Compliance of Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation in RTE Act: A Reality Check of Pratibha Parv in Elementary Schools of Old Bhopal City

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ABSTRACT

Every year MP government spends roughly 8-10 crores of rupees to organize three day festival of excellence called Pratibha Parv. The document of Pratibha parv indicates that there is increase in quality education in schools of MP. But NAS and ASER report along with NUEPA report of 2013 tells a different story. In fact, NUEPA study indicates that MP government slipped to 28th position in educational index. Pratibha parv started to improve the quality education both in infrastructural as well as in teaching-learning process. Document of Pratibha Parv indicates towards the CCE as mentioned in RTE. But when the conduct of Pratibha Parv especially at school level was observed, picture was different from what is portrayed. This small qualitative research conducted by the investigators was during the Pratibha Parv. In the name of comprehensive assessment, records were not only properly generated but also not being used properly for the benefit of the students. There were some suggestions in regard to the study which might prove beneficial for the students as well as for government especially when Non-detention policy would be removed.

Keywords: Assessment, Practice, Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE), RTE, Pratibha Parv

The RTE act was passed in 2009 and implemented all over of India with effect from 1st April 2010. The act ensures "Every Child of 6-14 years shall have the right to free and compulsory education in a neighborhood school till completion of elementary education"(p. 3, RTE Act, 2009). The very act also prescribed that "each school adopt continuous and comprehensive evaluation of child's understanding of knowledge and his or her ability to apply the same" (p. 9 RTE act, 2009). Even the NCF (2005) in its document emphasize that there are more than one means of assessing the learners within and outside the classroom and it should be the integral part of the teaching-learning process rather than an isolated event. But in Indian classrooms it seldom goes beyond the assessment of scholastic achievement in few subjects indicating and that too measuring the limited range of faculties for certification purpose. Our school education system never assess student participation in classroom activities, their interest, level of involvement, extent of abilities and skills honed, handling of a situations, critical and innovative thinking, creativity in different domains, participation in co-curricular activities etc. It needs to be understood here that assessment has multifarious functions like collecting information for better understanding the extent and nature of learning in different domains, evaluating the objectives, teaching methods, teaching-learning process and materials for developing the capabilities of learners, providing feedbacks to learners what remains to be achieved, inform parents about the growth and progress of their wards which needs complete shift from assessment of learning from assessment for learning.

Assessment of learner is often misunderstood by teachers as finding of learning difficulties in academic subjects of a learner that often goes

beyond to specific individuals, specific areas to whole class and remediated through routine pedagogic strategies which creates more woes and increases complexities in planning, teaching and material development. Actually, assessment is highly specific, and requires specific tools of assessment. Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) which was introduced by CBSE in the school education system is based on the very premise that assessment is a continual process and different domains and its sub-domains are assess through various assessment tools rather than through oral or pen and pencil test. This gives the teacher, learner a better idea about the progression of learner in an academic cycle and thus informed decision would be taken by the teacher or learner. Assessment of this kind will be used as an investigable tool for teachers and students indicating what the leaner know and can do, and what confusion, difficulties, preconceptions or gaps come up during learning process. This information will help the teachers to decide what they need to do next to move student learning forward. It also helps the teacher to realign instructional strategies, and resources. It also help teachers use assessment for learning to enhance students' motivation and commitment to learning. When teachers commit to learning as the focus of assessment, they change the classroom culture to one of student success.

But unfortunately, the whole exercise of assessment has been boiled down to "grades or marks" achieved by the students in the exams whether it is being conducted weekly, monthly, quarterly or annually. Our education system never believes in *assessment for learning* rather it believes on *assessment of learning*. The progressive growth of student is majorly reflected through marks attained in subjects. But how that marks has been attained by the students hardly bothers by the teachers. After CCE come into the school system, majority of the private schools in India have shifted their focus from assessment of learning to assessment for learning both in case of scholastic and for co-scholastic domains.

