectual powerhouse. So, attention needs to be diverted towards students in small towns and rural areas. Then, we would be able to meet the demands of social justice. This needs fresh thinking to enable us to discard colonial mindset and make us march

towards holistic economic growth. This kind of situation drags us to challenge of creating a balance between excellence and equity. Real equity could be attained only by way of teaches skills which could meet the parameters of excellence in the hither to neglected 80% rural population. A system of education and examination that teacher's problem solving and analytical skills to the disadvantaged population is the real need of the day. Job markets need only creative talents and not stale memorizing skills. Rural population with board certificates reach nowhere. Neither had they succeeded at a university nor in the job market because board examinations are not the valid tests of desired competencies, even in the cognitive domain.

Harvard university psychologists Howard gardner, Mera Krechevsky, David Feldman and Thomas Hatch had started research in 1983- Project Spectrum, a kind of research partially challenged the I.Q. mystique. A false notion had long existed that what matters for success is intellect alone. The existing board or even university examination evaluate, and that too in a stock manner, only cognitive abilities, the work of aforesaid psychologists helped to analyze the actual competencies that make

people successful in life. These psychologists astonishingly found that I.Q. takes second position to emotional intelligence in evaluating outstanding life performance. Their confusions point to the paramount place of emotional intelligence in life success. The existing system of examination and even training embraces an academic model. But what's actually needed is an entirely a new way of thinking and training to help people boost their emotional intelligence. Emotional part of the brain, neuroscience tells us, learns differently from thinking brain. In fact, "cognition" is a narrow view of intelligence and present examination system evaluates only pure cognition. Arguably, it is a genetic given that cannot be changed by life experience after teen tears. But, we cannot ignore the most challenging question that will help our children fare better in life. We need to investigate the factors that are at play when people with high I.Q. fail and those of modest I.Q. give stunningly successful performance. Emotional intelligence is the answer, says Daniel Goleman (1996), which includes self control, zeal and patience, and the ability to motivate oneself. And these skills can be taught to children, giving them a better

chance to use whatsoever intellectual potential the genetic lottery may have given them. However, these are times when selfishness, violence, and meanness of spirit seem to be rotting the goodness of our social life. In such circumstances, only emotional intelligence can help us with emphasis on sentiment, character and moral instinct. Research tells us that fundamental ethical stances in life stem from basic emotional capacities. Our level of emotional intelligence is not genetically fixed. It can develop from early childhood to adulthood, as we go through life and learn from our experience. People get better and better in these capabilities as they grow more adept at handling their own emotions and impulses at motivating themselves and at honing their empathy and social adroitness.

Conclusion: It stands out that training the teachers to teach the requisite skills is gigantic task requiring huge resources and careful road map. But it could be tackled through decentralization of curricula and examinations. It may not be easy to attempt but no other alternative is in sight. School based continuous and comprehensive evaluation (CCE) may prove an effective tool for innovation in examination system as held by National Focus Group on

examination reforms. The group holds that the examinations conducted by Boards of School Education have some short comings and greater importance needs to be given to CCE. It needs to be institutionalized for all stages of school education because small steps taken here and there would not suffice. CCE may be adopted immediately, if not a replacement to Board Examinations, yet as complementary to Board evaluation throughout India so that we could be able to strike a balance between excellence and equity. The national focus group have made valuable recommendations viz. varied modes of assessment; flexibility in examinations; and reduction of exam stress and anxiety. Examination systems must be made more flexible to make it fair to all social groups.

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