Abstract

Earlier, evaluation was viewed as a measurement of learning and an end of an academic course or program. However, it has the potential to be used for constructive and developmental purposes. In addition to this, it provides scope for the teacher to identify learner problems and also lays the ground for remediation. National Curriculum Framework 2005 (NCF-2005) proposed establishing a school based Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) system to reduce stress of examinations on the learners, provide space for the teacher for creative teaching and provide a tool for diagnosis and remedial action.

Therefore, to reduce the stress of assessment on the learner, and to make learning much more goal oriented in place of marks oriented, a continuous comprehensive evaluation of learners was felt necessary. This was planned in order that evaluation could provide scope for teachers to diagnose learner problems and plan for remediation, thus aiming for the learner’s progress and holistic development. So, CCE was introduced in 2009 in all CBSE schools with the objectives of:

a) helping develop the learner’s cognitive, psychomotor and affective skills, b) de-emphasising memorization and laying emphasis on thought process, c) making evaluation an integral part of the teaching-learning process, d) using evaluation for improvement of learners’ achievement and devising teaching – learning strategies on the basis of regular diagnosis followed by remedial instruction, e) using evaluation as a quality control device to maintain desired standard of performance, f) determining social utility, desirability or effectiveness of a programme and take appropriate decisions about the learner,
the process of learning and the learning environment and g) making the
process of teaching and learning a learner-centred activity (CBSE 2010, p.8).

Recognising the same, a teacher training program on CCE was initiated for teachers
across the country to provide them with the required information about CCE and to
make them understand the objective behind its inception. Along with the training,
sufficient information on CCE was made available online to the teachers and in the
form of teacher manuals.

Furthermore, CCE emphasised using evaluation, not as an end process but as a
continuous reflective practice. Therefore, it can be said that teaching and learning are
viewed as continuous, and if evaluation is seen as an integral part of the teaching-
learning process, it can also be viewed as continuous. This study tried to examine the
status of evaluation and emphasised the use of diagnosis and remediation as a means
to help the learners overcome their learning difficulties. It also aimed to bridge the
gap between evaluation and learner progress by a) investigating into the process in
which teachers used evaluation to diagnose learner problems and modified instruction
and b) understanding the role of CCE in helping the teacher in this process. This study
also tried to underline the areas that lagged behind in the current evaluation system
and attempted to provide insights into the methods adopted by teachers based on their
diagnosis of learner problems. It also focussed on the teacher’s process of monitoring
learner progress. The study was premised on the assumptions such as the introduction
of CCE being more top-down, needed a closer observation. Therefore, an
understanding of the process involved in creating and maintaining the balance
between the daily (formative) and the annual (summative) assessments was to be
made. Also, it was felt necessary to examine the impact of evaluation, diagnosis and
remedial teaching on learning in order to understand the importance of CCE in practice.

This study was planned in two phases: the main objective of the first phase was to gather basic information about the English classroom, and about the training provided on CCE. This, along with an understanding of the teacher’s conception of evaluation was helpful in planning the second phase. In phase two, the research framework designed for conducting the study was planned according to the information required to answer the research questions posed in this study. The research questions were drawn based on the assumptions made about the teachers, learners and CCE in order to understand i) how teachers use evaluation to diagnose learner problems, ii) how teachers use diagnosis to modify instruction, iii) how teachers use diagnosis and remediation to monitor learner progress and iv) the role CCE plays in helping teachers plan remedial instruction to suit the learner needs.

The study was conducted in six Kendriya Vidyalaya schools located in and around Hyderabad and Secunderabad. Twenty-two teachers of classes VIII and IX and one hundred fifty-five learners of classes VIII and IX were approached for the study. Data was collected from teachers and learners with the help of different research tools. Questionnaires for teachers were used to gather information about the teacher, the English language class, teacher awareness of assessment, training provided on CCE, the learner, methodology adopted by the teachers, materials used which included the course book and teacher manuals and evaluation. While teacher interviews focussed on gathering more information about teacher’s views on learner problems, diagnosis, remedial instruction, CCE, formative assessment and the learner, learner interviews were more focussed on the information about the teacher, formative assessment, CCE and learning difficulties. Classroom observations were helpful in getting information
on classroom details, preparation, presentation, execution/methods, teacher-learner interaction and teacher reflection.

An analysis of teacher manuals and formative assessment schedules, with the help of checklists, was also made to get further insights about the CCE and the classroom processes. Teacher manual evaluation was done with the help of a checklist that was adapted from Hemsley (1997), which focussed on the global and detailed evaluation of teacher manuals. Test script evaluation was done with the help of checklist used to evaluate the question paper by analysing the type of tasks used, number of sections/questions, division of marks, type of questions used and time allotted. Answer sheets were also evaluated with the help of a checklist to analyse the criteria used for evaluation, learning difficulties identified and feedback provided to the learners.

