
Unit - 5 □ Educational Assessment and Identification of Needs

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5.1 Introduction

Education is a dynamic process. It is flexible in nature. So a number of challenges arise. The rapid changes and increased complexity of today's world present new challenges and put new demands on our education system. There has been generally a growing awareness of the necessity to change and improve the preparation of students for productive functioning in the continually changing and highly demanding environment. We have to make a number of decisions in different situations. Therefore, no simple, single approach of assessment can be applied with the expectation that significant improvements of the system will occur.

Assessment based on school curriculum has several benefits for the teachers and students. It helps the teachers to determine the methods and techniques of teachings and it helps the students to plan out their study patterns and pace of learning. Assessment involves

the use of empirical data on student learning to refine programs and improve student learning. Teachers come to know about the student's strengths, weakness, learning style and many other factors.

5.2 Objectives

After going through this unit you will be able to

- Differentiate between concept of 'assessment in education' and 'educational assessment'.
- Understand different factors which can influence learner's academic performance,
- Understand the concept and scope of educational assessment.
- Explain Different types of assessment and assessment tools and technique, there advantages and disadvantages.
- Discuss recent trend and issues in the field of educational assessment of children with hearing impairment.

5.3 Educational assessment

The term 'assessment in education' and 'educational assessment' is not same. The former phrase i.e. 'assessment' in education 'covers assessment in its narrow perspective, whereas, the latter phrase i.e. 'educational assessment' indicates assessment in a wider perspective. The 'assessment in education' is mainly done for the purpose of intervention, whereas, 'educational assessment' includes diagnosis, intervention, and placement of children. The 'assessment in education' focuses more on the assessment of achievement of curricular activities of students while; 'educational assessment' focuses on all major areas of development of students. The specific instructional objectives set for students form the bases for assessment in education.

On the other hand, educational assessment focuses on the broader aims of education. The tools and techniques required for 'educational assessment' are more in number as compared to 'assessment in education'. Multidisciplinary team is required for 'educational assessment' whereas; an educator or a team of educators are involved in carrying out 'assessment in education'. According to McLaughlin & Lewis (2001), educational assessment is defined as the systematic process of gathering educationally relevant information to make legal and instructional decisions about the provision of

special services. Like any other type of assessment, educational assessment is also an ongoing process. Educational assessment of children with hearing impairment generally begins at the time of identification. It is a very systematic process. A multidisciplinary team of rehabilitation experts comprising special educators, audiologists, speech and language pathologists, psychologists, and social workers are involved in the process of educational assessment. This is because; education in its broader perspective covers all the domains of development of children. Though, majority of these professionals is not directly involved in education of children with hearing impairment, the assessment reports of all of these professionals are essential in order to determine the educational placement and for planning the intervention process including goals to be achieved.

In case of special education one of the main problems is sustainability and quality education. We know that merely admitting a special child to school does not guarantee its quality of education; the more important thing is sustaining him/her in the educational setups. Once the children with hearing impairment are enrolled in an appropriate educational setup, we must ensure that they do not drop out. For this to happen, the teaching style, methods, content should match the students' learning style and cognitive abilities. Assessment plays a significant role in providing information about the current level of functioning of the students as also about strengths and weakness in the academic process. This is especially important for school going children with hearing impairment. Their academic performance is a major concern for which educational assessment is carried out to assess their progress in all areas of school curriculum. In addition, the areas such as language and communication skills, socio-emotional skills, auditory skills, learning styles etc. are also assessed with a view to identify the strengths and weaknesses and the nature and type of support they may require to succeed in school. According to Eccarius and Malinda (1997), appropriateness of the educational placement, mode through which students with hearing impairment learn best (auditory, visual, or tactile), curriculum, amplification, and decisions about transition from service to service that families, schools, and individuals, depend on the outcomes of assessment. It is to note that the scope of educational assessment extends well beyond the school years also. Many a time, young adults with hearing impairment also require educational assessment for higher education or vocational education. The assessment of various areas of development in them helps in decision making and to guide them to a successful transition from school to college for higher education or to vocational institutions and other areas of adult life.

To sum up, the educational assessment is characterized by a team approach and is an ongoing process which includes special educators and parents for they deal with the

education of these special children directly. On the other hand, associated professionals with multidisciplinary expertise include psychologists, speech and language pathologists and audiologists. The composition of the team would change depending upon the need. Further, it is to note that educational assessment requires a wide variety of techniques and tools. Generally the techniques used for such assessment include (i) testing and (ii) observational techniques. Testing is predominantly used for assessment. The following sections explain the various types of tests. You would also gain more information about educational assessment in your practical manual of this paper.

5.4 Factors affecting Educational Performance

The educational performance of a learner can be influenced by a variety of individual, family as well as environmental factors. A thorough knowledge of these factors will prove very helpful for teachers and parents in understanding and guiding their children's learning. Some important personal factors are following:-

5.4.1 Individual factor

A. Physical factors

Under this group are included such factors as health, physical development, nutrition, visual and physical defects, and glandular abnormality. It is generally recognized that ill health retards physical and motor development, and malnutrition interferes with learning and physical growth. Children suffering from visual, auditory, and other physical defects are seriously handicapped in developing skills such as language development, reading writing, spelling etc. It has been demonstrated that various glands of internal secretion, such as the thyroid and pituitary glands, affect behavior. The health of the learner will likely affect his ability to learn and his power to concentrate.

