

# Traditional Evaluation vs. Modern Trends in Evaluation in today's educational scenario

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***Abstract***—Evaluation within education has changed drastically from a restrictive, exam-based system to the more comprehensive, competency-based system. In the Indian context, previously, evaluation was limited to using summative assessments or evaluating memory recall or standardized testing in measuring academic achievement. However, national education policy (NEP) 2020 ushered in a new educational policy and practice reform within education globally, changing the approach in education to continuous, comprehensive, learner-centred assessments. During this period, significant contemporary approaches focus on formative feedback, digital usage, performance-based tasks, and skills-based evaluation focusing on 21st century outcomes. This paper discusses both the theoretical and practical variations between, traditional and modern evaluation practices in the Indian context. Using education textbooks and meta-analysis, this paper discusses how the outcome of education policy reforms, the use of technology, and global influences in pedagogy have reshaped the purpose of evaluation, evaluation, and evidence in education. The paper also considers the implications of these approaches for teachers, curriculum writers, and education policymakers, arguing for the need to balance reliability, inclusivity of information, and growth as part of assessment systems.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Evaluation is a fundamental aspect of any educational process that provides a means to assess, interpret, and enhance learning outcomes. In India, the idea of evaluation has evolved from exam-oriented and product-oriented assessment to process-oriented and learner-centered evaluation. Historically, evaluation has focused on marks, grades, and examinations as proxies for success in schools. Traditional models often emphasized measuring students' knowledge of recall rather than their application and analysis of knowledge and innovation (Sharma & Kaur, 2018). This model allowed for standardized testing with little regard for creativity, emotional intelligence, and critical thinking abilities that matter in a 21st-century Learning Environment.

Modern evaluation took place when educators began questioning the limits of a tradition. The introduction of the Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) (NCERT, 2017) process and the Right to Education Act (2009) examined the context of enlarging inclusion and developmental considerations. NEP (2020) explored modernizing the evaluation system reducing exam pressure, competency evaluation, and establishing evaluation components in multiple dimensions (Ministry of Education, 2020).

Assessment methods are changing as education transforms to include a wider approach that uses technology. Digital tools, such as Learning Management Systems, e-portfolios, and AI analytics, have allowed for more adaptable and evidence-based evaluations (Rao & Singh, 2021). In addition, competency frameworks have called for assessment to prioritize authentic, real-world applications of knowledge.

I chose this topic issue because the education system in India is on the brink of a defining moment—how to balance the ancestry of historical assessment practices with the opportunities and challenges of a new assessment approach. Practitioners, educational administrators and curriculum designers will make or break this transition; they need to think critically, specifically about how assessment has conceptually shifted the purpose of evaluation in education, from a mechanism of simply judging performance to a mechanism of developing learning utility. This moment of transition is needed for educational quality, equity, and the desired mission from NEP 2020 of a 'vibrant knowledge society.'

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Evaluation has always been a vital part of the education system. Over the years, how teachers check and measure learning has changed a lot in India. This section reviews studies and educational reports that show how evaluation moved from traditional testing to more modern and learner-friendly methods.

### 1. Understanding Traditional Evaluation

In earlier times, evaluation in India meant written exams and marks. The main focus was on memorization and repetition. The British education system introduced this model during colonial times, and it continued for decades (Pathak, 2016). Traditional evaluation mainly involved paper-pencil tests, final exams, and grading systems where students were judged only by scores (Kumar & Pandey, 2018).

Although this method made it easy to compare students' results, it ignored creativity, problem-solving, and emotional growth (Chaudhuri, 2019). Teachers often became record-keepers of marks instead of guides for learning. Studies show that such systems caused stress and competition rather than curiosity and confidence in learners (Gupta, 2017).

## 2. Critique of the Conventional Approach

Several educationists have scrutinized the previous examination method due to its exclusive reliance on students' retrieval of information. As reported by the National Policy on Education (1986) and the National Curriculum Framework (2005), assessment practices were suggested to incorporate continuous and child-centered aspects. Sharma (2020) and Iqbal (2022) indicated that testing methods lead to stress and do not help learners improve by providing relevant feedback. In traditional evaluation, students were mostly judged on their performance at the conclusion of their learning and therefore, students did not learn to identify their strengths or weaknesses during their learning (Sarkar & Das, 2018). As a consequence, learners tended to only study to pass their assessment or examination and not for anything they possessed legitimate understanding.