The study used a mixed method of research though the data and analysis were mostly qualitative in nature. Information about the process of teaching-learning and assessment in the actual classroom, learner problems faced in learning, the teacher’s ability to diagnose learner problems based on the information available after assessment and methodology adopted by the teachers to help learners overcome learning difficulties was collected as part of this study. The data obtained with the help of the research tools was described quantitatively and qualitatively depending on the nature of the data. Graphs, charts and tables (in chapter 2) were presented to make the data available in the most comprehensive way possible. The data collected through each instrument was presented separately along with its analysis and interpretation that helped in arriving at a set of findings and implications. The research questions that were posed earlier were answered based on these findings.
The findings of the study show that evaluation informed the teachers about learner problems and this diagnosis enabled them to make classroom instruction more learner oriented. With the information derived based on evaluation, teachers modified classroom instruction. Teacher manuals provided on CCE were useful for teachers in understanding the objectives behind implementing CCE. CCE was also helpful in monitoring learner progress and was useful for teachers in planning remedial instruction. However, in contrast to these findings, it was also found that some teachers felt that CCE was introduced in haste. Since the in-service training provided to the teacher was not sufficient, teachers could benefit from regular monitoring and update about CCE in the form of training, workshops and seminars.

On the other hand, based on the responses from the learners, it was found that learners were less burdened with the syllabus or with assessment and were increasingly in favour of the semester-wise division of the syllabus. They were more focused on the content rather than on the completion of the syllabus, and they felt that there was less discrimination as learners were no longer categorised into toppers and failures. Also, learners were able to identify with the continuity in assessment as they found that there was progress over time and also felt that being creative and providing their own answers was more appreciated. It was also evident from the learner responses that the learners found teachers to be more interactive than earlier and new methods of teaching were adopted by the teachers.

In a nutshell, it was also observed that though explicit information about CCE was made available to all teachers along with a manual on formative assessment, there was a lack of quality control with regard to implementation of CCE. There were certain reliability issues with respect to consistency in learner performance. Since formative assessment was continuous and diagnostic in nature and provided room for teachers to
plan remedial instruction, it also provided scope for identifying learner problems. Based on what was assessed, teachers had the opportunity and the freedom to modify classroom instruction.

Based on these findings, a few implications for teachers, learners, policy makers and other stakeholders were presented for the effective execution of CCE. While implications for teachers focussed on listing out the different possible approaches of effective teaching, implications for learners focused on informing the learners about using formative assessment to its full potential. Likewise, implications for policy makers presented a series of measures to be taken before, during and after introducing new policies into the educational system that can ensure successful implementation and execution of the policy. Furthermore, an implication for other stakeholders included suggestions on the need for administrators and parents to be made part of the teaching-learning process by informing, involving and updating them about the system.

The entire study was divided into five chapters. The first chapter, *Introduction*, provides a brief introduction to the study along with a discussion on the importance of evaluation in pedagogy. It highlights the use of evaluation for diagnosis and remediation and presents a brief summary of CCE. The background for the study, definition of terms, lacuna in the system, assumptions, statement of the problem along with stating objectives which were helpful in finalising the research questions, the context of the study, the significance of the study, the research procedure adopted for the study and finally the design of the thesis are also discussed in this chapter.

The second chapter, *Review of Literature*, presents the theoretical background and existing research in the field of the study. This chapter begins with a description of
assessment and evaluation by discussing various aspects related to validity, reliability, formative and summative assessment. Different aspects of assessment focusing on the current issues in classroom testing, shifts in assessment practices, place and impact of evaluation in the curriculum, impact of assessment on learners and guidelines for developing assessment have been discussed in this chapter. It also presents a brief on the constructivist views upon which CCE was formulated. The theoretical perspectives adopted in this research are based on the Constructivist approach to assessment. Other theories such as the Zone of Proximal Development, Test-based Reform and Multiple Intelligences are also presented. Alongside assessment in the twenty-first century, a brief on the emergence of continuous comprehensive evaluation, its features, objectives and functions were also presented.

This discussion is followed by a brief report on the studies conducted in India which have looked at various other aspects such as impact of training on CCE, projects and co-curricular aspects covered by CCE, history of CCE, critique of a workshop (training) on CCE, teacher awareness on CCE, implementation of CCE at school level with respect to the framework of CCE and so on are also presented as part of the discussion on the existing studies on CCE at the end of this chapter.

The third chapter, Research Methodology, presents the research methodology adopted for the study by discussing the research questions, the sample of the study, the population of the study (which comprised of a detailed description of schools, teachers, learners who were chosen for the study), research framework and factors affecting the framework, choice of framework; methodology adopted for conducting the study; the stages of the study, where a detailed description of the preliminary study is presented and; the main study. Furthermore, the research tools used for data collection which include questionnaires, interviews, classroom observations,
checklists are presented along with the format, design and description of each tool. The framework for analysis of the data and its interpretation in the next chapter are also discussed in this chapter.

The fourth chapter, *Data Analysis and Interpretation*, presents the data collected with the help of five research tools along with a discussion of the analysis and interpretation of the data. Qualitative and quantitative data collected using the research tools are presented in this chapter. The quantified data is presented in the form of graphs and tables while the qualitative responses are presented either in the form of tables or are presented in the form of quotes. Each set of data is presented and then described along with its interpretation and analysis.

The fifth chapter, *Conclusion*, presents an overall view of the study and findings that were obtained with the help of research tools. Also, a brief overview of the study, the implications and recommendations for different stakeholders including teachers, learners, policy makers, administrators and parents are also presented. Finally, the contribution of the current study to the field of ELE, suggestions for further research and the limitations of the study are also discussed.