B. Age and maturation

Learning is directly dependent upon age and maturation. No learning can take place unless individual is matured enough to learn. Some children can learn better at earlier age while others take more time to learn the same content.

C. Emotional condition

Describe emotional condition enhance the quality and speed of learning. Happiness, joy and satisfaction are always favorable for any type of learning. Adverse emotional condition, on the other hand, hinders learning.

D. Interests

Various types of interests of the students can be exploited to facilitate their learning. The interests during early infancy are mostly limited and short lived. As the child grows older his interests diversify and stabilize.

E. Motivation

Motivation is the heart of the learning process. It generates the will in an individual to do something.

F. Intelligence

Intelligence as expressed by an I.Q score on an intelligence test is positively related to learning. Generally, students with higher I.Q learn rapidly. However higher I.Q in itself is no guarantee for rapid learning

G. Sensation and perception

Sensation and perception are the psychological factors which help in learning. Sensation is at the core of perception. There are five sense organ i.e., skin, ears, tongue, eyes and nose. These sense organ are the gateway of knowledge and help in perception of various stimuli in the environment.

H. Learning style

Learning style is one of the major factors which can influence learner's academic performance. Below we have the three major learning styles.

a) Auditory Learners someone with an auditory learning style has a preference for the transfer of information through listening: to the spoken word, of self or others, of sounds and noises. These people will use phrases such as 'let me hear', 'let's talk it over' and will be best able to perform a new task after listening to instructions from an expert. These are the people who are happy being given spoken instructions over the telephone, and can remember all the words to songs that they hear.

b) Visual Learners Someone with a Visual learning style has a preference for seen or observed things, including pictures, diagrams, demonstrations, displays, handouts, films, flip-chart, etc. These people will use phrases such as 'show me', 'let's have a look at that' and will be best able to perform a new task after reading the instructions or watching someone else do it first. These are the people who will work from lists and written directions and instructions,

c) Kinesthetic Learners Someone with a Kinesthetic learning style has a preference for physical experience - touching, feeling, holding, doing, practical hands-on

experiences. These people will use phrases such as ‘let me try’, ‘how do you feel?’ and will be best able to perform a new task by going ahead and trying it out, learning as they go. These are the people who like to experiment, hands-on, and never look at the instructions first.

5.4.2. Family factor

A. Socioeconomic status of family

Social background remain one of the major sources of educational inequality. Children from low Socioeconomic status families are more likely to exhibit the following patterns in terms of educational outcomes compared to children from high SES families:

- have lower levels of literacy, numeracy and comprehension;
- have lower retention rates
- have lower higher education participation rates
- are more likely to have difficulties with their studies and display negative attitudes to school.
- have less successful school-to-job transitions.

B. Parental awareness

Is also one of the factors affecting academic performance of students in school, parental psychologist believes that most modern parents recognize the importance of education as a preparation for successful living. They therefore willingly made reasonable sacrifice to educate their children because they believes that education is more than any assets and therefore encourage their children to read in order to develop their physical, academic, intellectual and social qualities.

C. Educational background of parents

Educational background of parents Influence and affect the academic performance of students in other words students whose parents has highly educational standard perform very well because their parents were so concern and conscious about their children academic performance since they have gone through these process, they also encourage and motivate them to work very hard so that they can emulate them and even have higher educational standard than them they also create time to check their books and provide additional help to them through extra moral lesson while students from low or non - educational background might not know the effect of it, in some instance those

with low educational background might encourage their children in that they misused their opportunity during time and will not want that to happen to their children.

5.4.3 Environmental Factors :

The influence of environment begins since the time of the conception of the child in the womb of the mother. Fetus in the womb is influenced by mother's mental, physical and emotional conditions.

The external environment starts from the time of birth of the child. The external environment refers to the surroundings which prevail in home, school and locality.

At these places the child interacts with other members of the family, teachers' classmates or peers and neighbors. He establishes relationship with them. Some of the environmental factors are as under:

A. Natural surroundings

Natural surrounding covers the climatic and atmospheric conditions. For a limited time, humidity and high temperature can be tolerated but prolonged humidity and high temperature become unbearable.

They decrease mental efficiency. The intellectual productivity and creativeness of people living in hot regions are much low. Likewise, the morning time is always better for mastering difficult tasks.

B. Social surroundings

Social surroundings Includes especially the environment of home, school and locality. Learning is affected by physical conditions at home such as large family, small family (specific family of the study) insufficient ventilation, improper lighting, uncomfortable temperature, noisy home environment due to use of radio, and TV etc.

The socio-emotional factors such as child rearing practices, reward and punishment, scope for freedom in activities are decision making play and study facilities, disorganization and discord among birth positions such as eldest or youngest child has his definite influence on learning.

C. Cultural Demands and Social Expectation

They influence learning deeply; the spirit of culture is reflected in its social and educational institutions. For instance, in an industrialized culture, the emphasis mostly centers mechanical science and preparing children for highly mechanized vocations.

