TITLE OF PAPER : CONTROLLING YOUR SELF-CONTROL - MYTHS AND REALITIES OF TRUE ASSESSMENT IN THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

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Abstract Key words related to the foci of the paper:
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ABSTRACT AIM: The aim of this paper is to highlight the challenges of assessment systems in the fast growing and dynamic educational sector and suggests solutions to handle it at a global level in the back drop of multicultural, international and varied curricula. The paper identifies some key areas of concern and spells out many myths and realities about assessment as it is commonly understood. Special emphasis is given to the dynamism of assessment reforms on a multicultural, multilingual, multi-curricula horizon. Paper and presentation strategy: The entire paper and presentation will be highly interactive in nature with emphasis on more practical analysis than theoretical hypothesis. Videos, photographs, statistics, graphs, examples and narrations will be an integral part of the presentation for the participants to be more connective and relate with their own organizations. Interactive game sessions of 'Housie', 'Casino of myths' and 'Suggestion lucky dips' will be an integral part of the presentation. Presentation Flow: a.

Introduction to the need for a good assessment policy in relation with the current localized scenario of one's own organization. b. An awareness test will be conducted interactively to highlight   view points on the strengths of good assessment. c. A Housie game will be played to highlight certain myths and realities of good assessment systems and ethics of assessment. d. It will be then highlighted how one controlled assessment system gets out of control in a different scenario of culture, curriculum or environment. e. An interactive 'lucky dip suggestions' game will be played to highlight the evolvement of a good assessment system for an organization. f. The presentation will end with burning question of 'what is the best assessment system to be adopted?...'

Myths and Realities of True Assessment in the Global Context

Warm up Exercise

The workshop will begin with a warm up exercise. Two videos of two neighboring countries conducting the retreat ceremony will be shown. Participants will be asked to assess the ceremony without any assessment criteria. A discussion will be initiated to understand the assessment process. We will discuss procedure and purpose of assessment in this video.

The criteria will be given and then reassessment will be done on the criteria. The difference in opinion will be observed. The objective- Aimless assessment does not serve any purpose. The teacher and the student should be aware of the criteria before the assessment and the ultimate objective of the assessment.

Dissecting Assessment Definitions-

The literal meaning of the word Assessment is --The evaluation or estimation of the nature, quality, or ability of someone or something. And Educational Assessment means --the process of documenting, usually in measurable terms, knowledge, skills, attitudes and beliefs.

We are all aware that there are different types of Assessments- formative and summative, objective and subjective, informal and formal, internal and external etc. Each of these assessments have their own reliability and validity. We have used them and we need to reflect upon them and discuss the areas of concern.

Task- Let us talk about our last school and share what was missing in the assessment system in that school. How could we strengthen the deficiencies that we have faced earlier? A discussion will be initiated and the challenges faced by the participants will be listed down. The areas of concern will then be discussed in detail as the discussion will lead to needing a good assessment policy.

Therefore, we need to develop a **good assessment policy** keeping in mind the challenges we face in the existing assessment system. So a good assessment system should have the following strengths: **Utility**- reliability, validity, acceptability and feasibility, **Transparent standards**- what are we assessing knowledge, competence or performance or all of it, **Setting standards**- different standards to be maintained for different age level as well as children with different

learning abilities, **Integrating assessment into daily teaching** and lastly **selection, training and evaluation of educators.**

Now let us have a brainstorming session regarding Myths of Assessments. A casino activity will be conducted to drive home a point. Identify a myth and brainstorm it.

1. **Myth 1: The path to school improvement is paved with standardized tests-** We have all gone through standardized tests at different times in our countries and come to a conclusion that standardized tests can be just one part of assessing and evaluating a child. The assessment system has to move away from having standardized tests as the only method of assessment. Standardized tests often measure superficial thinking. Educators today are of the belief that it is not a good idea to base important decision such as promotion of a child on the scores of a single test. Rather we need to rely more on multiple-choice tests. Some nations use performance-based assessment where students are evaluated on the basis of real work such as essays, projects and activities. To ensure that true learning takes place teachers need to move beyond tests.