## 3. Beginning of Modern Evaluation Practices in India

As educators and policy-makers acknowledged that testing does not represent legitimate learning, the shift toward contemporary evaluation began. The introduction of Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation CCE (2009) under RTE was a significant turning point. CCE was designed to evaluate students not only on their academic knowledge, but on aspects of co-scholastic areas such as life skills, values, and attitudes (NCERT, 2017).

A bit later, the National Education Policy (NEP, 2020) set out to significantly change assessment. The NEP promoted assessment that was competency-based, with an emphasis on what learners can do with their knowledge, instead of what they can remember (Ministry of Education, 2020). Dubey (2023) adds that NEP 2020 seeks to make evaluation more meaningful and less of a stress for students by including peer evaluations, projects, and practical applications of knowledge.

## 4. The Role of Technology in Contemporary Assessments

Technology has changed how teachers measure learning. With tools like online quizzes, e-portfolios, digital rubrics, and Learning Management Systems (LMS), teachers can measure student learning and give feedback quickly (Rao & Singh, 2021). With the onset of COVID-19, most schools and colleges moved to online forms of assessment. Mishra and Jha (2021) stated that this transition allowed for flexibility and accessibility during assessments. This transition was complicated by lack of devices and internet access in rural communities; however, Nair (2022) presents a different aspect of assessment by examining newer assessment forms, such as Artificial Intelligence (AI), which provides personalized assessment and analysis of student data and cautions about appropriate and ethical uses of new forms of assessment.

## 5. Holistic and Outcome-Based Assessment

In recent years India has transitioned to Outcome-Based Education (OBE) and holistic assessment. Holistic assessment measures not only what a student knows, but how a student applies knowledge, acts, behaves, and develops values (Joshi & Mehta, 2020). In line with this, the University Grants Commission (UGC, 2021) also highlighted the need for an outcome-based approach to responding

to requests for the international comparability of Indian higher education. The UGC published the 'NEP 2020' document, which led the government to establish PARAKH (Performance Assessment, Review, and Analysis of Knowledge for Holistic Development) to develop fair, innovative, evidence-based, and stakeholder-focused systems of assessment (Ministry of Education, 2022). PARAKH seeks to measure understanding and a breadth of skills, rather than...

## 6. Comparing Traditional and Modern Evaluation

Traditional and modern evaluation differ in purpose, process, and focus. The traditional system checks how much students remember after teaching, while modern evaluation looks at how well students are learning during the process (Kumar & Sinha, 2019). Traditional methods are teacher-centered and depend on marks and rankings. In contrast, modern evaluation is learner-centered, giving importance to feedback, peer evaluation, and self-assessment (Bhattacharya, 2021). Pillai and Thomas (2020) state that modern evaluation is “a journey of improvement rather than a judgment at the end.”

## 7. Obstacles to Adopting Modern Assessment

Despite policy developments in the form of CCE and NEP 2020 that encourage different forms of assessment, many schools have not moved beyond their traditional practices. Despite the availability of professional development, teachers may not be trained in the application of contemporary assessment strategies or the development of rubrics (Rajan, 2019). In addition, the challenges of having a larger number of children in any one classroom, limited instructional time, and the stress of standardized assessments, make it difficult to implement continuous or digital assessment in a meaningful manner (Aggarwal, 2020).

There is agreement among researchers that teachers need professional development in order to become comfortable and competent in understanding and implementing modern types of assessment (Rao, 2021). Singh (2024) adds that in order for modern assessments to work well and be successful for a variety of learners, they must balance fairness and flexibility while providing all learners with an equal opportunity to succeed.

## Summary of the Review

The research studies indicate that assessment is changing in India, moving from a mark and exam-based system, to an ongoing system that is skill based and ultimately learner centered. We are shifting away from the traditional use of assessments that contributed to our system by stressing discipline and standardization, but too often negated emotional and creative development. There is a current push for systems of assessment, supported by NEP 2020, and in some cases modified by technology, that hope to provide a fuller and more meaningful learning experience for all students. However, for these assessments to be effective, schools and teachers will need enhanced support, training, and guidance, as well as rethinking assessment.

