



360° Degree holistic assessment: A new approach to shape the personality of a learner as visualized by national education policy 2020

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Abstract

A 360-degree feedback also known as multi source feedback, or multi source assessment is a process through which feedback from peers, teachers, supervisors, parents as well as a self-evaluation by the students themselves is gathered. The NEP 2020 makes a second attempt to bring back this purpose of assessment in section 4.34. The key words once again are “regular and formative”, “competency-based”, “promotes learning and development” “tests higher-order skills, such as analysis, critical thinking, and conceptual clarity”. The report card will be a “holistic, 360-degree, multidimensional report”, reporting on the learners’ progress in “cognitive, affective, socio-emotional, and psychomotor domains”. The biggest advantage of a 360-degree report card is that it reduces the scope of prejudices, at all levels. Since the system is iterative in nature and provides a comprehensive report, it automatically removes bias.

Keywords: Holistic assessment, Personality National education Policy 2020

Introduction

Designing a comprehensive Education Policy is very essential as Education leads to progress the in society apart from its other benefits. Different countries use different education systems depending on their governance system. Recently, the Government of India implemented the New Education Policy 2020 this Education policy was designed by an expert committee headed by Dr. K. Kasturirangan, former chairman of Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO).

The committee made incremental and drastic changes in existing Indian Education Policy and gave guidelines on effective implementation of the same in the country by 2030. This is also in line with the Objectives of fourth Sustainable Development Goals to provide quality education for all citizens through fourth Educational Industry Revolution in the country. The focus of NPE 2020 on examination reform is a step in the right direction, as Assessment and Evaluation play a major role in the academic and intellectual development of the learner. This article is focussed on the importance of Assessment and Evaluation in National Education Policy (NEP 2020).

360° Holistic assessment

The way in which the NEP 2020 addresses assessments is refreshing; it acknowledges some of the weaknesses in the system and offers remedial measures. It lays out a roadmap in the way assessments are designed and administered. These

recommendations are underlined by broad perspectives that have potential in transforming education.

Student will be able to have a 360-degree holistic assessment of his performance with the help of this policy (NEP). Here not only teachers will be able to assess the students but even co-students and parents or guardians will also be able to do the assessment.

What is a 360 - degree assessment?

A 360-degree feedback (also known as multi source feedback, or multi source assessment) is a process through which feedback from peers, teachers, supervisors, parents as well as a self-evaluation by the students themselves is gathered.

360 Degree feedback: Continuous learning

The effective 360 degree feedback encourages continuous learning on the part of the participants. Just by receiving the feedback does not necessarily make them more effective learners, the change must come from within. It is important, therefore, first to “unfreeze” the self-view so that the participant would be willing to improve or change behaviours. The best way to unfreeze the self-view is to provide the participant with accurate data from multiple perspectives and to encourage openness in accepting the feedback.

For 360 degree feedback to be effective in enhancing participants’ self-awareness and challenging them to engage in

self-development, it must also be embedded in a larger development process which includes a development plan and organizational support for development.

Concept of holistic - 360 degree assessment

According to the National Education Policy 2020, the redesigned report cards will be “a holistic, 360-degree, multidimensional report.” The progress report will include self-assessment, peer assessment along with teacher assessment. They will reflect the progress and uniqueness of learner in the cognitive, affective, socio-emotional, and psychomotor domains. Project-based progress, Inquiry-based learning, Quizzes, Role Plays, Group work, Portfolios, etc., will be included in these report cards.

By definition, the 360-report is holistic and multidimensional, ‘It is a system of collecting feedback on the performance of an individual or sometimes a team.’

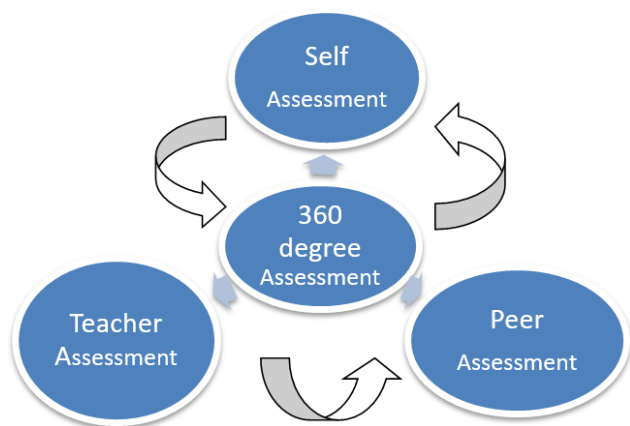


Fig 1: All round development of the Student

Any other person or team who may be affected by the outcome of the report may also contribute to the feedback system. The comprehensive data is then stored, systematically, which provides us with a wholesome and meaningful report. The report serves to identify the strengths and areas of improvement of an individual, so as to facilitate a clear-cut action plan.