The different types of tools and strategies that may be used to assess the students other than standardized tests are as follows; **because one size does not fit all.**
a) Graphic Arrangements b) Interviews c) Observations d) Performance Tasks   e) Creative performance and exhibitions f) Self and Peer Evaluation   g) Journals and leaving logs h) Tests i) Portfolios
Videos will be shown about bright students in real scenario, depicting that at times even they are not able to relate to an assessment if not structured appropriately. Music activity may be done to drive in the point.

2. **Myth 2: A great school is one with great marks.**

Community leaders may want to play an important part in education but are not aware of local curriculum and cannot relate to class room requirements and situations. The emphasis is more on marks obtained in end of year exams rather than in enhancing overall development of the children. Parents as well as the teachers always feel tangible marks display learning of child in a more authentic way than other techniques of assessment. The community leaders and school management are result oriented which is disadvantageous to learners who have to struggle to keep up with the competition. **Therefore, assessment should be for learning and not of learning.**

Videos and snapshots of websites will be shown to elaborate the point. Headlines of admission criteria from TOI to be displayed showing 100% cut off for prestigious schools and colleges like DPS RKP, LSR, SRCC etc.

Let us take an example of Australia- The Australian schools are listed rank wise on their website. The students appear for standardized tests in grade 3,5, 7 and 9.The schools are colour coded according to their performance and ranked accordingly. The result of the standardized school exams is displayed to maintain the standards. Tremendous pressure is on the schools to

project good scores. Hence, pressure on teachers and learners to produce good marks. This system is common in many countries.

3. Myth 3: A good teacher is obviously trained to assess productively.

We believe that all teachers are thoroughly trained to assess accurately but in reality they may have not have had enough pre service opportunity to learn and understand about the latest assessment developments. The teachers need regular professional development to know and understand new concepts and pedagogy. With the world shrinking in size, the teachers need knowledge, disposition and skills to work with children from diverse social, linguistic and cultural backgrounds. They also need knowledge and attitude to support political and social justice, as social realities make teachers very important agents of social change. For example in South Africa following the apartheid régime, development of critical awareness was made integral part of teacher preparation. We may find that some old teachers may be uncomfortable using new assessment tools and strategies, so refresher courses need to be held from time to time for the teaching community to be able to understand the requirements of the new age students.**(Video of untrained teachers)**

4. Myth 4: All students respond to an assessment criteria in the same way.

To understand this myth we will show a couple of slides of Taj Mahal. The audience will describe the painting or the picture on a slip of paper. They will be asked to write what they know about Taj Mahal/or we could choose any other famous monument.

This task was given to a class of students with mixed subject options. They were told to submit a research report on Taj Mahal. After the completion of the task it was observed that the students displayed their multiple intelligences in their reports.

The assessment by students was as follows:

- A logical mind- A math student had shown with graphs the dimensions of the Taj Mahal, its minarets and the surrounding area. He had calculated the amount of marble and man power used and the costs incurred.
- A Naturalist- Another student researched on the impact of pollution on the Taj Mahal and shared that the colour of the dome was changing due to the presence of toxic chemicals in the air. The airborne particles were being deposited on the monument's white marble, giving it a yellow tinge. His concerns were whether the government was doing enough to restore this monument.
- A Linguist- A student wrote a beautiful poem expressing the reason why this grand monument was built. The expression of love and melancholy of a lover was reflected beautifully in his poem.

- A Kinesthetic – Another student put up a skit with the help of a friend depicting the last days of Emperor Shah Jahan and his relationship with the Taj Mahal. A touching depiction of how an emperor's life revolved around a lifeless monument.

  This proved that all students have different perception of the given tasks and their dominating intelligence will make them work in a particular way. The same theory stands true for adults as well as students.

5. **Myth 5: Assessment is about segregating children who know from who do not know.**

Assessment is not about finding fault with programs, courses, or individuals; it is about agreeing on what is most important in our courses and programs, communicating that to all stakeholders, and finding out what's working and what's not. Great assessment results can and should be used to trumpet success, market programs, motivate faculty, students, and staff, and justify a program's worth. Less-than-satisfactory assessment results indicate that changes need to be made so students reach our expectations. To assess children appropriately there are many theories that come in handy, each of them have been tried and tested and positive outcomes have been achieved.
The tasks set should be such that it caters to all with different learning abilities and requirements.