But the government schools especially state funded government schools; assessment of learning is practiced ritually. RTE has mentioned in its document that "No student up to class VIII can be failed or expelled from school. All the students up till Class VIII will automatically be promoted to next class". The main aim of CCE as well as non-detention policy is to evaluate every aspect of the child during their presence in the school. It was also done to reduce the workload of children by taking continuous tests of the students throughout the year. Under the new system, the student's will be evaluated throughout the year through a series of circular and extra-circular activities. The grades will be awarded based on work experience skills, dexterity, innovation, steadiness, teamwork, public speaking, behavior, etc. But unfortunately, school system has taken non-detention policy in other way round and thus instead of assessing continuously throughout the year through various means (tools and technique), teachers depend more upon paper-pencil test for progression of learning especially in the scholastic domain. Co-scholastic domain an integral aspect of learning is hardly measured as result comprehensive evaluation and through it holistic development of the individual learner is hardly practiced.

On the contrary, government schools understood non-detention policy as automatic promotion without judging the quality of learning of a learner at periodic interval of time. This has resulted into non-development of any of the faculties of the learner. Thus, quality has been the concern in the government elementary schools. The recent survey of ASER and NAS indicated that learners of government schools often lag behind in the academic performance than their private counterparts. This is irrespective of the fact, that majority of the teachers working in the state funded schools are qualified than the private schools. The position of the States like Bihar, UP, WB and Madhya Pradesh is more miserable. MP one among the states which has low level of educational attainment has started many initiatives in improving the quality of education offered in the elementary schools.

But the recent survey done by ASER indicated that 48.1%, 56.5% and 64.3% of Class VI, VII and VII students (rural) are unable to read class II text book. In the subject mathematics, fundamental operation like subtraction and division, it has reported that 20-34% of class VI VII and VIII are unable to do two digit subtraction and single digit division. State Planning commission has almost similar kind of report related to educational achievement and infrastructural facilities in the MP government

schools (ASER, 2016; NUEPA, 2013). The government has taken several initiatives for promoting quality education and one of it is Pratibha Parv wherein not only infrastructural facilities of the schools are taken care off but also the educational attainment of the students are being assessed to improve upon the existing the quality of learning. Recently, Pratibha Parv was celebrated from 18-20 January 2017 across MP. For the investigator, witnessing the *Pratibha Parv* in government schools was the first occasion and how it is conducted in the schools and how it is a comprehensive learning assessment which brings quality improvement in the learning system. How it is different from the CCE as prescribed in the RTE.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the assessment practices of Pratibha Parv
2. To find out the gap in the assessment practices with RTE (if any).

Design of the Study: The present research was a qualitative in nature wherein analysis of the documents related to Pratibha Parv, and its prescribed theoretical comprehensive assessment practice was analyzed. Moreover,

Sample: Purposive sampling for selection of schools was done as these schools are nearby to the investigator area of working and residence. Moreover, it was selected as internship programme was going of the teacher education institution where the investigator is presently working. A small sample of ten government middle schools located in Old Bhopal city was selected for the present research. To fulfill the objectives one regular teacher and two internship teachers from each of the schools were part of the sample.

Tools: Interview with regular teachers, Focus Group Discussion with intern teachers' and Participant Observation at the time of conduct of examination of Pratibha Parv was used as a tool of research. The detailed information on the assessment system followed before and after conduct of examination was collected from regular teachers along with the assessment practices normally carried out throughout the year.

Data Collection: Data were collected through primary sources. Documents of Pratibha Parv were obtained from the government website for desk analysis. In addition, interview with regular teachers, Focus group Discussions with intern teachers and what has happened on the days of Praibha parv was observed by the investigator.