Likewise, in an agriculture based community, the educational process focuses on preparing its members for those skills which are suited to the needs of an agrarian community .Relationship with Teachers, Parents and Peers; This relationship can be explained as under:

D. The setup of learning

The teacher is an important constituent in the instructional process. The way he teaches and manages the students has an effect on their learning.

An authoritarian teacher will create an aggression and hostility among students. On the contrary for it a democratic teacher will create a participatory climate for learning.

The democratic environment leads students to constructive and cooperative behaviour. Generally, students learn better in a democratic setup because they like democratic procedures.

E. Relationship with parents

It plays a vital role in the learning process of the student. If the child-parents relationship is based on mutual respect and faith, it can facilitate his or her learning.

On the contrary to it a distorted and unhealthy environment, adversely affects the learning of the student. The upward mobility brings resistance on the part of the student to learn. Student's belongings to such families find themselves unable to cope up.

F. A healthy peer group

This relationship also plays an important role in learning. Student-student relationship in the classroom, school, society, etc., creates a particular type of emotional climate. The climate solely depends upon their relationships.

A sound relationship provides a tension free environment to the student enabling him to learn more and to complete in the class. If the relationship among peers is not good, it adversely affects their learning.

5.5 Types of Assessment

Norm referenced and criterion referenced tests

For a comprehensive educational evaluation of the students with hearing impairment, various techniques and a battery of test/ tools are required. These include personality tests, intelligence tests, achievement tests; attitude scales developmental scales, and aptitude tests. Tests used for educational assessment are classified as (i) norm referenced tests, and (ii) criterion referenced tests. The data obtained from these tests are quantitative

in nature. According to McLaughlin & Lewis (2001), educational assessment using norm-referenced tests is often considered more for gathering information for making eligibility related decisions. The non-standardized criterion referenced tests are more useful for classroom instructional designs. Let us understand each of these tests in detail.

A. Norm referenced tests

Norm-referenced refers to standardized tests that are designed to compare and rank test takers in relation to one another. Norm-referenced tests report whether test takers performed better or worse than a hypothetical average student, which is determined by comparing scores against the performance results of a statistically selected group of test takers, typically of the same age or grade level, who have already taken the exam. The main purpose of norm referenced test is to measure general abilities and skills of student. Example of Norm referenced test is Grammatical Analysis of Elicited Language -Pre sentence Level (GAEL-P).

Grammatical analysis of elicited language -pre sentence level (GAEL-P) is a norm referenced test originally developed in English by Moog, Kozak and Geers (1983). The English version of GAEL-P test was originally adapted in Marathi by Gathoo (1992) and was standardized on children with hearing impairment in the age range 3-6 years. This test in Marathi was developed for assessing the children at very early ages of language acquisition. It was further designed to assess the grammatical aspects of spoken /or signed Marathi in a standardized test setting. The test consists of a set of toys, games and activities designed to elicit specific target words, phrases and sentences.

Calculating norm-referenced scores is called the "norming process," and the comparison group is known as the "norming group." Norming groups typically comprise only a small subset of previous test takers, not all or even most previous test takers. Test developers use a variety of statistical methods to select norming groups, interpret raw scores, and determine performance levels.

Norm-referenced scores are generally reported as a percentage or percentile ranking. For example, a student who scores in the seventieth percentile performed as well or better than seventy percent of other test takers of the same age or grade level, and thirty percent of students performed better (as determined by norming-group scores).

Issues in the use of norm referenced tests

The major concerns related to norm-referenced tests are (i) non availability and (ii) the issues of fairness and equity (Lam, 1995). These have restricted the use of norm-

referenced tests for educational assessment of students with hearing impairment. The rising interest in addressing the issues of fairness and equity in relation to gender, linguistic backgrounds, and disability has also led many teachers to limit the use of norm-referenced tests. According to Lam (1995), individual characteristics such as gender; ethnicity, race, linguistic background or disability may result in biases in assessment. Hence, appropriateness of testing using norm-referenced test is a major issue in the educational assessment of students with hearing impairment.

Another concern in the use of norm-referenced tests for students with hearing impairment is the validity of the test results. According to Luckner (2002), the goal of norm-referenced measures is group comparison. This becomes a challenge when groups are initially heterogeneous in language, exceptionality, and/or culture. As a result, many students with hearing impairment often perform at levels two to four years below their same-aged peers, even though they may be knowledgeable of the content (Musselman&Szanto, 1998), All these result in invalid test results and mistaken conclusions regarding the abilities of students with hearing impairment.

B. Criterion referenced tests

Criterion referenced tests are very popular amongst teachers for educational assessment of students. Generally, Criterion-referenced tests and assessments are designed to measure the specific knowledge and skills possessed by students against a fixed set of predetermined criteria or learning standards. According to Anastasi (1988), this form of testing uses a specified content domain as its interpretive frame of reference rather than a specified population of persons. According to Taylor (1997), it measures the student's mastery of content. Criterion referenced tests are either standardized or non-standardized. Generally, majority of the schools in India follows non-standardized criterion referenced tests. Example is teacher made tests (TMTs) for evaluating the students' achievement in various curricular subjects. The teachers themselves develop this type of tests based on what is to be evaluated in students. As a part of development, the questions (items) are developed and documented in the form of question papers. The marks obtained on administration of the test are then compared against the established criteria, rather than against other students. If the student's score is equal to or better than the established criteria, that student is said to have mastered or passed that aspect of the criteria. For example, students scoring above 60% are placed in first class.