Lessons of Bloom's Taxonomy: Bloom's taxonomy was created by Benjamin Bloom during the 1950s and is a way to categorize the levels of reasoning skills required in classroom situations. There are six levels in the taxonomy, each requiring a higher level of abstraction from the students. Teachers should attempt to move students up the taxonomy as they progress in their knowledge. Test that are written solely to assess knowledge are unfortunately very common. However, to create thinkers are opposed to students who simply recall information; we must incorporate the higher levels into lesson plans and tests.
Video of Pirates of Caribbean will be shown to understand Bloom's Taxonomy.

Bloom's taxonomy
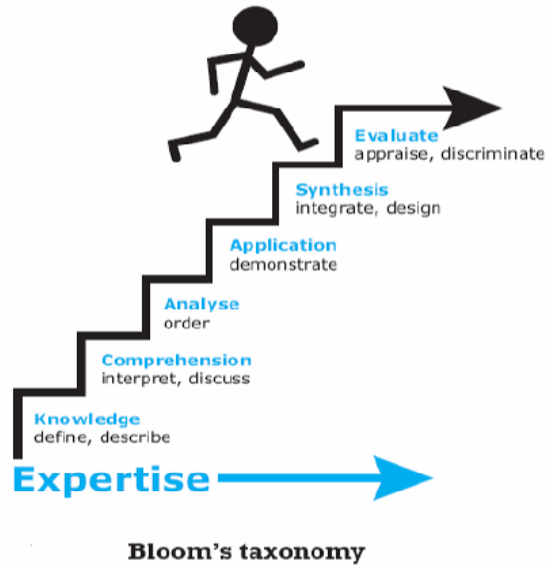
Millers Pyramid: In 1990, George Miller proposed a classification, in the form of a pyramid, for methods of assessment in education. 'Knows' (knowledge) is at the lowest level of the pyramid followed by 'knows how' (competence), 'shows how' (performance), and 'does' (action). Miller distinguished between the top two levels of the pyramid depending on whether the students were aware they were in a testing situation (i.e., for 'shows how' they know they are being assessed). Methods aimed at skills and performance generally falls into the 'shows how' level.
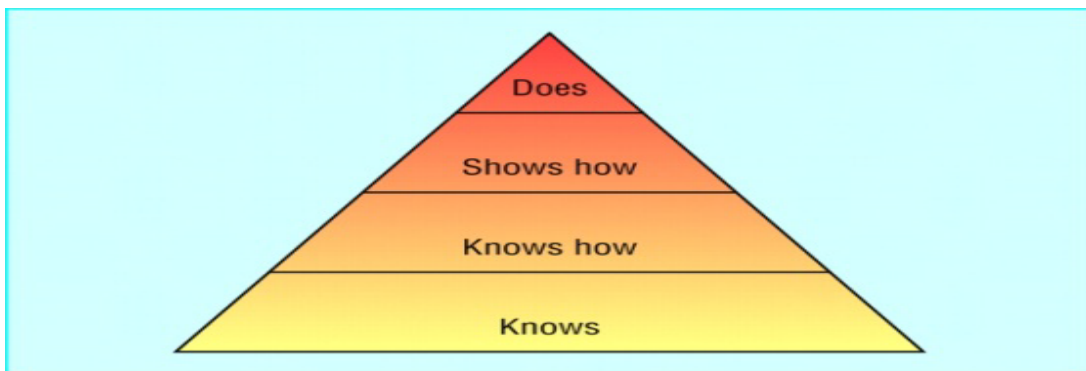
Examples will be shown to illustrate the pyramid

Gardner's multiple intelligence theory

Howard Gardner (1983) proposed a new view of intelligence. In his Theory of Multiple Intelligences, Gardner expanded the concept of intelligence to also include such areas as music, special relations, and interpersonal knowledge in addition to mathematical and linguistic ability.

A video of special needs children who are not expressive will be shown with respect to their learning of a subject demonstrated by their work. Further an illustration of an unskilled labourer will be shown who has detailed knowledge of the fundamentals of Physics postulate and theorem

Seven Intelligences

Gardner defines intelligence as *"the capacity to solve problems or to fashion products that are valued in one or more cultural setting"* (Gardner & Hatch, 1989). Using biological as well as cultural research, he formulated a list of seven intelligences. This new outlook on intelligence differs greatly from the traditional view which usually recognizes only two intelligences, verbal and computational. The seven intelligences Gardner defines are:

Logical-Mathematical Intelligence--consists of the ability to detect patterns, reason deductively and think logically. This intelligence is most often associated with scientific and mathematical thinking.