Result Analysis

Analysis of the Document of Pratibha Parv: Pratibha Parv is programme started by MP government in the elementary schools for Class VI-VIII students in the subjects-language, Mathematics, Science, Social Science and English. It is initiated by government to bring quality education in elementary schools. The main objective of this programme was not only ensuring improvement in quality education in elementary schools but also to assess the academic performance of students. As per the document of Pratibha Parv:

> *It is a three day festival of excellence, is a comprehensive initiative for the assessment of teaching and learning, and evaluation of educational facilities and activities. It endeavours to assess the academic performance (abilities) of students and track it at regular intervals at the elementary education level (p.39).*

Thus, Pratibha Parv took into cognizance the assessment of scholastic and co-scholastic areas and thus a prepared a comprehensive profile about each student abilities in not only academic domains but also non-academic domains which the RTE and within it CCE talks about. This programme is implemented through Rajya Siksha Kendra, and the coordinating agencies include District, Block and Cluster Resource centers. National Institute of Informatics provides technical support, Tribal Department and Department of Public Instructions also help in to provide logistics, administrative, and other support. The process of implementation has been shown in Fig. 1.

Thus, Pratibha Parv includes:

❑ Scholastic Assessment of Different Subjects;

❑ Assessment of teaching arrangements and facilities in the schools,

❑ Assessment of Mid-Day Meal scheme for health and nutrition,

❑ Progress on the syllabus;
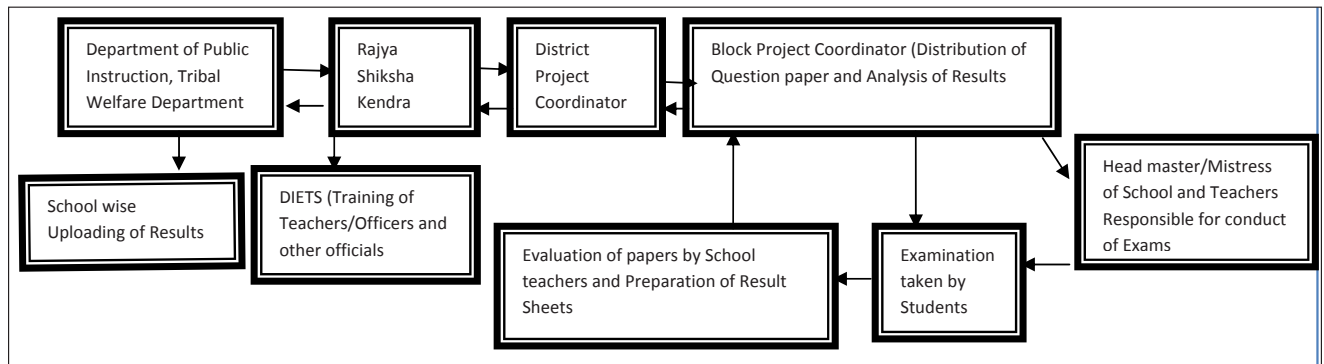
❑ Assessment of Attendance of students

Fig. 1: Flow Diagram of Process of Implementation

❑ Maintenance of school records.

❑ General knowledge of students

Pratibha Parv is the responsibility of School Education Department but responsibility of organizing it lies on the shoulder of State level agency called Rajya Shiksha Kendra (RSK). District Level and Block Level Project Coordinators are also involved. It also includes, school teachers, principals/Headmasters/Head Mistress and Local bodies like SMC, Village Panchayats.

Phase-I : *Advocacy and sensitization process* to all the stakeholders including DEO/BRC/DRC/CRC plus the Community. Even the School Management Committee (SMC), is involved at the lowest level for its campaign and advocacy.

Phase-II: *Preparation of Question Paper and Training of Officials:* State and District level Bodies like RSK, DIET are responsible for preparing and designing questionnaires. DIET provides training to the officers, teachers and other officials involved in Pratibha Parv especially in conducting, preparing and designing the evaluations, so that they can monitor and supervise implementation. District Collectors are nodal officers. Question papers are set senior officers at the district level and once prepared, copies of the question papers are provided to the Block Resource Persons in sealed envelopes.