Issues in the use of criterion referenced tests

Most of the teachers use non standardized criterion referenced tests/teacher made tests

for educational assessment of students with hearing impairment. The Criterion referenced tests are more subjective on criteria, such as content, type of questions, total marks, duration etc. Most of these tests do not give consideration to the students' language background and previous knowledge, experience, weightage to contents etc. Hence, interpretation of results from criterion referenced tests has to be done cautiously. Literature reveals following problems of criterion referenced tests for students with hearing impairment.

According to Martin and Mouny (2003), construction of items that are difficult or confusing in general present an unfair additional challenge to deaf individuals. Yarroch (1991) claimed that frequently students' ability is overestimated by multiple choice tests. In contrast to this, Moores (1996) claimed that for deaf, such multiple choice tests underestimate the ability. McKee and Lang (1982) focused on question formats, and mentioned that the linguistic manner in which an enquiry is posed may affect the results and subsequent decisions made about student performance and ranking within a group. According to Quigley, Wilbur and Montanelli (1974), 'wh' questions are more difficult for deaf students than 'yes/no' questions, but are perceived less difficult than 'true/false' questions (McKee and Lang, 1982). Based upon his extensive experience with assessment of deaf individuals, Martin (2005) noted several issues with multiple-choice examinations. All these issues of non-standardized criterion referenced tests have a serious threat to the validity and reliability of the obtained results.

Subjectivity in terms of expectation levels of teachers, leniency in correcting the answer scripts etc are yet other drawbacks of a criterion-referenced test. The other concern expressed is of the linguistic bias. According to Brown et. al (1983), a test item is linguistically biased if a language handicapped student has mastered a course objective, but is unable to demonstrate mastery because of syntactical or lexical factors. Hence; language of test items may be a determining factor in deciding whether or not a student demonstrates mastery of course content. In the absence of content and other forms of validity, the results obtained from a criterion- referenced test may not provide an accurate picture.

C. Comprehensive and Continuous Assessment

Continuous and comprehensive evaluation is a process of assessment, mandated by the Right to Education Act, of India. This approach to assessment has been introduced by state governments in India, as well as by the Central Board of Secondary Education in India, for students of sixth to tenth grades and twelfth in some schools. The Karnataka government has introduced CCE for grades 1 through 9. The main aim of CCE is to

evaluate every aspect of the child during their presence at the school. This is believed to help reduce the pressure on the child during/before examinations as the student will have to sit for multiple tests throughout the year, of which no test or the syllabus covered will be repeated at the end of the year, whatsoever. The CCE method is claimed to bring enormous changes from the traditional chalk and talk method of teaching, provided it is implemented accurately.

As a teacher in a class especially when you are dealing with CWSN, it is necessary to assess your child in regular basis .Learning, particularly at the primary stage, has to be evaluated on a developmental pattern, hence it has to be evaluated in a continuous form. As education is a continuous process of development. Therefore, Evaluation has to be carried out in every possible situation or activity. By comprehensive evaluation, we mean that any type of evaluation has to cover all the learning experiences of a child such as knowledge, skills, understanding, appreciation, interest, and all the important areas of growth and development.

Let us now discuss what to evaluate in learners while we talk about continuous and comprehensive evaluation.As a teacher during the preparation of lesson plan you have to formulate the instructional objectives which means the desirable changes of behavior within the learner after the lesson is implemented. These objectives are the criteria against which you as a teacher are making a value judgment (evaluation). Evaluation should be carried out in relation to learners' cognitive, affective and psychomotor growth. Cognitive growth refers to the intellectual development of learners (such as learners' knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation). Affective growth emphasizes learners' attitude, interest and personal development. Psychomotor growth deals with learners' ability to perform some activity or do some practical work. Therefore, if you want the teaching-learning process to be really effective, you should evaluate the learners continuously and comprehensively.

Advantages of comprehensive and continuous assessment

- Identifying learning progress of students at regular time intervals on small portions of content.
- Employing a variety of remedial measures of teaching based on learning needs and potential of CWSN.
- Desisting from using negative comments on the learner's performance.
- Encouraging learning through employment of a variety of teachingaids and techniques.

- Involving learners actively in the learning process.
- Recognizing and encouraging specific abilities of students, who do not excel in academics but perform well in other co-curricular areas.
- To identify learning difficulties in mastering certain competencies and the intensity of such learning difficulties.
- To improve students' learning through diagnosis of their performance.
- To plan appropriate remedial measures to enable the students who have learning difficulties in mastering the competency.
- To improve or alter instructional strategies to enhance the quality of teaching.
- To decide upon the selecting of various media and materials as a supportive system in mastering the competencies.
- To strengthen evaluation procedure itself

To conclude Continuous and comprehensive assessment is not an end in itself As it presents a happy combination of external and internal evaluation it offers opportunities to teachers to make suitable changes in their efforts. Continuous feedback also provides direction to pupils and parents and to all those concerned for remedial steps.