Linguistic Intelligence-- involves having a mastery of language. This intelligence includes the ability to effectively manipulate language to express oneself rhetorically or poetically. It also allows one to use language as a means to remember information.

Spatial Intelligence-- gives one the ability to manipulate and create mental images in order to solve problems. This intelligence is not limited to visual domains-- Gardner notes that spatial intelligence is also formed in blind children.

Musical Intelligence-- encompasses the capability to recognize and compose musical pitches, tones, and rhythms. (Auditory functions are required for a person to develop this intelligence in relation to pitch and tone, but it is not needed for the knowledge of rhythm.)

Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence-- is the ability to use one's mental abilities to coordinate one's own bodily movements. This intelligence challenges the popular belief that mental and physical activity is unrelated.

The Personal Intelligences-- includes **interpersonal intelligence** -- the ability to understand and discern the feelings and intentions of others-- and **intrapersonal intelligence** --the ability to understand one's own feelings and motivations. These two intelligences are separate from each other. Nevertheless, because of their close association in most cultures, they are often linked together.

Recap on VAK's Learning Styles

TASK – A quick self assessment test will be conducted and participants will line up according to their learning styles. Then a task will be given to them. They will have to present it in the style they have scored least in.
Aim of this task- To understand that each person will be most comfortable being tested in their dominating learning , the theory holds true for children as well as adults.

Neil Fleming argued that visual learners have a preference for seeing - think in pictures; visual aids such as overhead slides, diagrams, handouts etc. Auditory learners best learn through listening - lectures, discussions, tapes etc. Tactile/kinesthetic learners prefer to learn via experience-moving, touching and doing active exploration of the world; science projects; experiments etc. Equipping teachers with this pedagogy enables them to organize their lessons in a methodical way, where each of these areas is addressed. This form of learning style can help students themselves to identify their ideal learning style and capitalize on their educational knowledge by understanding on what benefits them the most.

learning style	Description
Visual	seeing and reading
Auditory	listening and speaking
Kinesthetic	touching and doing

Video will be shown and analyzed

<u>Out Of Control – How does assessment get out of control?</u>

Video will be shown to draw the attention of participants towards how things go out of control.

There are many factors that contribute to authentic assessment. Many times assessment may be conducted well but may not be genuine because of ethnic, cultural and linguistic differences.

There is a possibility that many times assessments may give rise to flawed conclusions about children, their learning or their development. Sometimes judgments are based on data without adequate reflection being given to tools used. This can happen when judgments are based on data without sufficient consideration being given to the possibility for bias. Inaccuracy may take place in two cases with any assessment tools. These are, erroneously seeing something that does not exist and not being able to see something that exists.

A faulty assessment may take place due to many factors. It may identify some areas that are not in fact present. For example
- Standardized tests in English which are conducted on a majority English-speaking population may lead to a child being characterized as having language difficulties if he/she is from an ethnic group which uses a different English dialect. Majority of Asian countries may fall under this group. In fact in India itself, English dialect may change from region to region.
- If assessment is to be conducted to judge the motor skills of children. Samples of handwriting used to judge may differ if the child's first written language is not similar to alphabets or characters of Roman alphabet, which are commonly used in written English. Assessing such a child may give rise to the faulty judgment that the child has

underdeveloped motor skills when in fact the child simply has difficulty in reproducing unfamiliar characters. We may consider Chinese and Japanese scripts as well as some South Indian language scripts which are very different from Roman English

Faulty assessment may also take place if the assessment criteria are not able to highlight the child's competencies or capabilities due to insufficient knowledge of the child's ethnicity or culture.

