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**ANALYSIS OF THE QUESTION PAPER OF CLASS X: A
COMPARATIVE STUDY OF CBSE AND SEBA.**

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Abstract

Question papers are crucial tools in the current academic system. They are utilized for the purpose of bringing out the extent of knowledge acquired by a learner during a particular time frame given for the completion of a particular course. Depending on the approach of the syllabus the methods of setting of a question paper varies. The pattern of a question paper therefore takes into account the intended learner outcomes. This paper shall make a comparative study of question papers of Class-X set by Central Board of Secondary Education and Board of Secondary Education, Assam and shall attempt to bring out the intricacies of the mechanism.

INTRODUCTION

Examinations have always been an important part of the total educational process. Examinations are designed and administered at different stages of education and their results are used for various purposes like improvement in learning, grading and classification of students, selection for admission to higher classes or for scholarship, certification and for providing guidance for future, etc.

In our country, written examinations are the most commonly used technique of testing students' achievement. The written tests are organized by schools in each subject

every now and then. In fact, the evaluation of student' scholastic achievement is based on these written tests and examinations.

A question paper is-the basic tool used in a test or examination. It is usual for a teacher to prepare a test by assembling questions on the spur of the moment without taking into consideration the characteristics of a good test. But to serve any useful purpose a test must possess certain attributes without which it will be a poor measuring instrument. The three main attributes of a good test are validity, reliability and usability.

(i) *Validity:*

The most important characteristic of a good test is the validity. Validity of a test is the extent to which it measures what it attempts to measure. That is to say that a test should conform to the objectives of testing. Though there are many types of validity, for a classroom teacher it is enough to know about the following three types:

A. Face Validity:

Face validity means that a test, even on a simple inspection, should look valid. For example in a language test the following item is totally invalid, as it does not test language but the computation skill of the students.

- The train starts from Kathmandu at 8:10 hours and reaches Kanchanpur at 14:30 hours.

Q-How much time does the train take to reach Kanchanpur from Kathmandu?

To establish face validity of a test, the examiner or the teacher should go through the test and examine its content carefully.

B. Content Validity:

Content validity is very important in an achievement test as an achievement test tries to measure some specific skills or abilities through some specific content. To obtain content validity it is necessary that all the important areas of the course content are represented in the test and also that the test covers all the instructional objectives.

In other words, the test should contain questions on every important area of the content in appropriate proportion and the questions should be framed in such a way that all the objectives of that course are tested properly. Content validity can also be ensured

by analyzing the course content and the instructional objectives to be achieved through it and by taking the test items to both these things.

c. Empirical Validity:

Empirical validity is also known as statistical validity or criterion-related validity as to ensure this a criterion is taken (which may be a standardized test; another teacher's rating on a class test, students' scores on a previous test, or the student's grades on subsequent final examination, etc.) and the scores of students are correlated with their scores on the criterion test. If the scores correlate positively the test may be said to have empirical validity. Empirical validity is important because it shows statistically that a test is valid, i.e. it measures well what it intends to measure. It refers to the consistency with which a question paper measures the achievement of students. In other words, if the test is to be reliable the chance errors must be zero. Unreliability occurs at two stages:

Firstly, at the level of examinee, when he/she is not able to understand and interpret the question properly. This may be due to vagueness in language of question or due to some other reason. This can be removed if the questions are pointed and free from ambiguity.

Secondly, at the level of examiners. In the absence of standard marking scheme, examiners are free to interpret and mark the questions in their own way. This contributes greatly to unreliability. A detailed marking scheme improves the reliability aspects of the question paper. Objective type and very short answer type questions are more reliable than essay-type questions.

Thus, by including these questions and also by increasing the total number of questions in a question paper reliability can be increased.

Usability or practicability is the third characteristic of a good test. There are a number of practical factors that are to be considered while preparing or selecting a test for use.

- The first thing to be kept in mind is that the test should be of such a length that is can be administered within stipulated / allocated time. If the test is too long or too short it may not be practical to use as a classroom test.
- Secondly, it is to be seen that the test is easy to administer and that clear cut directions are provided in the test so that the testis as well as the test

administrators can perform their tasks with efficiency. Moreover, the facilities available for administration should also be kept in view as in case of oral tests, tape recorders may be required. If a teacher doesn't have the facility of tape recorder, s/he should not take up a test requiring the use of one.

- Thirdly, scorability is also to be considered while using a test. When large number of students are involved, a test which can be scored quickly (preferably by machine) is to be selected but when only one - class is to be tested, perhaps a test consisting of subjective questions may also be used.

STEPS OF TEST CONSTRUCTION:

Once the teacher or the test constructor is aware of the characteristics that a good test must possess, s/he can proceed to construct a test, which may be either a unit test or a full-fledged question paper covering all the aspects of the syllabus. Whether the test is a unit test for use in classroom testing or a question paper for use in final examinations, the steps of test construction are the same, which are as follows:

- **Prepare a Design:** The first step in preparing a test is to construct a design. A test is not merely a collection of assorted questions. To be of any effective use, it has to be planned in advance keeping in view the objectives and the content of the course and the forms of questions to be used for testing these. For this weightage to different objectives, different areas of content and different forms of questions are to be decided, along with the scheme of options and sections, and these are the dimensions of tests which are known as a design of a test.
- **Weightage to Objectives:** To make a test valid, it is necessary to analyze the objectives of the course and decide which objectives are to be tested and in what properties. For this marks are allocated to each objective to be tested according to its importance.
- **Weightage to different areas of Content:** It is necessary to analyze the syllabus and allocated weightages to different areas of Marks allocated content. This is again done to endure the validity of the test.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study are as follows:

(a) To analyze and compare the question papers of CBSE and SEBA on the following aspects:

- Unit wise distribution of marks
- Weightage to objectives
- Weightage to different types of questions
- Nature of options given in the question paper

(b) To study about the satisfaction of the Principals of secondary schools about the question paper of Class X.