D. Formative Assessment

The term 'formative evaluation' denotes the on-going of systematic assessment of learners' achievement while the term, course or instructional programme is in progress. Formative assessment measures student progress but it also helps the teacher by the feedback to the teacher provide information for modifying instructions .For example, when implementing a new activity in class, you can, through observation and / or surveying the students, determine whether or not the activity should be used again (or modified). A primary focus of formative assessment is to identify areas that may need improvement. This assessment is not carried out for the grading purpose. Thus, formative evaluation is 'evaluation for learning'

Types of Formative Assessment

- Teacher made test are generally used for these type of assessment.
- Observations during in-class activities of students non-verbal feedback during lecture.
- Homework exercises and class discussions.

- Question and answer sessions.
- Conferences between the instructor and student on a sub-unit.
- In-class activities where students informally present their results.

E. Summative Assessment

Summative assessment takes place at predetermined times after the learning has been completed and provides information and feedback that sums up the teaching and learning process. This is used to determine the extent to which the instructional objectives are achieved. The term 'summative evaluation' refers to assigning a grade for learners' achievement. Summative evaluation determines the extent to which the objectives have been achieved; whether learning is sufficiently complete so that the learner may qualify himself for the next unit of instruction. It provides the evidence that the programme is satisfactory and a new programme for the learner is needed; feedback to the classroom teacher for the success or failure of the programme of instruction. It measures the extent to which the learner has attained the desired outcomes. Thus summative evaluation is 'evaluation of learning'.

Types of Summative Assessment

- Final examination.
- Term papers (drafts submitted throughout the semester would be a formative assessment)
- Projects (project phases submitted at various completion points could be formatively assessed)
- Portfolios (could also be assessed during its development as a formative assessment)
- Student evaluation of the course.

Formal Assessments

Formal assessment uses formal tests or structured continuous assessment to evaluate a learner's level of growth and development. Formal assessments have data which support the conclusions made from the test. We usually refer to these types of tests as standardized measures. These tests have been tried before on students and have statistics which support the conclusion such as the student is reading below average for his age. The data is mathematically computed and summarized. Scores such as percentiles, or standard scores are mostly commonly given from this type of assessment.

Characteristics of formal assessment.

This type of evaluation

- is formal in nature
- uses standardized tests or NRT's hence tools dependant, it compare the performances of a standardized group .
- has testing material and manuals containing details of administration and scoring .
- constructed by the experienced test specialist.
- gives valid and reliable result which is consistent,
- focuses on assessing the general skill.

Informal Assessments

In order to properly understand what informal assessments are, we should first differentiate them from formal assessments. Formal assessments are designed to tell how well a student has progressed as evaluated against other students. These are standardized tests, tests that are presented and graded in a formulated, consistent manner. These tests, through the gathering of data, are used to evaluate how students are doing when compared to a larger group of students.

On the other hand, informal assessments are those that are used to evaluate a student's own performance and progress individually. In the classroom, these take numerous forms and are simply the teacher's, student's, and parent's way of measuring that student's progress.

Characteristics of formal assessment-

This type of evaluation

- is informal in nature.
- Is generally used to assess the curricular objectives
- Give qualitative judgment
- Is generally developed based on the need
- Uses criterion referenced test.
- Example are-teacher made test, observation, Portfolios etc.

Traditional Assessment

Traditional assessments are the conventional methods of testing which usually produce a written document, such as an exam, or paper. Standardized tests, most state achievement tests, and high school graduation examinations are also examples of traditional assessments.

Characteristics of Traditional Assessment

- Traditional assessments usually produce a written document, such as a paper, test, or quiz.
- Traditional assessments usually take place at the end of a chapter, unit, or course of study.
- Traditional assessments often use the following types of questions -true/false, multiple choice, matching, short-answer, fill-in-the-blank, and essay.
- Students are usually tested individually.
- Students receive a numerical score or grade which often contributes to a student's final grade.
- Subject areas are usually tested in isolation.
- Also known as summative assessment.
- Classroom assessment should consist of a balance between traditional and alternative assessment.

Alternative Assessment

Alternative assessment is done to know what a student can do, emphasizing their strengths instead of their weaknesses. In the assessment, students, teachers, and sometimes parents select pieces from a student's combined work over the (usually four) years of school to demonstrate that learning and improvement has taken place over those years. It is to measure the skill of the student rather than his or her knowledge. Alternative assessments are also used to encourage student involvement in their assessment. Alternative assessment tools are performance based and different from traditional tests.

Features of alternative assessment:

- Instructor and learners focus on communication rather than the right answer.
- Require students to perform, create, produce or do something.

- Use real world context.
- Learners have opportunities to assess themselves and their peers.

Advantages of Alternative Assessments

- They provide a means of assessing valued skills that cannot be directly assessed with traditional tests.
- They provide a more realistic setting for student performance than traditional tests.
- They focus on student performance and the quality of work performed by students.
- They can be easily aligned with established learning outcomes.
- Process can be costly in terms of time, effort, equipment, materials, facilities, or funds.

Disadvantages of Alternative Assessments

- Process can be costly in terms of time, effort, equipment, materials, facilities, or funds.
- Rating process is sometimes more subjective than traditional exams.