- In case of assessing language competence of multilingual children the results may show a dip as the children may not be comfortable being tested in that particular language. However, their concepts may be clear but due to the language deficiency they may not be able to explain their points of view proficiently.
- An assessment of a child's social engagement in class may conclude that a child who does not make eye contact with a teacher is shy or un-engaged, whereas in some cultures it is inappropriate for children to make eye contact with adults. This may affect his social assessment which in turn will influence his overall assessment.
- Studies have shown that subtle gender bias does happen not only during assessment in schools but also at managerial level. A girl child, however competent is discriminated upon.
- It has been proved that the success rate of various ethnic groups in solving mathematical problems is dependent in part on how the problem has been phrased.
- Students who are used to the objective tests with negative marking may have been taught answering strategies that maximize test scores, therefore disadvantage will be with the children who are unfamiliar with such answering strategies.
- Children belonging to countries located in South Asia have practiced mental calculations and can solve problems without the use of a calculator. However, children from other regions will have difficulty attempting a test where calculators are not permitted. **(video of Ms. Shakuntala Devi the mathematic expert will be shown)**
- **(Discussion with the participants regarding diversified assessment systems in different countries. Examples from America and India- as regards usage of calculators during exams.. Europe and South East Asia- Difference in subjective and objective methods of assessments**.)

Lastly assessment may swirl out of control when differentiated learning in the class becomes unmanageable. Understanding the need for assessing each child differently may fatigue the teacher and discourage her.

Some known personalities who have been successful in spite of not receiving formal education. Aim is to understand how aptitude influences understanding and knowledge of a person.

Abraham Linclon- Self taught president of America
Bill Gates- School dropout computer wizard
Dr Henry Fok- Junior High dropout turned into a successful businessman of Hong Kong
Alexander Graham Bell-school dropout successful scientist and inventor
Anna Hazaare- Soldier and activist turned leader

Global Assessment –It is an assessment which is based on application, research, understanding comprehension and action. The Global Assessment is a reliable way for a school to review where they are in encouraging their students' global competence. To strengthen this practice, this tool can offer ways to determine how global the school is. It can be done in two ways: firstly a brain storming session may be conducted with the entire school community, addressing areas ranging from school mission, vision tradition, philosophy, to curriculum, training, learning and understanding of the students. An expert may be invited to audit, review and present a detailed interpretive report to offer authentic suggestions on on how to make the school more globally focused. It may be stated that countries whose students consistently perform well in schools will find economic success which heavily depends upon educated and highly skilled workforce.
(Video of President Obama's speech and education reform bill)

Thus we may although conclude that a lot of work has been done on understanding assessment; a lot still needs to be done. So what should effective assessment look like?

Successful assessment should allow the students to:
Know and understand the criteria in advance , analyze and evaluate their learning , demonstrate the range of their conceptual understandings, their knowledge and their skills , synthesize and apply their learning , base their learning on real-life experiences, highlight their strengths and demonstrate mastery and expertise , express different points of view and interpretations ,develop skills in reflection, self- and peer-evaluation .

Effective Assessment should allow the teachers:
Include collaboration between the student and the teacher or among students, take into account different cultural contexts and different ways of learning and knowing, gather information which is both analytical and holistic, produce evidence that can be reported and understood by students, parents, teachers, administrators and board members , evaluate and develop the ongoing learning and teaching process .

Effective assessment allows the parents to:

Understand the learning process; actively support their child's education, provide opportunities to support and celebrate student learning.

But is this enough? There are many burning questions that still remain ablaze. …

1.   Assessment Ethics:When we talk of ethics we are not looking at the integrity of the teachers or the educators. In fact we need all educators to introspect as to whether they look at their assessment strategies seriously and plan to improve upon them periodically?

   Task- Take two minutes to introspect and write down on a slip of paper how many times your closest colleague has changed his strategy of assessing his students after a particular type of assessment has not yielded good result?

2. Apart from introspection from the educators point of view at which stage are the following aspects of the personality of a child get addressed in our present assessment system. Students' ethics, leadership, endurance, moral values, adaptability to change.

3. How to deal with differentiated learning if the population of the class is heterogeneous?

4. How to formulate a common assessment system which can cater to Globe trotting students?

Lastly before saying Sayonara, we would request each of you to ponder over the following words of wisdom…..

...the geometrician teaches me how to work out the size of my estates rather than how to work out how much a man needs in order to have enough....You geometers can calculate the area of circles, can reduce any given shape to a square, can state the distances separating starts. Nothing's outside your scope when it comes to measurement. Well, if you're such an expert, measure a man's soul; tell me how large or how small that is. You can define a straight line; what use is that to you if you've no idea what straightness means in life?" -- Seneca, Letters from a Stoic, c4BC-65AD

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