Phase-III: *Conduct of Examinations and Other Activities in Schools:* The sealed envelopes containing examination question papers are opened by the headmasters of different schools on the day of the examination in the presence of the chairperson of the school. Students appear for the test and the evaluation of the answer sheets is undertaken school-wise by the teachers, after which answer sheets are attested by district level officials, principals and

higher faculty authorities. Once the evaluation process is over, school-wise data is compiled at the level of the Block Resource Centre for further analysis by school authorities and teachers before the report is uploaded on the state education portal to be accessed by all stakeholders.

Phase-IV: *Post Evaluation Process:* The results of the Pratibha Parv create the foundation for developing school improvement plans attending to areas of academic and curriculum activities that require special attention. The initiative provides feedback on different aspects such as school infrastructure, teaching and learning processes, achievement levels of students in different subjects, identification of weak students, teacher training and meeting other needs and requirements. Information on weak schools, blocks, districts, state-wide rankings and identified areas of school improvement (specific to each school) are made available to decision makers to further enhance the process for improving the performance of schools and students, by looking into factors that are negatively impacting performance. Information generated by the evaluation is online and is available for public access, thereby enhancing transparency. Pratibha Parv is regarded as a unique model of system reengineering in schools.

Responses of School Principals on Pratibha Parv: In regard to the process of conducting the Pratibha Parv, all the Principals/Headmaster/Headmistress who was interviewed, all of them at some point of time were involved in the process of conducting, supervision, monitoring and implementation of the Pratibha parv programme. But none of the Principal/Headmaster/Headmistress was involved in preparation, designing of question papers. Neither they were involved in post evaluation process. All of the principals/ Headmaster/Mistress

were involved in school level examination process or in the supervision process. All the principals have no idea about how the entire process of Pratibha parv works. Principals/ Headmaster /Headmistress did say that records as mentioned in Pratibha Parv maintained by the schools but they were seldom being used by the administration as these records were kept in schools except that of attendance of students. In case of poor result, educational officials though take appropriate action against the school or teachers.

On being asked how it is different from the CCE? Principals replied that it held once a year, and it complements school examination conducted thrice as per government instruction. Did tools like observation, sociometric, anecdotal, portfolio or student profile being maintained in the schools? All the headmaster/mistress/principals admitted that their schools prepared some records but these were health and academic achievements, but other records were not prepared. Whether monthly test were held? Four principals/ Headmaster/ headmistress replied no but other said yes to it. What are the other means through students are being evaluated? They replied teachers normally asked oral questions related to the topic/subject? Did they maintain any records of progressive growth of learners in the classroom in a particular subject? None of the principals replied in yes. What they replied is quoted here:

" स्कूलों में इतना काम होता है हम कितना रिकॉर्ड बनाए और उसे संभाल कर रखें/ इन रिकॉर्ड का कोई लाभ नहीं होता है क्योंकि बच्चों के अभीभवक तो स्कूल तो आते नहीं है और नहीं सरकार को इसकी जरूरत है. प्रतिभा पर्व के समय जो रिकॉर्ड बनाए जाते है वह भी प्रयोग में नहीं लाये जाते" |

When being asked under Pratibha parv schools were given 5000-7000 money for improvement in quality in education? They replied no such money was given from government side. Some of the But school never follows the pattern of CCE as mentioned in RTE and neither various tools were used to assess the different aspects of scholastic and co-scholastic domains. Records were generated in the form of student profile indicating any serious information related to health or achievements. But they were hardly being used for students. They

were more of normative features which schools were following unlike in private schools. Some of the Principals/Headmaster/Headmistress:

"प्रतिभा पर्व में बच्चो का मूल्याकन केवल शैक्षिक विषयां का होता है/ बच्चों को इससे बहुत लाभ नहीं होता है"

"सरकार का मकसद अच्छी शिक्षा है तो स्कूलों की अवस्था ठीक करे/ सी सी इ के अंतर्गत अगर मूल्यांकन करना है तो इन सभी के लिए जो रिपोर्ट कार्ड तैयार होती है उनको ठीक तरीके से प्रयोग करे'