Guidelines for Constructing Alternative Assessments

1. Instructional objectives or performance objective should be well defined.
2. Distinguish between those outcomes that can validly be assessed solely by performance assessments and those that can be assessed just as effectively by objective measures.
3. Create tasks that provide the student with ample opportunity to show student's ability to perform the targeted skill.
4. Decide what kinds of teacher guidance can be used while still allowing students the freedom to learn and do it their own way.
5. Try out the assessment and make revisions as necessary.

Performance-Based Assessment

Performance-based assessment is a way for students to demonstrate knowledge, skills, and material that they've learned. Performance-based assessment measures how well students can apply or use what they know, often in real-world situations. Research has

shown how this assessment practice helps teachers and principals support students in developing a deeper understanding of content, and provides a means to assess higher-order thinking skills.

Advantages of Performance based assessments:

- Instruction in most subject areas is being altered to include more practical applications of skills and to incorporate a greater focus on the understanding and combining of content and skills.
- Performance based assessments provide teachers with more information about the learning needs of their students and enable them to modify their methods to meet these needs. It also allow students to assess their own progress and, therefore, be more responsible for their education.
- Performance-based assessments allow teachers to assess areas of learning that traditional assessments do not address. Many traditional assessments do not directly measure progress toward the teacher's final learning objectives. Direct observation of students performing in a real-world setting provides a powerful way to measure both their knowledge and their ability to apply it.
- Performance-based assessments involve real-world tasks, students tend to find them more interesting useful and challenging.
- Performance-based assessments motivates students to use higher-order thinking skills such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. The more opportunities students are given to practice these skills, the more proficient they become at using them.

Disadvantages of Performance based assessments:

- Performance based assessments usually include fewer questions and call for a greater degree of subjective judgment than traditional testing methods.
- Performance based assessments usually the costly and Time consuming and labor intensive to design and execute. Performance based assessments must be carefully designed if used to document obtainment of student learning outcomes.

Curriculum based assessment (CBA)

Curriculum based assessment is assessment based on the curriculum materials for the grade level the child is in, or it may be adapted to the student's ability or IEP goals. For example, fourth grade children are mastering long division, but children with disabilities

in the same classroom may be mastering single digit divisors into two or three digit dividends.

Curriculum based assessment is used in the classroom during teaching for a very quick assessment /feedback of students. Thus the teacher come to know about the student's understanding of his/her teaching. by doing this he knows whether or not to move on the next level.

Following are the major characteristics of Curriculum based assessment:

- Curriculum based assessment follows direct assessment of academic skills like observation, testing etc.
- Matters are developed based on the prescribed curriculum.
- It emphasizes a direct relationship to the student's curriculum.
- The duration of the whole exercise is not very long.
- It is inexpensive, and easy to understand.
- It can be administered over and over again.

5.6 Tools and techniques of Educational Assessment:

From the discussion of previous subunits we understand the importance of educational assessment and its different types. In those discussions we observe that every lesson that a teacher teaches has an objective -- that students who have understood the lesson are able to perform tasks they couldn't have done before the lesson. At the end of the lesson, teachers like to know whether or not the objective has been realized. For this, we need assessment tools. These allow teachers to measure how well students have understood a topic. Following are some tools and techniques of educational assessment.

Observational Techniques

We continually observe our students. The observation, however, is typically informal and unsystematic, carried on without proper planning. But it should be reliable, accurate and goal oriented. The term observational tools and techniques are not synonymous. An observation technique generally implies the use of a particular observational tool such as a rating scale, a check list, etc. However, the process of observing and recording an individual's behavior is what is meant by the phrase observational technique.

It is expected that the observer should be completely objective and record the actual behavior without attempting to interpret behavior.

Advantages of Observation

1. Frequent observations of a student's work and work habits can provide a continuous check on his progress.
2. The errors or problems, as they arise can be immediately detected and corrective actions can be taken quickly.
3. Observational techniques are not as time-consuming for the pupil as are achievement tests.
4. Observational data provide teachers with valuable supplementary information, much of which could not be obtained in any other way.

Disadvantages of Observation

1. Problems of the past cannot be studied by means of observation.
2. Having no other option one has to depend on the documents available.
3. Observations like the controlled observations require some especial instruments or tools for effective working, which are very much costly.
4. One cannot study opinions by this means.
5. Observation some times involves a lot of time as one has to wait for an event to happen to study that particular event.

Suggestions to Help Make Valid Observations

1. Plan in advance what is to be observed.
2. The observer must be conscious of sampling errors. There should be frequent, short observation distributed over a period of several weeks and at different times of the day.
3. Co-ordinate the observations with your teaching. Otherwise, there is great danger that invalid observations will result.
4. Record and summarizes the observation immediately after it has occurred. More important, however, is the fact that when pupils know they are being observed, their resultant behaviour may be a typical.
5. Make no interpretations concerning the behaviour until later on. Otherwise, it may interfere with the objectivity of gathering observational data.

6. Prepare some sort of list, guide or form to help make the observation process objective and systematic.

Interviews

The interview is a face-to-face personal conference, in which the required information is obtained directly from an individual.

