Can examinations accurately assess our abilities/skills?

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Is it fair that an individual is evaluated on the basis of an exam to assess the reception of the knowledge imparted to a set of heterogeneous children within the four walls of the classroom? Can a 3 hours exam fairly assess the student's diligent e orts to learn and grow over a year? Also, how can we evaluate an individual's unique abilities, skills, and capabilities through just one question paper that is the same for all when we constantly parrot the truth that every child is unique and no child's needs can exactly match others? These inquiries demand an answer since, in some cases, they are to be blamed for a majority of problems that children in our day and age face and are unable to overcome. Firstly, the mentioned issues are the reasons for the cause of several psychological issues in children that in many cases persist throughout adulthood. Secondly, because exams and their results are considered as a reflection of one's intellect in our society, they also have a deep and lasting impact on a child's self-esteem and social skills. Thirdly, and most importantly, as parents are so over zealously concerned about their child scoring the best or good grades: students always aspire for the best grades and therefore prevented by this very lopsided evaluation system and parental expectations either from improving their skills or embracing their individuality. At times the development of their natural talents are also prevented by the same.

The examination system is not entirely wrong of course; we need methods or processes to evaluate the learning a child undergoes in the classroom as all learners have di erent abilities. Some children are excellent in understanding and grasping concepts but struggle to answer questions in the examination. Some on the other hand perform well in exams even though they are unsure of their answers. Nevertheless, even the best students sometimes struggle to obtain high grades. Nobody can predict the blunders, incorrect reading of the questions, forgetting to read the questions, silly errors, or problems in the evaluation process and many more problems that one may occur during the exam or the processes before and after examinations.

Even though each student has unique abilities, all students are subjected to the evaluation process through an exam format that is standardised. Unfortunately, that stereotypical exam becomes a marker for a student's academic performance. Students are pressured to memorize material and study minute details to prepare for a given and non negotiable exam framework. Most of the times, students don't genuinely engage with the content taught; rather, they learn what they need to know to get good marks.

While it is true that a single exam cannot accurately assess a student's intellectual capacity, it is untrue to claim that exams evaluate learning. Exams assess a person's ability to remember and the ability to separate

critical information from irrelevant diversions. Exams consider a student's capacity to comprehend a question and provide a meaningful response. Thus, exams are still an important part of learning and assessment till date. Recent interventions by academic bodies like emphasis on application-based learning and logical reasoning can be considered a big step towards evaluating cognitive abilities rather than rote learning.

However, the basic questions remain the same: how can these examinations assess a child's skills and talents? Can their abilities and skills be measured by these exams? Life struggles and experiences cannot be handled by the information gained from books. Can they? No, the ability to process information successfully doesn't guarantee that an individual is knowledgeable. I guess we all use computers but can we call it a knowledgeable being?

Digressions aside, it is a crime to overlook and suppress a child's talents and skills however this is a repeated occurrence in schools nowadays. The focus on sports and related extracurricular activities are relatively low. I say so because a weekly practice of 30 minutes cannot polish a child's athletic abilities or can they? Is one co-curricular activity per month enough to improve one's social and physiological skills? And with all these inconsistencies in formative learning years and drawbacks in the education system isn't it ironic that we complain about people leading a lazy and introverted lifestyle as adults? The future is shaped by childhood, and we inadvertently sabotage it through our actions. Not every kid excels in academics, but they may excel in sports, a particular art form, or possess extraordinary ability to work with technology. But they are compelled to study to be accepted by society. Their special skills and talents are destroyed by their society. This is a peculiar issue, which affects every student's life in a significant way and is not addressed by our examination system. As a result, our children are under great stress, and so are their worried parents.

Over the years through numerous discussions various issues have emerged but no clear-cut solutions have been arrived at. Multiple new measures were adopted, such as evaluating students through tests and quizzes, fun-learning activities, group projects, discussions, etc., but rather than assisting in bringing about a positive change these measures have become more of a burden to parents. As per surveys and research conducted among academicians, it has been found that this conventional method of evaluating students has many lacunas, but what are the options or way out? Do you think we should test the system without exams? If so, how can we assess their academic performance? There are undoubtedly significant issues that need to be handled in this situation. Why do we require tests to evaluate students' learning outcomes? In a system where every student is seen as apples in a basket and all apples have the same flavor and composition, how can we evaluate their question marks? Every child should be treated as an individual with unique abilities and valuable inputs to offer. The testing process should highlight this special quality to instill confidence in children. It demands us to give up on the concept of the "classroom" and instead shift our attention to the learning outcomes, which may be measured via project-based hands on learning, digital and graphic tests, games, and a variety of other methods. In this regard, policymakers should conduct more social research. In many countries, different unique models and educational methods are being experimented with; thus, it is high time that we allow the encouraging trend to impact our thinking. These upcoming models and approaches require more money, time, skill, and wisdom. But we should at least make an effort to take one step in the long process of making our examination system responsive and humane.

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