Taken as a whole with cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains, the progress card will be a true reflection of the individual as one is at the present moment and also demonstrate progress with time.

In the past, the major element that was captured in the report card was memory and retention. In the 360-degree report card, all aspects of the personality of an individual would be captured making it more relevant and actionable. This detailed analysis will not only be a tool to identify gaps but would also be of assistance in solving multi-dimensional issues in an institution ranging from student-teacher engagement, learning curve & progress, drop-out rate (and causes), and barriers to learning.

Looking at it holistically; just like the number (360), the report will give an all-round description of an individual’s performance over a certain period of time, in addition to identifying the strengths, opportunities, barriers and skills or qualities that may be developed over a period of time with honest feedback and the support of training.



Fig 2: Successful 360-degree feedback program

Paradigm shift in conventional practices

Given the global adaptation of outcome-based education frameworks and an enhanced focus on higher-order learning and professional skills, the NEP promises a paradigm shift in conventional practices of curriculum design, education delivery and assessment.

Regular and formative assessment system

NEP 2020 has also proposed a shift from summative assessments to regular and formative assessments, which is more competency-based, promotes learning and development, and tests higher-order skills, such as analysis, critical thinking, and conceptual clarity.

New structure will promote "assessment for learning" which acknowledges that individual students learn in idiosyncratic ways. These initiatives indicated in the NEP are laudable but require much more scalable systems of teacher empowerment, checks and measures, rubrics and guidelines to create a fit for the purpose of education system.

Critical Thinking Some researchers and scholars use the terms “critical thinking” and “higher order thinking” interchangeably, while others define “critical thinking” as a form of higher order thinking.

Critical thinking has also been described in the following ways: Goal-directed, reflective, and reasonable thinking, as in evaluating the evidence for an argument for which all the relevant information may not be available An essential component in metacognitive processes Analysis, inference, interpretation, explanation, and self-regulation; requires inquisitive, systematic, analytical, judicious, truth-seeking, open-minded, and confident dispositions toward critical-thinking processes.

The measurement of higher order thinking skills requires that students are unfamiliar with the questions or tasks they are asked to answer or perform and that they have sufficient prior knowledge to enable them to apply their higher order thinking skills to answer the question or solve the problem. Meeting these requirements is problematic in dealing with either real-life or subject-matter domain problems. A recommended solution (Sugrue, 1994) is to examine students using multiple-item formats to measure multiple aspects of a domain. Student profiles of correct answers can help to determine the extent to which the overall assessment is novel for individual students.

360-degree assessment is an improved approach that combines all three of these assessment strategies to support a greater culture of growth and foster student ownership and critical thinking skills.

Continuous and comprehensive evaluation

Another seemingly small but structural change is the report card, which brings back the best of the CCE (Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation) with holistic assessment. This supports more well-rounded activities during school time since they are necessary for such assessment. By reducing the importance of summative marks in the report card, it helps pivot the change while also keeping traditionalists happy. This approach has been proved to be successful in many progressive private schools that have been doing this for a while. Indeed, many of the suggestions of the NEP are not as impractical as teachers fear. Most of them have been practised and sustained in elite schools that sought and worked through different approaches in their quest for quality education.

The focus on reducing pressure at the Examination board level, bringing choice of subjects, and system checks rather than individual scores are all an attempt to make assessments meaningful to student progress. The intent is to unlock better quality learning by using assessment in all three forms –

- Assessment for learning,
- Assessment as learning and
- Assessment of learning.

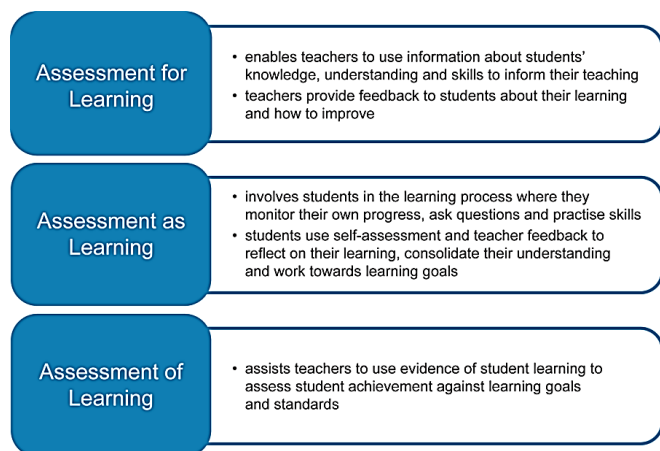


Fig 3: Show the assessment of learning student has completed the learning tasks and activates

Assessment of learning is the snapshot in time that lets the teacher, students and their parents know how well each student has completed the learning tasks and activities. It provides information about student achievement. While it provides useful reporting information, it often has little effect on learning.