Advantages

1. It is flexible. It allows the interviewee to ask for a clarification of a question and the interviewer to raise all kinds of follow-up questions to the answers of the respondent.
2. It lends itself to dealing with confidential and personal material which cannot be obtained through a questionnaire.
3. It gives the interviewer the opportunity to hear how an interviewee has said something (e.g., accent, fluency, tone of voice, meaning, etc.) as well as what he has said.
4. An informal interview on how Vijay solves an arithmetic problem may reveal to the teacher what techniques of thinking Vijay employs.
5. Quietly chatting with a student at his seat, the teacher can gather valuable information about him.
6. The interview is a face-to-face situation. Here two people enter into a structural conversation. To this extent the interview is a familiar, real-life situation.
7. It enables each side to have a look at the other. No employer would like to take an employee without seeing him, nor would an employee like to join a firm without meeting somebody from the firm.
8. The interview is a method acceptable to both sides. An unacceptable selection method e.g., tests of intelligence etc. could cause considerable initial tension which might impair performance.
9. The skillfully-handled interview, provides a highly flexible situation. Different approaches can be tried.
10. The interview is relatively quick and economical.

Limitations

1. There is always a chance that time will be wasted or unnecessary will be questions raised.

2. It is time-consuming.
3. It makes it possible for an interviewer to ride a personal hobby.
4. Its utility depends on the willingness of the interviewee to give honest answers.
5. It cannot be used in group situations.
6. There is lack of definite aim or purpose in the interview.
7. The candidate is not allowed to develop a theme. Instead of that there are too many questions which can be answered in one word.
8. Asking questions which only elicit information already possessed by the interviewer through application forms, confidential reports etc. This only shows that the interviewer has no clear idea of procedure.'
9. Asking the questions in such a tone that the candidate is led to believe that the question must be answered in a certain way.
10. Restricting the time so much that there is no real chance of making maximum use of the interview possibilities.
11. Sometimes the interviewee is unduly influenced by the views and techniques of the other interviewers.
12. Failure by interviewers to discuss techniques of interviewing among themselves.

Developmental Scale

Developmental scales are another feature unique to the Learning Record. It includes a standard series of measurements of steps, activities or behavior which the observer records. In understanding and accounting for student progress and achievement, we look at what students know and can do, rather than their presumed deficits. Developmental scales are unlike rubrics or other forms of ranking and sorting, which establish an "ideal" performance or standard, and lesser levels progressively below the ideal until the lowest level on the scale describes a learner bereft of any qualities. This deficit-based model diminishes the dignity and worth of the entire range of stages in learners' development.

Advantages

1. It is an easy method of observation.
2. It is an objective method of evaluation traits of characteristic.
3. It can be used in most subject matter areas.
4. When properly prepared, it constrains the observer to direct his attention to clearly specified traits or characteristics.

Teacher-made Test

Teacher-made tests are written or oral assessments that are not commercially produced or standardized. In other words, a test a teacher designs specifically for his or her students "Testing" refers to any kind of school activity that results in some type of mark or comment being entered in a checklist, grade book, or anecdotal record. Teacher-made test is important parts of the teaching and learning process if they are integrated into daily classroom teaching and are constructed to be part of the learning process, not just the culminating event. They allow students to see their own progress and allow teachers to make adjustments to their instruction on a daily basis.

Modifications for Students with Special Needs

With the movement toward inclusive classrooms, teachers need to be able to meet the needs of students with special needs like learning disabilities, behavior exceptionalities, physical exceptionalities, and intellectual exceptionalities.

Teacher-made tests can be constructed to meet the needs of all students by providing many opportunities to measure what students can do instead of just measuring their ability to read, write, and take tests.

The following modifications can be made to help ensure success on tests for all students, especially those with special needs who are most at risk of failing tests:

- Read instructions orally.
- Rephrase oral instructions if needed.
- Ask students to repeat directions to make sure they understand.
- Monitor carefully to make sure all students understand directions for the test.
- Provide alternative evaluations—oral testing, use of tapes, test given in another room, dictation.
- Give examples of each type of question (oral and written).
- Leave enough space for answers.
- Use visual demonstrations.
- Do not crowd or clutter the test.
- Give choices.
- Go from concrete to abstract.
- Don't deduct for spelling or grammar on tests.

- Allow students to write down key math or science formulas (so that students are not penalized for poor memory).
- Include visuals like graphic organizers on tests.
- Give specific point values for each group of questions.
- List criteria for essay questions.
- Provide immediate feedback on all tests.
- Allow students to correct mistakes and/or to retake tests to improve scores and understand what they didn't understand on the first test.

Guidelines for Teacher-Made Tests The following guidelines may help in the construction of better teacher-made tests:

1. Create the test before beginning the unit.
2. Make sure the test is correlated to course objectives or learning standards and benchmarks.
3. Give clear directions for each section of the test.
4. Arrange the questions from simple to complex.
5. Give point values for each section (e.g., true/false (2 points each))
6. Vary the question types (true/false, fill-in-the-blank, multiple choice, essay, matching). Limit to ten questions per type.
7. Group question types together.
8. Type or print clearly. (Leave space between questions to facilitate easy reading and writing.)
9. Make sure appropriate reading level is used.
10. Include a variety of visual, oral, and kinesthetic tasks.
11. Make allowances for students with special needs.
12. Give students some choice in the questions they select (e.g., a choice of graphic organizers or essay questions).
13. Vary levels of questions by using the three-story intellect verbs to cover gathering, processing, and application questions.