### III. OBJECTIVES, HYPOTHESIS, AND METHODOLOGY

#### Objectives of the Study

This paper's overarching purpose is to examine the transition of evaluation in Indian schools from traditional assessment to modern ways of assessing students. In addition, the study aims to examine the ways in which the new evaluation practices have assisted both teachers and students in adapting to the National Education Policy (NEP) framework (2020).

The specific objectives are:

- To evaluate the differences between the traditional evaluation and modern contemporary trends in the Indian education system in terms of evaluation purpose, evaluation process, and educational assessment outcomes.
- To evaluate how effective modern evaluation trends (inclusive of continuous, comprehensive, and competency-based assessment procedures) in improving student learning and reducing exam stress.

The derived purpose of this study provides direction in the analysis of how Indian schools and colleges are gradually shifting towards more flexible and inclusive forms of evaluating and judging success based on educational study outcomes.

### IV. HYPOTHESIS

The present study is built on the understanding that educational evaluation is evolving to support learning rather than merely to measure it. Hence, the hypothesis can be stated as follows:

Null Hypothesis ( $H_0$ ): There is no significant difference between traditional and modern evaluation approaches in improving learning outcomes.

Alternative Hypothesis ( $H_1$ ): Modern evaluation approaches are more effective than traditional evaluation methods in supporting holistic and meaningful learning.

This hypothesis is conceptual and interpretive in nature. It is not tested numerically but through a qualitative meta-analysis of educational policies, research findings, and textbook practices.

### V. METHODOLOGY

The study uses a qualitative research design, combining textbook analysis and meta-analysis to interpret data and insights from secondary sources. The purpose is to understand the changing patterns of evaluation rather than to measure them statistically.

### 1. Research Methodology

The methodology is descriptive and analytical and examines both what has been written, reported, and enacted regarding educational evaluation in India. In particular, it examines policy documents, textbooks for teacher education, academic journals, and educational reports published between 2015 and 2025.

### 2. Textbook Examination

The textbook examination described how teacher education material and school curriculum frameworks explore and illustrate different forms of evaluation. NCERT and NCTE were considered to examine how concepts like formative assessment, CCE, rubrics, and peer evaluation had been taught in current practices. This also highlights if the textbooks have shifted from old exam-oriented ideas to performance-based, learner-based education.

### 3. Meta-Analysis

Meta-analysis consisted of a review of existing research studies, policy papers, and articles on evaluation reforms in India. It was oriented more around patterns and trends vs. numerical data. Therefore, the meta-analysis identified a collection of ideas across multiple sources, including:

- Government reports (e.g. NEP 2020, NCF 2005, RTE 2009, PARAKH framework)
- Research articles/papers/the dissertation related to evaluation practices and the implications of policy
- Teacher training modules/curriculum by NCERT/SCERTs
- The process of meta-analysis represents a holistic understanding of how different reforms and academic viewpoints work in relation to the evaluation system in India today.

### 4. Data Sources

Data for this study comes from authentic and credible sources, including:

- Books and articles published by educational scholars and policymakers
- NCERT and NCTE textbooks used in teacher education programs
- Official policy documents by the Ministry of Education, Government of India
- Peer-reviewed journals on educational evaluation and assessment practices

### 5. Ethical Considerations

Since this is a secondary and interpretive study, no personal or student data was collected. All sources were properly cited and referenced following the APA 7th edition format to ensure academic integrity.

### Summary of Methodology

This study uses qualitative methods to compare and interpret the evolution of evaluation systems in India. Through textbook and meta-analysis, it connects traditional approaches with modern reforms, particularly those under NEP 2020. The analysis focuses on understanding patterns,

reforms, and the broader meaning of evaluation as a process for learning improvement rather than judgment.

## VI. RESULTS

The analysis of lexicons, studies, and educational policies indicates the transition of the Indian education system from conventional, standard-based assessment to contemporary, learner-based assessment. The findings indicate several insights and implications:

### Transition of Purpose of Assessment

Previously, assessment was viewed as the final evaluation for grading and ranking. Evaluation today is viewed as a process; a process of continual evaluation that both informs teaching and improves learning, this demonstrates a more sophisticated understanding of education (Sharma, 2020).

