

INTEGRATED ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

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One of the important components of teaching learning process is assessment. Assessment is necessary to gauge the competence and proficiency the learner has acquired during the learning process. Assessment / evaluation is an ongoing process and since it is a continuous process it should not be used as mere method or an annual summary for accountability purpose in fact it should provide meaningful link and feedback to both teachers and students. There has been a wide chasm between assessment and learning because it has been administered considering it to be the end of the learning process moreover the assessment pattern and the learning goals never matched each other and thereby leave the learner ambiguous.

Testing of theoretical knowledge in a specified subject was considered to be the best method of evaluation but in an outcome based teaching and learning both teaching and assessment must align to support progressive attainment of both theoretical and practical knowledge. To achieve this purpose integrated assessment / evaluation can be identified as a “Form of assessment which permits the learner to demonstrate applied competence which uses a range of formative and summative assessment method.”

What is integrated assessment? It is method by which it enables the assessor to integrate skill, knowledge, concepts and ideas at both theoretical and practical level, it also offers an opportunity for learners to exhibit the “length and breadth” of competence they have achieved. Integrated assessment is a structured process of gathering information about an individual

performance. The information or “sufficiency of evidence” can be gathered through summative, formative, diagnostic test and also through presentations, oral presentations, logs, scrap books, collage, posters, games, peer assessment, self-evaluation and many more.

Integrated assessment / evaluation has many advantages:

- It tests the ability of the learner to combine foundation, practical, reflective and critical competence.
- Measures the extent to which knowledge and skill has been integrated.
- Allows integration of variety of tasks, techniques and tools to gauge the performance.
- Assess a variety of outcomes together.
- Authentic, valid and reliable method of assessment.
- It is interesting, challenging and meaningful
- Enables self-reflection

Integrated assessment covers both micro and macro level of learning, it is performance based and involves collaborative learning. Major difference between traditional evaluation and integrated assessment is that it is continuous throughout the learning programme and it is performance based since, it is continuous it requires a great length of planning on the part of the teacher.

The curriculum has to be designed following certain principles.

- ❖ **Purpose/ outcome**
- ❖ **Analyzing the needs of the learner**
- ❖ **Selection of materials to support outcomes**
- ❖ **Learning teaching strategies and activities**

❖ **Assessment criteria and strategy**

❖ **Review**

Teaching and Assessment are” heart and head” of learning process, it needs the support of each other in order to acquire knowledge and make learning meaningful. “All meaningful assessment should attempt to evaluate knowledge and ways in which is supports and used in practice.” The extent to which it can be applied largely depends on the context; a meticulous and careful planning is required on the part of the teacher for preparing an assessment.

A decision about assessment should be based on following questions;

- why are we assessing?
- what are assessing we assessing?
- Which method is best suited with reference to the purpose?

Based on these principles the designer should create assessments using certain guidelines;

- Fix learning outcomes / purpose.
- Select content to support outcomes.
- Focus on activities and teaching methods to suit the outcome.
- Select best method of assessment for each learning outcome.
- Integrate skill and knowledge/ practice and theory for expression of applied competence.
- Select variety of assessment methods for each unit and different units.
- It should assess “clusters of learning area” ex: skill programme for job purpose.
- The assessment method should provide enough evidence of the competence of the learner.

- Tasks related to real world context.
- Review of quality and content periodically.

Apart from these guidelines the teacher should make the assessment method familiar and accessible to the learners this accessibility enables self monitoring. The learner should be familiarized about how assessment will be conducted (written, oral, project, assignment, case study etc.,) The learner should be aware of what is being evaluated through the task given and what is the criteria for being successful. The teacher should relate all assessments to overall purpose and inform the students about the feedback.

How reliable and authentic is integrated assessment and evaluation : authenticity and reliability refers to appropriateness and meaningful inferences that can be drawn from the evaluation therefore an assessment is authentic if it “measures what it is saying to be measuring”, “closer the assessment is to learning teaching process, the more valid, accurate and fair it is likely to be.”

In order to increase the authenticity the teacher needs to link it to the real world or real life situations. Reliability in assessment refers to consistency and clarity of relationship between what is taught and what is assessed. There is a possibility of error occurring during the process of assessment but it should be rectified and reviewed because assessment is not the end of the learning process but it is an ongoing process. Oversimplified and irrelevant evaluation mars the reliability of assessment so the assessment designers have a great task of balancing reliability and authenticity.

Conclusion

The overall purpose of an instruction is to promote students' abilities as thinkers, problem-solvers and inquirers Assessment, if they are to be aligned with current views on instruction and human learning it must close resemble meaningful learning tasks and assess the acquisition of high level thinking and reasoning ability (International Encyclopedia of Education 1994)

The aim of this paper was to emphasis on the need of the teacher to use integrated assessment and evaluation to test the competency of the learner. The paper also stresses on need to integrate theory and practice / knowledge and competence. However there is no claim that this method is without any shortcomings. This methods can be time consuming, difficult to administer and accessibility to certain methods of testing ex: listening may prove to be difficult. The reliability aspect is also questioned because the performance as against the outcome may vary from one student to another.

In most of the academic settings traditional pen and pencil method is considered to be the best method .The paper does not advocate on the idea of abstaining from pen and pencil method but suggest on the use of alternative and integrated methods of assessment and evaluation. This method gives a more dynamic and comprehensive picture of the students competence and thereby becomes a document on the progress of every student in the class.

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