5.7 Current trends and challenges in assessment

Assessment plays a significant part of our education system at the end of the day, -all stake holders have a vested interest in knowing how successful the teaching learning process is completed and what the measures of the students' success are. Assessment is the way we have to make the learning visible, and of applying some measure to the success of the learner in demonstrating what he or she has learned.

Historically the focus on assessment has been summative applying measures of how successfully the learner can demonstrate what he or she has acquired through the learning process, usually in the form of a final examination, but sometimes in the presentation of a portfolio, submitted thesis or essay, or completion of a practical task.

For decades our approach to assessment has been shaped by notions of the physical place and time of assessment activities, leading to practices that require students to complete assessment activities in certain places at certain times. For the most part, these were summative assessments in the form of exams. In recent years there has been an increasing focus on the importance of formative assessment, that is, the assessment of the learning that is taking place through the process of learning, not simply what is produced at the end of it. These approaches are sometimes referred to as assessment as learning - focusing on progressions in learning, and identification of next steps, rather than simply taking a summative view of the exam or assignment at the end of a period of study. Such an approach is gaining support internationally.

Now a days most of the teachers use non standardized criterion referenced tests/teacher made tests for educational assessment of students with hearing impairment. The Criterion referenced tests are more subjective on criteria, such as content, type of questions, total marks, duration etc. Most of these tests do not give consideration to the students' language background and previous knowledge, experience, weightage to contents etc. Hence, interpretation of results from criterion referenced tests has to be done cautiously. Literature reveals following problems of criterion referenced tests for students with hearing impairment. But a number of issues raised regarding the use of criterion referenced test. We discussed the issues before. We also discussed the problem of using norm referenced test in our classroom.

The modern trends of assessment continuous assessment plays dual role by taking the role of a bridge between formative and summative assessment. If students, as a part of their studies, produce gradually completed units, which are built up into a portfolio of assessment evidence, then this continuous assessment serves a dual purpose, both

formative and summative. This allows students to learn from their feedback and take greater responsibilities for their own learning and achievements. Simultaneously, teachers and tutors are assisted in tracking the progress of learners, rather than waiting for the end of the course to discover, summatively how much learning has taken place. It is helpful for hearing impaired learner because they have tendency to forget curriculum content rather than their hearing peer. Hence continuous and comprehensive assessment lessen their burden.

Constructivist perspective of assessment

Constructivism is basically a theory - based on observation and scientific study - about how people learn. It says that people construct their own understanding and knowledge of the world, through experiencing things- and reflecting on those experiences. When we encounter something new, we have to reconcile it with our previous ideas and experience, maybe changing what we believe, or maybe discarding the new information as irrelevant.

In the classroom, the constructivist view of learning can point towards a number of different teaching practices. In the most general sense, it usually means encouraging students to use active techniques (experiments, real-world problem solving) to create more knowledge and then to reflect on and talk about what they are doing and how their understanding is changing. Constructivist teachers encourage students to constantly assess how the activity is helping them gain understanding. Constructivism transforms the student from a passive recipient of information to an active participant in the learning process. Guided by the teacher, students construct their knowledge actively rather than just mechanically ingesting knowledge from the teacher or the textbook.

In our classroom we are probably already using the constructivist approach to some degree. Constructivist teachers pose questions and problems, then guide students to help them find their own answers. They use many techniques in the teaching process. For example, they may:

- prompt students to formulate their own questions (inquiry),
- allow multiple interpretations and expressions of learning (multiple intelligences),
- encourage group work and the use of peers as resources (collaborative learning).

Characteristics of Assessment

- In the context of constructivist approach, assessments need to gauge the progress

of students in achieving the three major learning outcomes of constructivist approach: conceptual understanding in science, abilities to perform scientific inquiry, and understandings about inquiry.

- All learners come to a learning tasks with some relevant knowledge, feelings and skills. Meaningful learning occurs when the learners seeks to relate new concepts and propositions to relevant existing concept and propositions in her/his cognitive structure (Mintzes, Novak, Wandersee, 2000).
- Constructivist approach to assessment is a formative rather than a summative. Its purpose is to improve the quality of student learning, not to provide evidence for evaluating or grading students. Assessment have to respond to the particular needs and characteristics of the teachers, students and science content. Assessment is context-specific: what works well in one class will not necessarily work in another.
- Assessment is ongoing process. Teachers get feedback from students of their learning. Teachers then complete the loop by providing students with feedback on the results of the assessment and suggestions for improving learning.

5.8 Let us sum up

In this unit we have discussed about the concept and scope of educational assessment and how. We also discussed about the important factors which can affect the learning and academic achievement of a learner. We came to know about different types of assessment and assessment tools and technique, there uses advantages and disadvantages. The unit ends with the discussion on the recent trend and issues in the field of educational assessment of children with hearing impairment.

5.9 “Check your progress”

1. Write down in detail the procedure of educational assessment of primary school students with hearing impairment.

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2. What is norm referenced test? How it differs from criterion referenced test?
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3. What will happen if a teacher is not following curriculum based assessment for the student in his/her class?
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4. Why you would give more important on formative test as a teacher of a hearing impaired child?
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5. Enumerate the importance of teacher made test.
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