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Education

Evaluation Issues for Quality Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

Evaluation, generally a rich and varied combination of theory and practice; is widely used to create information for planning, designing, implementing, and assessing the results of our efforts to address and solve problems when we design and implement policies and programs. The richness of the evaluation field is reflected in the diversity of its methods. Evaluation can also be viewed as a structured process that creates and synthesizes information intended to reduce the level of uncertainty for decision makers and stakeholders about a given program or policy.

KEYWORDS | Evaluation, stakeholders, implementing, assessing

Education is a process of human enlightenment and empowerment for the achievement of a better and higher quality of life. Recognizing such an enormous potential of education, all progressive societies have committed themselves to provide 'Quality Education for all'. Since the effective school education anticipates effective teacher education, the teacher education has to remain effective and functional.

Educational evaluation is a systematic process of determining the growth and progress of a learner toward educational objectives. In other words, it is a systematic process of determining objectives which are to be achieved by learner. The fact that educational evaluation is a systematic process means that it excludes casual, uncontrolled and unsystematic ways of judging a learner's growth and progress. It strives to judge a learner's growth and progress in a systematic way. The educational evaluation is a comprehensive process in the sense that it has a bearing on all the stages of the process of education, beginning with the determination of objectives through planning of the curriculum, the teaching-learning process till completed.

Types of Evaluation and Present position
Diagnostic evaluation is intended to improve the learner's experience and their level of achievement. However, diagnostic assessment looks backwards rather than forwards. It assesses strengths of all students. It is often used before teaching or when a problem arises. Diagnostic assessment is used 'for learning' where taking action to adjust teaching plays a significant role in improving learning outcomes for all students.

There is hardly any practice of preparative evaluation to determine whether a student possesses the necessary prerequisites required to complete the teacher training programme in Punjab.

Formative assessment is assessment for learning. Evaluation that is used for the purpose of self-improvement is defined as "formative evaluation". The teacher collects student and peer perceptions of teaching effectiveness solely for the purposes of modifying and enhancing teaching strategies.

At present there is kind of formative evaluation in the student training programme. The trainee is asked to write assignments on various topics from different subjects of the course throughout the year. There are periodical tests also. SO far as teaching is concerned, each and every practice lesson is supervised and evaluated. They are encouraged on their good points and instructed on weaknesses in their teaching. This helps the trainees to improve upon particular points in their instruction which need modification.

Summative assessment is assessment of learning. Evaluation involves making judgments about achievement in terms of set goals, but before you can pass judgment, you must pin-point and area of activity which you seek to evaluate and then seek information about it.

At present, there is an annual examination for theory papers, based on the portion taught throughout the year. In some universities, there is a practice to treat the last two lessons as evaluation lessons and the marks/grades for practice-teaching are awarded on the basis of these last two lessons only. However, summative evaluation in the of some of the objectives listed earlier under the section' objectives of evaluation in teacher education'. These are the objectives from the affective domain listed at serials nos. 8, 9, 10. It is also seriously doubted whether these examinations evaluate the real objectives of the teacher education programme at different levels. It is alleged that they evaluate me re rote memorization of the subject matter.

The essence of evaluation lies in focusing on the results you want rather than on what you will cover in the course. That is, after a learning episode, the student teachers should have acquired new skills, knowledge, and/or attitudes. Three domains must be taken into consideration for evaluating student teachers so they should learn, develop and explore.

Cognitive domain defining knowledge classification. (Intellectual capability)

Affective domain defining behaviors that correspond to attitudes and values (feelings, emotions)

Psychomotor domain defining physical skills or tasks classification (manual and physical skills).

There are several methods which ensure you to obtain diverse but complementary perspectives on many facets of teaching. They are as follows:

Anecdotal records: Objective narrative records of student performances, strengths, needs, progress and negative/positive behavior.

Authentic tasks: Activities that is genuine and purposeful. These can include real life shopping tasks, measuring a ball-park, designing a home, building a bridge or tower, writing about significant issues and so on.

Checklists, scales or charts: Identification and recording of students' achievement can be through rubric levels, letter grade or numerical value, or simply by acceptable/ unacceptable

Games: Games are excellent opportunities for simulations and small and large group assessment.

Diagnostic inventories: Student responses to a series of questions or statements in any field, either verbally or in writing. These responses may indicate an ability or interest in a particular field.

Peer evaluation: Assessment by students about one another's performance relative to stated criteria and program outcomes.

Portfolios: Collections of student work that exhibit the students' efforts, progress and achievements in one or more areas.

Rubrics: A set of guidelines for measuring achievement. Rubrics should state the learning outcome(s) with clear performance criteria and a rating scale or checklist.

Self-evaluations: Student reflections about her/his own achievements and needs relative to program goals.

Simulations: the use of problem-solving, decision-making and role-playing tasks.

Student journals: personal records of, and responses to activities, experiences, strengths, interests and needs.

Student profiles: a compilation of data which may include student work samples.

Student-led conferences: Where the student plans, implements, conducts and evaluates a conference regarding their learning achievements. The purpose of the conference is to provide a forum in which students can talk about their school work with parents/ careers and demonstrate their growth towards being self-directed lifelong learners.

Teacher observations: regular, first-hand observations of students, documented by the teacher.

Existing Evaluation Practices: External and Internal Evaluation

Educational evaluation is of two kinds-external and internal-depending on the agency that conducts the examinations and evaluates pupil achievement.

