Continuous and Comprehensive Assessment Practices During the Covid-19 Pandemic at Secondary Schools in Kerala

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Abstract- The COVID-19 pandemic caused an unprecedented disruption in the education system, compelling schools to shift abruptly from traditional classroom teaching to online and virtual modes. This sudden transition posed serious challenges to student assessment, particularly in implementing Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE), which emphasizes holistic, formative, and learner-centred assessment. The present study examines the practices of Continuous and Comprehensive Assessment adopted during the COVID-19 pandemic at secondary schools in Kerala. A qualitative research design was employed, and data were collected from 110 secondary school teachers using a structured questionnaire. The responses were analysed using thematic analysis with partial quantification. The findings reveal that teachers adopted diverse assessment strategies such as online assignments, projects, oral tests, quizzes, portfolios, and digital feedback mechanisms. However, major challenges included lack of direct interaction, technological constraints, assessment reliability issues, increased workload, and difficulties in evaluating co-scholastic aspects. The study highlights the need for teacher training, improved digital infrastructure, and flexible assessment policies to strengthen CCE practices in online and blended learning environments. The findings have important implications for policymakers, school administrators, and educators in rethinking assessment practices during crisis situations.

Keywords- Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation, COVID-19 Pandemic, Online Assessment, Secondary Education, Kerala.

I. Introduction

Assessment is an integral component of the teaching–learning process and plays a crucial role in improving student learning outcomes. The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic significantly disrupted conventional schooling across the globe, forcing educational institutions to adopt online and distance learning modes. In India, the sudden closure of schools resulted in an urgent shift towards digital platforms such as Google Meet, Zoom, YouTube, and WhatsApp for instructional delivery.

Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE), recommended by various national commissions and endorsed by the National Curriculum Framework (2005), aims to assess both scholastic and co-scholastic development of learners through formative and summative approaches. However, the implementation of CCE in an online environment posed serious challenges for teachers, students, and institutions. Teachers were required

not only to adapt their teaching strategies but also to redesign assessment tools suitable for virtual classrooms.

In this context, understanding how CCE practices were implemented during the pandemic becomes crucial. The present study focuses on analysing the assessment practices adopted by secondary school teachers in Kerala during the COVID-19 pandemic and identifying the challenges faced in implementing CCE in a virtual learning environment.

II. Review of Related Literature

Several studies have highlighted the importance of continuous assessment in enhancing student learning and reducing examination stress (Bloom, 1956; NCF, 2005). Research on CCE indicates that it supports holistic development, learner-centred pedagogy, and formative feedback (Pani, 2004; Singh, 2017).

Studies conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic reveal that online learning significantly affected assessment practices. Teachers faced difficulties related to technological access, student engagement, academic integrity, and evaluation of co-scholastic skills (Yates et al., 2020). Areekkuzhiyil (2021) emphasized that assessment practices during online learning require careful planning and innovative strategies to maintain validity and reliability.

However, limited empirical studies focus specifically on CCE implementation during the pandemic at the secondary school level in Kerala. The present study attempts to fill this research gap.

III. Objectives of the Study

The study was conducted with the following objectives:
To analyse the practices of Continuous and Comprehensive Assessment adopted in secondary schools in Kerala during the COVID-19 pandemic.
To identify the problems faced by teachers in implementing CCE during the pandemic.
To examine the challenges faced by students in the process of CCE during online learning.
To analyse the strategies and techniques adopted for assessment during the COVID-19 pandemic.

IV. Methodology

Research Design
The study adopted a qualitative research design with partial quantification. Sample
The sample consisted of 110 secondary school teachers from government, aided, and unaided schools in Kozhikode district, Kerala. Teachers were selected using theoretical sampling, ensuring representation based on gender, type of school management, and locale.

Tool for Data Collection

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed by the investigator with expert guidance. The questionnaire focused on assessment tools, strategies, challenges, and feedback mechanisms used during the pandemic.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analysed using thematic analysis following the steps suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006): familiarization, coding, theme generation, theme definition, and interpretation.

V. Results and Discussion

The analysis revealed that teachers employed a variety of assessment practices during the pandemic, including online assignments, project work, oral assessments, quizzes, presentations, and digital portfolios. Feedback was provided through online platforms such as WhatsApp, Google Classroom, and video calls.

However, several challenges were reported. Major issues included lack of face-to-face interaction, difficulty in monitoring student participation, technological barriers, unreliable assessment outcomes, increased workload, and challenges in assessing co-scholastic and socio-personal qualities. Teachers also reported difficulties in maintaining assessment records and ensuring academic honesty.

Despite these challenges, teachers demonstrated adaptability and innovation in assessment practices. The findings suggest that while CCE principles were largely retained, their implementation required significant modification in the online context.

VI. Conclusion

The study concludes that Continuous and Comprehensive Assessment practices during the COVID-19 pandemic at secondary schools in Kerala were characterized by flexibility, innovation, and adaptation to digital platforms. While teachers adopted multiple assessment strategies to ensure continuity of evaluation, they faced significant pedagogical, technological, and administrative challenges. Strengthening digital infrastructure, providing systematic teacher training, and developing clear assessment guidelines are essential for effective implementation of CCE in online and blended learning environments. The study emphasizes the need to re-conceptualize assessment practices to ensure equity, reliability, and holistic development of learners during crisis situations.

VII. Educational Implications

The findings of the study provide valuable insights for educational policymakers, curriculum planners, and school administrators. The study highlights the importance of integrating technology-based assessment tools, continuous professional development for teachers, and flexible assessment policies to support CCE in digital learning contexts.

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