Difference between assessments of learning & assessment for learning

Assessment for learning is commonly referred to as formative assessment—that is, assessment designed to inform instruction. If we can agree that the purpose of assessment is to provide data to revise planned instruction, then the only type of assessment that's not 'assessment for learning' is 'assessment

of learning,' commonly referred to as summative assessment.

Assessment is generally broken down into three categories –

- a) Assessment before Instruction (pre-assessment),
- b) Assessment during Instruction (formative assessment), and
- c) Assessment after Instruction (summative assessment).

To further complicate matters, it could be argued that pre-assessment is both assessment of and for learning—that is, it assesses 'prior knowledge' (as a pre-assessment) and that data is then used to revise planned instruction (making it formative assessment). In short, the difference between assessment of learning and assessment for learning is a matter of function and purpose – a matter of 'who': assessment of learning is a way to see what the students can do while assessment for learning is a way to see what the teachers should do in response.

In CCE, Equal importance are given to non-scholastic activities such as sports, drawing, painting, art & craft, music, theatre, storytelling, etc. There is systematic assessment of skills such as teamwork and problem-solving as well as subject-specific knowledge. Recognizing the stark reality that education today is continuity and not a conclusion; through the CCE system assess the learner throughout the year.

Implementation of CCE

A decade ago, the idea of Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) was introduced as part of the Right to Education Act 2009. The view that "evaluation should be viewed as a component of the curriculum" and "as a part of the teaching-learning process" was considered revolutionary only because it had consistently been seen as desirable, but never before actually implemented. Unfortunately, the manner of the implementation only served to be a self-fulfilling prophecy that proved why "not failing" students would "not work". A system built on examination fear as the driving force that would impel students to study and 'pass', does not change easily.

2020 – Perception of CCE

The NEP 2020 makes a second attempt to bring back this purpose of assessment in section 4.34. The key words once again are "regular and formative", "competency-based", "promotes learning and development" "tests higher-order skills, such as analysis, critical thinking, and conceptual clarity".

Section 4.35 of the NEP 2020 describes this progress card and its usage in detail. "The progress card will be a holistic, 360-degree, multidimensional report that reflects in great detail the progress as well as the uniqueness of each learner in the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains." (NEP 2020, 4.35). Again, as in the CCE, we see the attempt to assess the 'whole' learner rather than specific subject knowledge possessed by the learner.

The cards will add up over the years, to become progress books, with complete profile of the students, their strengths and the areas where they have to work on. "It will include self-assessment and peer assessment, and progress of the child in project-based and inquiry-based learning, quizzes, role plays, group work, portfolios, etc., along with teacher assessment". (NEP 2020, 4.35).

Targeting the early stages of development for pre-schoolers, and building the right attitude in the later years of schooling, the student can now channel their intelligence in accordance with their aptitude and career options at an earlier age. Technology allows the students access to information in a manner that is more easily understood. NEP-2020 will lead to a change where memorizing and manual dexterity will decline and the student will be assessed on their analytical thinking, creativity, originality and flexibility.”

The ability to actualise this promise will depend heavily on the teacher’s clarity regarding these terms. What they mean with regard to daily classroom practise, will need to be detailed through video, audio and text resources. A common vocabulary and a common understanding will need to be developed across teachers. This agreement will also be required across the teacher education faculty, both pre-service and in-service.

Role of teachers for preparation of holistic progress card

- Teachers have to first change their mindset and understand what true education is and what it means to achieve the higher segments of Bloom’s taxonomy.
- They will need to focus on improving a student’s real potential to create something new rather than on what they are told to do. Also,
- Schools must provide infrastructure and the resource for a student to grow in his/her area of interest. Parents must realise marks are not the only way to assess the growth and potential of a child. Students must want to master a skill, pursue their own interest while also acquiring knowledge.”

The Holistic Report Card includes self, teacher and peer assessments. “The holistic progress card will form an important link between home and school and will be accompanied by parent-teacher meetings in order to actively involve parents in their children’s holistic education and development. The progress card would also provide teachers and parents with valuable information on how to support each student in and out of the classroom.” (NEP 2020, 4.35).