External evaluation may be defined as the evaluation done by an external agency which involves people who are not directly involved in the process of teaching those who are being evaluated. External evaluation is usually confined to tests conducted at fixed intervals of time. The purpose of external examination is to maintain uniformity of standards of evaluation procedures in a large number of institutions, and also to maintain academic standards when a large number of institutions are involved. External evaluation has dominated our educational system for a long time. This domination is so much that getting through the external or public examination has become an end in itself and the true ends of the educational system has been completely forgotten. It is also found that pupils can get through these examinations merely by studying for a month or two when the examination approaches, with utter neglect of the day-to-day activities introduced by the educational institutions with a view to bringing about an all-round development of their pupils. Thus, it has miserably failed in measuring some of the important educational outcomes not only in the psycho-motor or affective domains but even in the cognitive domain.

The other aspect is internal evaluation may be regarded as a system of evaluation of the students' knowledge, intellectual abilities, skills, interests, initiative, industry, attitudes, etc. Which is carried on throughout a course of study. It takes into account all aspects of the students' works such as assignment, tutorials practical's, seminar contribution, project work, participation in sports and social service activities as well as period-

ical tests of achievement, all geared to the basic objectives of the course. It can, therefore, be said that internal assessment consists is assessing the students' progress in curricular as well as co-curricular day-to-day activities, conducted by the educational institutions with a view to bringing about an all — round development of the students' personality.

The external examination can evaluate only some of the aspects of this development, mostly the knowledge aspect. However, internal assessment can evaluate all the aspects of development, viz., physical, intellectual, moral, social, emotional, etc. It is, therefore, very comprehensive in nature, including the assessment of personality traits, interests, attitudes, appreciations, etc.

Now, in order to judge these various aspects of development, it is necessary to make use of a variety of tools and techniques of judgment. The internal assessment does make use of both qualitative and quantitative techniques of measurement. Some of the developmental factors like personality traits are assessed in descriptive terms while intellectual development is assured by means of I.Q.s which is quantitative.

Schemes and strategies for Evaluation and Feedback

Schemes and strategies refer to different modes of testing and evaluation. These are different modes of evaluation e.g. essay type questions, objective type questions and short answer type questions. At present the question papers of university examination of the teacher education programme consist of all the three types of question but more emphases is on essay type question. Here and emphasis is on criterion reference testing that is to identify whether a student has mastered the essential of the subject. Success on the test is determined according to a pre-determine criterion i.e. a student passes or fail the test depending on whether or not he satisfy the stated criterion. One must state very clearly and specifically what the criterion is. This involves the use of specific behavioral objectives.

On the other hand a norm referenced test indicates the level of students' performance in relation to some group called the 'norm group'. Norm means normal or typical behavior of the group. This approach to measurement is designed to compare a students' performance with that of other students belonging to the same group.

The basic difference between the criterion referenced and norm referenced testing is that in the criterion referenced testing, the teacher is interested to know how well a student can perform a specified function, whereas in the norm referenced testing, he is interested in knowing how the student compares with other students of the same group.

In spite of these tests there are oral and practical examinations or viva-voce. Teacher educators do have some predetermined criterion at the time of evaluation, whether it is internal or external. However, the criterion is arbitrary, vague and never stated in terms of specific behavioral objectives. With external evaluation there is internal evaluation also for fixed numbers. Internal evaluation is based on preparing of assignments, attendance, practical work done, participation in co-curricular activities etc.

Utilization of Evaluation for Quality Improvement of the Higher Education Programme

The Higher education programme seeks to develop a variety of competencies and interests which are deemed to be basic for the effective performance of the teacher's job. It is, therefore, necessary to devise appropriate tools and techniques to judge the teacher-trainee's performance in the various aspects of the programme. It is urged that the educator should strive to make efforts in this direction.

Along with the traditional tools and techniques, some modern tools and techniques also should be adopted in the ed-

ucation programme. These are psychological tests including attitude scales, aptitude tests and interest inventories. The sociometric techniques can also be fruit fully employed. With a view to knowing, oneself, even a device like self-rating by teacher-trainee himself is advocated. The evaluation procedure should serve to motivate the teacher trainee to make greater effort at learning. Teacher-trainee must be informed as to how his performance is going to be evaluated. Though, there is some weight age given to the practice teaching programme, practical work in each subject as well as activities related to social service and community living, etc. are mostly neglected. It is urged that some kind of evaluation programme should be developed so that the performance, skill, attitudes and interests of the teacher-trainee are continuously evaluated throughout the year. It is very necessary to make evaluative devices valid, reliable, objective and as comprehensive as possible. At the same time, care should be taken to see that they are feasible.

Conclusion

Evaluation is the systematic investigation of the merit, worth or significance of an object (Scriven, 1999), hence assigning "value" to a program's efforts means addressing those three inter-related domains add value of quality, value (cost effectiveness) and importance respectively. Evaluation systems need to be considered not only in terms of the policy systems. Evaluation program could encourage educators to be generally more self-reflective, regardless of the evaluative criteria and the evaluation process could create more opportunities for educators and administrators for future effective practices. Policies that create increasingly valid measures of teaching effectiveness-and that create innovative systems for recognizing, developing and utilizing expert teachers-can ultimately help to create a more effective teaching profession.

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