स्कूलों न तो इतनी जगह है और नहीं इतनी सुविधाए जिससे छात्रों का सर्वागीण विकास का मूल्यांकन किया जा सकें"

Response of Teachers: On being interviewed with teachers it was felt that they had a similar kind of views which were held by Principals/ Head masters/ Headmistress. Schools usually took three terminal examinations and fourth one was Pratibha Parv. They said that since non-detention policy is in place our hands were tied. On being asked whether they followed the CCE pattern of assessment system? Not exactly, but usually we conduct activities once a week called Bal Sabha on Saturday and therein they ensured participation of the students. They also kept the record of the activities as Department may asked for it. In between week, they did not have time to conduct any activities. Even on seeing the table the investigator found that, there is no space of co-curricular activities. What are the co-curricular activities organized in the school? Teachers told that skit, poem competition, painting, rangoli, cooking etc. Did students participate in the inter-school competition held at other schools?

हम बाल सभा स्कूल में कराते हैं और हम कोशिश करते है की इस में सभी छात्र-छात्रा भाग लें यह प्रतिस्पर्धा हम हर शनिवार कराते है/ पर इसकी कोई औपचारिक रिपोर्ट नहीं तैयार की जाती है/ प्रतिभा पर्व पर जो क्रियाएं की जाती है उन्हें जरूर हम रिकॉर्ड में रखते हैं/

Investigator found out that though BAL sabha was conducted in the schools but it was confined to few activities and nothing new in it which the teachers usually conducted every Saturday. Definitely students attendance did increased during

the Pratibha parv. Even few students who were highly irregular they did come in the Pratibha Parv. This is because attendance was a big issue during Pratibha parv otherwise in regular days teachers hardly enquire if students were coming in the school exception if it was along gap where enquiry reaches to home via other students. Most important to note here was that in all the ten schools there is hardly any space for any physical activities. When being asked about various tools being used related to assessment practices like sociometric, observation, anecdotal records, health records, co-curricular achievement records or scholastic records etc? Teachers replied that they normally did not use any specific tools but yes observation, sociometric, tools they used in informal manner. School profile were generated for each students and marks of terminal I, II, & III were filled along with home, students characteristics, students achievement in co-curricular areas.

जब खास तोर पर पुछा गया की क्या शिक्षा विभाग कभी बच्चों से जूढ़ी विभिन्न रिकॉर्ड की जाँच करता है अथवा रिकॉर्ड विभाग में जमा करता है? जब कोई ऑफिसर आता है तो रिकॉर्ड देखें जाते है नहीं तो इन रिकॉर्ड का कोई महत्व नहीं है/ इन्हें हम स्कूल में ही रखते है/ यहाँ तक अभीभवक भी इन्हें नहीं देकने आता है/

When asked how you utilize the records generated during Pratibha Parv for students benefit. Teachers replied and I quote:

प्रतिभा पर्व के समय जो भी रिकॉर्ड तयार किये जाते है उन्हें स्कूल में संभाल कर रख दिए जाते है और ऑफिसर या शिक्षा विभाग के मागें जाने पर दर्शय जाते है नहीं तो छात्रों को सत्र के अंत में सोप दिए जाते हैं. इन रिकॉर्ड में अधिकतर छात्रों की शैक्षिक एवं अन्य गतिविधियों का मूल्याकन होता है/

On being asked whether these results were used for students' improvement?

Teachers replied:

अधिकतर नहीं क्योंकि उपचारात्मक शिक्षण स्कूलों में हो ही नहीं पता है क्योंकि नॉन-डिटेंशन पालिसी की कारण शिक्षक किस्सी को फ़ैल नही कर सकता है/ साथ ही यह भी है जिस स्कूलों के परिणाम ख़राब आता है शाशन उन स्कूल और शिक्षक के खिलाफ करवाई करता है/ तो फ़ैल होने का तोह प्रश्न ही नहीं उठता/

Since our intern teachers are also being there while Pratibha Parv they revealed some astonishing facts which did tell us about the Pratibha parv.