(c) To study about the satisfaction of the Teachers of secondary schools about the question paper of Class X.

(d) To study about the satisfaction of the Students of secondary schools about the question paper of Class X.

(e) To suggest means to improve the question paper of Class X

The method followed in the present study is the “Descriptive Survey Method”. As the main objective of this study was to make comparative study of Assessment and Evaluation at Secondary Stage of CBSE and SEBA, the researcher prepared questionnaire for collection of data. The population of the present study comprises of all the students, teachers and principals from 242 Secondary schools of Dibrugarh District under CBSE and SEBA. As per the objective of the present study 12 schools from SEBA, 05 from CBSE were selected by using purposive sampling techniques. Again incidental sampling technique was used to select the exact samples i.e. all the students of Class X, teachers, and principals who were present on the day of data collection. Out of the 17 schools, 328 Students, 62 Teachers, and 17 Principals had been selected for data collection. In the present study Questionnaire is used as a tool of data collection. Researcher developed three sets of questionnaire meant for Principals, Teachers and Students. The data obtained by the researchers were analyzed both qualitatively and quantitatively.

FINDINGS

The major findings of this study are listed below:

1. Aspects of the question papers of CBSE and SEBA:

- Unit wise distribution of marks
- Weightage to objectives
- Weightage to different types of questions
- Nature of options given in the question paper

1.1 Unit wise distribution of marks

For this dimension the researcher had collected the question papers of Class X from both CBSE and SEBA. After close analysis of the papers of both CBSE and SEBA the researcher found that both CBSE and SEBA followed the principle of unit wise distribution of marks. They distributed the marks in unit wise as mentioned in their syllabus.

1.2 Weightage to objectives:

To make a test valid, it is necessary to analyze the objectives of the course and decide which objectives are to be tested and in what properties. For this marks are allocated to each objective to be tested according to its importance. The questions were also divided into different types on the basis of the instructional objectives they meant to measure – Knowledge, Comprehension, Application and Skill. In analysis of the question paper of Class X the researcher found that in English language the three major objectives are Knowledge of the elements of language, Comprehension and Application. Again in social science the major objectives are Knowledge, Comprehension, Application and Skill.

(a) Question paper of CBSE:

About 25% in Social Science and more than 5% of marks in English have been allotted to knowledge level questions in the CBSE question papers. In CBSE question papers more emphasis is given in comprehension and application in all the subjects. But the weightage of skill questions is very less in CBSE.

(b) Question paper of SEBA:

About 40% in Social Science and more than 20% of marks in English have been allotted to knowledge level questions in the SEBA question papers. In SEBA question papers, the application level questions are very few and the weightage of skill questions is very less.

1.3 Weightage to different types of questions:

The questions were divided into different types on the basis of the length of the answers, marks allotted to them and the objectivity in scoring as given below : Objective type/ Multiple Choice (1 mark), Very Short Answer Type (1 mark), Short Answer Type (2 to 3 marks depending on the nature of the subject) and Long Answer Type (4 marks and above).

In analyzing the question paper of both CBSE and SEBA, the researcher found that they included different types of question like objective type, very short answer type, short answer type, long answer type etc.

(a) Question paper of CBSE:

In the question paper of CBSE they included multiple choice type questions, very short answer type question containing 1mark, short answer type questions containing 2-3 marks and long question type questions containing not more than 5-6 marks.

(b) Question paper of SEBA:

In the question paper of SEBA they included multiple choice questions, very short answer type questions containing of 1 mark, short answer type questions containing 2-3 marks, compulsory questions containing of 4 marks and long answer type questions containing 5-6 marks.

1.4 Nature of options given in the question paper:

In analyzing the question paper of Class X, the researcher found that both CBSE and SEBA applied the same type of options in their question paper i.e. the internal options. Options in the question paper are included from the same content area and for the same amount of marks.

2. Satisfaction with question paper:

Cent percent Principals, Teachers and Students from both CBSE and SEBA mentioned that they were satisfied with the present pattern of question paper of Class X.

3. Means to improve the question papers:

The Principals and Teachers from both CBSE and SEBA provided few valuable suggestions for bringing changes and improvement in the question paper, such as:

- (a) Inclusion of more number of objective types of questions.

- (b) Introduction of OMR sheet
- (c) Selecting and setting the questions from all the chapters
- (d) Along with objective type question essay type question should be included in the question paper.
- (e) Marks should be allotted properly for each question.
- (f) Question paper should be such that students may easily understand the questions and question must be prepared on the basis of present need of the students and should have relation with life so that students could use their knowledge in their present life.
- (g) Question paper should be set by following the principle of “easy to complex”.

CONCLUSION

Examination system is a tool generally applies to assess and evaluate the learning performance of the learner. Question paper is the main instrument of examination, by applying which academic achievement of the students can be measure. The pattern of question paper is generally differ from state to state and board to board. The present study was an attempt to make a comparative study of the question paper of two educational board i.e. CBSE and SEBA. In this study the researcher found that both the board applying their own strategy in setting the question paper.

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