While parent engagement has been identified as having a significant impact on 30-40% of students’ learning outcomes, it is *Evaluation in the field of artificial intelligence (AI)*, AI that can pick up on where a student “is” and take them to the place where they would like to be. “AI-based software could be developed and used by students to help track their growth through their school years based on learning data and interactive questionnaires for parents, students, and teachers, in order to provide students with valuable information on their strengths, areas of interest, and needed areas of focus, and to thereby help them make optimal career choices.” (NEP 2020, 4.35).

What we must remember as we imagine this report card of our student is that if we want to see critical thinkers and problem solvers emerging from our schools, they must have ample opportunities to practice agency. If databases full of information about students are deployed to make their decisions for them, then we can rest assured our education system will continue to send out students who are afraid to think for themselves.

AI must only act as a GPS does, guiding the students to where they want to go, not determining the goal and not deciding the

route. For students to be able to choose for themselves, make mistakes, and reflect on and learn from their own decisions, their teachers, parents and data scientists need to understand how to step back and be supportive. Schools must remember that students enrol to learn, not to be graded. And that their primary job is to enable independent, critical thinkers who collaboratively and respectfully take care of themselves and the planet.

Purpose of Holistic ‘report card’

It needs to describe that repercussions would be felt by a school if students are not seen making progress. Would the school and teachers be viewed as failing its students? Would the school leaders be required to ask their teachers why the students were not learning? How the “excessive exam coaching and preparation” would be removed from the student’s ecosystem if the school is unable to deliver the experiential learning that the NEP 2020 dreams for all students.

The National Education Policy (NEP) initially speaks about aligning assessment to learning outcomes, but then takes a bold stand by stating that “The primary purpose of the assessment will indeed be for learning”. Indeed if that word tells a story, it is that the apex body too knew that assessment was not primarily “for” learning and was failing its students.

Connecting the dots within the NEP, one finds well-defined assessment architecture for a National Assessment Strategy, almost as if embedded in stealth mode. A strategy that can drive fundamental change in a way that enables action at the level of state, school, teacher, and scholar, without disrupting the deep, almost existential faith in examinations, but works with it constructively to improve learning. This could well be the charge that shifts the needle.

The report card will be a “holistic, 360-degree, multidimensional report”, reporting on the learners’ progress in “cognitive, affective, socio-emotional, and psychomotor domains”. The draft says it will “form an important link between home and school, and will be accompanied by parent-teacher meetings in order to actively involve parents in their children’s holistic education or development, and provide teachers and parents with valuable information on how to support each student in and out of the classroom”.

Conclusion

If instead, the assessment is merely a kind of benchmark to see ‘how well they can do’ and you’re moving on, then it’s primarily an assessment of learning. There is significant overlap between the two; in fact, the same test given in one circumstance would be considered an assessment of learning while in another circumstance be considered an assessment for learning.

Positive impact

The biggest advantage of a 360-degree report card is that it reduces the scope of prejudices, at all levels. Since the system is iterative in nature and provides a comprehensive report, it automatically removes bias. Since the system is based on the concept of continuous assessment, it will assist in tracking the progress and provide timely feedback. Also, the 360-degree report creates a culture of self-assessment and understanding of one’s strengths and areas of improvement. This, to my mind, is a huge leap forward in promoting excellence.

The report will serve to connect teachers with students and understand the underlying causes of the drop or rise in performance, which would help both the teacher and the taught to work together towards a common objective.

Negative impact

Since the report is essentially an improvement seeking method, all positives of an individual may not find a place in the report. These reports are often generic in nature and therefore, may not be a source of encouragement to meritorious students who seek inspiration from excelling. This may also shift a lot of load for selection for graduation courses to the colleges/universities which are already over-burdened due to the ever-increasing number of aspirants. The success of this initiative would hugely depend upon how open the students and teachers are to the recommendations; else the purpose of the 360-degree report will not be met.

As far as the application of the 360-degree report card is concerned, the required infrastructure, IT/OT support and the mindset of the assessor who are used to marks and ranks will need to undergo a complete overhaul. The funds needed for this purpose which will be compounded by training requirements at all level may again become a barrier to implementation. Furthermore, given the enormity of Indian population, the limited resources for quality higher education, the selection process for specialized colleges for higher studies will require special attention to ensure that deserving candidates do not get missed out due to the generic nature of 360-degree report card.

Concluding remarks

The report will create opportunities for the child in areas which otherwise were not included. This, in turn, would establish a sense of empowerment for the child and he/she will be motivated to engage. Such an engagement would also enhance the scope of appreciation inward or outward, ensuring happiness for the child. I believe that one unsaid and significant objective of this measure is to enable the child and others around him/her in celebrating the uniqueness that one possesses and the fact that this uniqueness is integral to one's identity in a world of diversified individuals.

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