प्रतिभा पर्व में जो बच्चे उस दिन नहीं आते है और वह रोज आ रहे है तो उनकी कॉपी कोई और लिख कर देता है/ इस के आलवा ब्लैकबोर्ड पर उनके यह तो जवाब लिखाये जाते है यह उन्हें जबानी बताई जाती है/ क्योंकि कॉपिय स्कूल में ही चेक होती है इस लिए कुछ जवाब गलात करवा दिए जाते है/ इस बार हम ने छात्रों को जवाब लिका दिए था/

Investigator also had similar kind of experiences in some schools and few years back had similar experience in two of the government school that teachers either written the answer on the blackboards or dictate the answers. Even the students who had unable to come on that day his/her answers sheets were prepared and checked and sent to the block level. Even I had seen teachers asking some of the bright students to write the answers for weaker students. I quote two incidents here where I found this to happen:

Case-I : *Almost two years back when I visited school I found that B.Ed interns of mine college were not teaching. I asked them why? They replied Pratibha Parv is going on. One of the teacher of the school explained me about the assessment practice government regularly conducts in a year for Class I-VIII. It is was an external examination but teachers of the schools were not only dictating the answers but also telling the bright students to write the answers in the copies of weak students. Even I found that some teachers were writing the answers on the blackboard. I thought that kind of Assessment practice it is?*

Case-II: *Last year I was in another government schools wherein I was in observation round and I knew that Pratibha parv is going on. I saw that mine students were instructed by school teachers to help them in completing the questions by dictating answers to the students. Interns were given special instruction to wrong answers to some of the questions so that it won't come under suspicion. Answer copies checked by our interns as instructed.*

Moreover, in the name of comprehensive assessment of child few activities were organized records being generated but never being utilized for the improvement of learners. The ASER (2016) and NAS

report of class VIII and V of this year and previous year reflects the results of Madhya Pradesh. The achievement level of students are poor, dropout rate is high. Boys dropout rate is high than the girls. Poor infrastructure, non-availability of basic infrastructure like usable toilets, potable water, electric connection, children are sitting on mat etc indicates the quality in government schools. "Assessment practices are more farce than real" few teachers quoted. But defiantly it should not be generalize but while speaking to some of my colleagues who are in the helm of affairs and in education department also said that even teachers are to be blamed for as they did not do anything regarding improvement of students. One of them quoted that government asked schools those students who are weak even after passing the certain class they should be taught separate classes in summer break. What does this mean? They replied that teachers were not performing the duties. Many of the teachers were found absent during duties when department went for inspection. So, one Pratibha Parv would not change until and unless teachers change the system.

Suggestions

Pratibha parv, a nice initiative by the government of MP to have comprehensive assessment of school and children regarding infrastructural development and assessing children abilities but it should plug the holes of the entire assessment system to have a better result of it. Some of the suggestions:

1. An independent agency should conduct it like any NGO in coordination so chances of accountability will increase

2. One single OMR based examination especially for students VI-VIII to avoid inter evaluator variability.

3. Checking should be done at district level under district education officer.

4. In regard to assessment of co-scholastic domain block and district level office should conduct it thrice in a year wherein participation from each school in all the events must be compulsory.

5. Records generated related to scholastic and co-scholastic domains must be evaluated at block level officer, village panchayat or SMC.

6. Government has done an excellent work by creating education portal dedicated to Pratibha parv wherein separate link pages related to monitoring, academic performance evaluation, infrastructure analysis reports school and grade wise web pages are created but it is not being updated. Therefore, it is essential to update which will help the school to monitor its progress. If it is possible use the child Samagara ID for each student and made available the monitoring report on the website then it would be better to track the progress of child and code will be Samagra ID.

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