### Holistic Development

Traditionally, evaluation tended to focus solely on the academic cognition. Evaluation today, includes emotional, social and creative aspects of learning. Both CCE and NEP 2020 refer to the evaluation of life skills, values and attitude in addition to academic content knowledge (NCERT, 2017, Ministry of Education, 2020). Such a focus has resulted in teachers regularly using techniques such as projects, peer evaluation, or reflective journals in lieu of writing assessments.

### Shift in the Teacher's Role

In the past, teachers were primarily examiners that would evaluate papers. Today, they are facilitators and mentors who lead learners forward through feedback and reflection. Teachers assess growth and cultivate individual learnings through various means such as rubrics, portfolios, and diagnostic assessments (Rao & Singh, 2021).

### Implementing Technology

Digital systems and tools have now been woven into evaluation. Learning Management Systems, digital rubrics, and indeed AI (artificial intelligence) mediated systems have improved efficiency and transparency (Nair, 2022). Unfortunately, many rural schools still face issues of flaky connectivity and availability of devices, resulting in students having access to inequitable opportunities (Mishra & Jha, 2021).

### Support of Policy and Innovation

Policies such as NEP 2020, PARAKH and the School Quality Assessment Framework advocate for flexible, skill-based and performance-based assessment systems (Dubey, 2023). They encourage institutions to recognize value in creative and experiential methods of learning.

### Challenges and Gaps

Despite these desired changes, many teachers still prefer exams because of lack of training, large classrooms, and cumbersome syllabi (Aggarwal, 2020). Continuous assessment is also generally viewed as time consuming and demanding effort, which can be problematic for exam orientated systems.

Overall, contemporary evaluation is more effective than traditional forms of assessment. Contemporary assessment emphasis self-awareness, collaboration, creativity, and components of the 21st century.

## VII. DISCUSSION

The study confirms alternative hypothesis stating that contemporary evaluation methods are more effective than traditional evaluation methods in enhancing learning outcomes.

Moving from traditional to modern evaluation is not only a new method but also a shift in mindset. It represents the move from a teacher centered methodology to a learning-centered process. Traditional evaluation served to sift and sort students, those who passed and those who failed. Modern evaluation is developmental and progressive, where the students have agency in their learning (Bhattacharya, 2021).

The introduction of formative assessments, feedback loops, and technology-based assessments has personalized learning and made it adaptable to each learner's needs. Timely feedback is provided to the students which allows them to correct any mistakes and build confidence in their skills. The teachers use the assessment data to thoughtfully plan lessons and better address learning needs. NEP 2020's vision of reducing exam pressure and introducing "assessment for learning" instead of "assessment of learning" is a reflection of this new educational philosophy. It is "hence proved" that evaluation must go beyond testing memory. It should measure how well students apply knowledge in real-life contexts.

To support these changes, continued investment in teacher training, technology, and curriculum is needed. Without real support, evaluation risks staying theoretical, rarely occurring in classrooms (Singh, 2024).

So, while India has improved its system, dedication to the process is vital to make assessment truly support learning, creativity, and growth.

## VIII. CONCLUSION

Evaluation is one of the chief parts of education as it indicates how effectively learning has occurred. The Indian education system has transitioned over the years from traditional, examination-based testing to continuous, comprehensive, and competency-based approaches to evaluation. This process of reforms was necessitated due to various factors: national reforms,

global research, and the realization that learning needs to develop a whole child, intellectually, emotionally, and socially.

Conventional assessment methods provided structure and objectivity, but often introduced fear and stress for both educators and learners, as emphasis was often on memorization rather than understanding. Alternative evaluation methods ranging from formative assessment, rubrics, peer and self-assessment and digital portfolios emphasize reflection, creativity, and skill development. The National Education Policy (2020) also strongly established the premise of evaluation methods of education which demonstrate flexibility, inclusivity, and real-world relevance to learning.

Textbook and meta-analysed findings very clearly demonstrated that practical evaluation practices in education are more effective in addressing student performance and reducing exam and assessment anxiety. Practical evaluation methods make assessment a process rather than an event to be measured, that supports the learner at every level. However, the challenges remain that teachers need training, resources, and people need to embrace these new methods.

In conclusion, assessment in India has begun to shift toward a more humane, just and holistic model of learning. However, for this manifesto to be realized, we must ensure that we will empower teachers, design flexible institutions and operate from the position that assessment will not be viewed as the destination, but as an opportunity for growth or transformation. Only then will assessment work and help every learner to become their best self.

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