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Suggested Reference

Brown, G. T. (2014). Purposes and practices of assessment under conditions of reform: Understand Indian secondary school teachers' & leaders' attitudes and beliefs. (Preliminary Report). New Delhi, India.

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Purposes and practices of assessment under conditions of reform: Understand Indian secondary school teachers' & leaders' attitudes and beliefs

Research Consortium: The University of Auckland; IIT-Delhi; EduExcellence; & ACER-India
Funded by the New Zealand India Research Institute grant to Associate Professor Gavin Brown

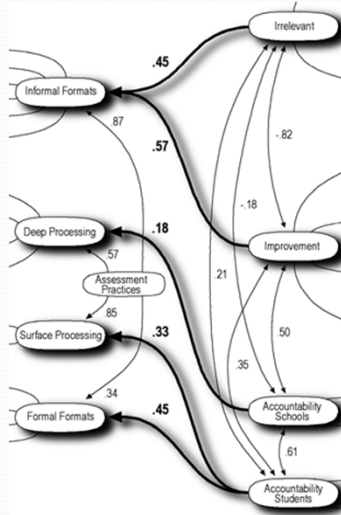
Context

- Assessment and evaluation reforms were introduced in the 2005 National Curriculum Framework and have been progressively implemented in Indian schools but discussed since?
 - Example: Continuous & Comprehensive Evaluation
- The purpose seems to have been to broaden curricular attention to a wider spectrum of valuable outcomes than simply performance on examinations of academic subjects
 - *Discuss: Are there other goals for CCE?*

Importance of Teacher Beliefs

- Teacher beliefs about the purposes of assessment partly influence the evaluative practices they implement and value
- School-based assessment requires teachers to participate actively in assessment
- Assessment has multiple and conflicting purposes
 - Assessment is used to **evaluate** students, teachers, and schools
 - Assessment is supposed to inform **improvement** in what teachers and students do
- Accountability consequences tend to elicit *compliance* rather than *improvement*

Previous Studies



A. New Zealand Primary



B. Hong Kong

Purpose of study

- To determine if there were differences in teachers' self-reported attitudes towards and practices of assessment according to whether the assessments they were thinking of were low-stakes or high-stakes.
 - *Discuss:*
Are there any low-stakes assessments in Indian schools?

Questionnaire Prompts

Low-stakes

- The term “assessment” used in the following statements refers to any act of collecting and interpreting evidence of student learning in terms of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes **USE BY THE TEACHER WITHIN THE CLASSROOM.**

High-stakes

- The term “assessment” used in the following statements refers to any act of collecting and interpreting evidence of student learning in terms of knowledge, skills, values and attitudes **BY EXTERNAL EXAMINATION AUTHORITIES OR BOARDS (e.g., CBSE).**

Discuss: are the assessment reforms (e.g., CCE) low-stakes or high-stakes?

Methodology

- Face-to-face interview completion of a standardised questionnaire
 - 424 schools * 4 teachers
 - Wide-spread collection
 - Random assignment to ½ Low-stakes and ½ High-stakes
 - All Class 9 to 12
 - Part A: beliefs about the purposes of assessment
 - Part B: practices or uses of assessment



Analysis

- Using advanced causal-correlational statistical techniques
 - factor analysis
 - structural equation modeling
 - invariance testing
 - analysis of variance
- **Expectation:** *Low-stakes prompt would elicit more improvement oriented beliefs and practices than High-stakes prompts*

Purposes of Assessment Factors

Improvement (8 items)

Assessment feeds back to students their learning needs

Assessment is a way to determine how much students have learned from teaching

Control (5 items)

Assessment ensures teachers teach to the defined examination standard

Assessment controls the content of teachers' classes

Irrelevant (7 items)

Assessment results are filed & ignored

Teachers conduct assessments but make little use of the results

School Quality (6 items)

Assessment is a good way to evaluate a school

Assessment is an accurate indicator of a school's quality

Practices of Assessment Factors

Diagnostic (5 items)

I use assessment to establish what students have learnt.

I use assessment to determine how much students have learnt from teaching

Teach for Examinations (12 items)

I always set tests and examinations with reference to public examinations

I teach my students examination skills from time to time

Ignore Exams (4 items)

The priority of my work is to complete the curriculum

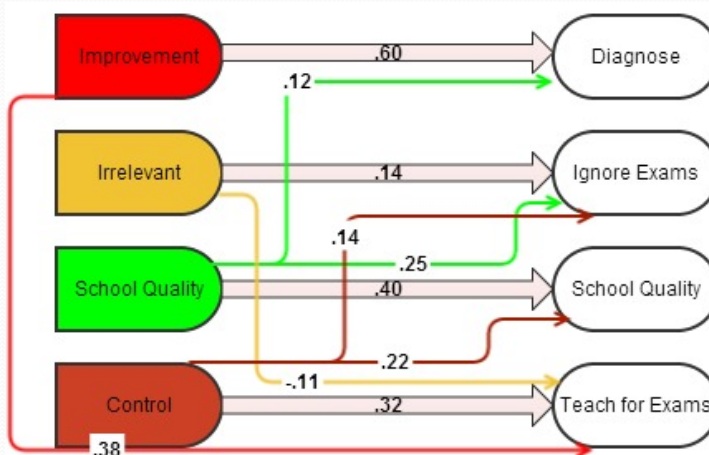
The priority of my work is to help students to pass their examinations.

School Quality (5 items)

My school uses assessment results to determine if students meet standards.

My school uses assessment results to show how well it is doing.

Beliefs Align with Practices



No statistically significant difference in paths and parameters between Low and High-stakes prompts

Mean Score Differences

Statistic	TCOA			School Quality	Diagnose	Practices		
	Improve	Ignore	Control			School Quality	Teach 4 Exams	Ignore Exams
High-Stakes								
<i>M</i>	4.74	2.82	4.21	4.05	4.65	4.50	4.85	3.31
<i>SD</i>	.744	.87	.89	.89	.90	1.02	.62	1.07
Low-Stakes								
<i>M</i>	4.88	2.76	3.97	4.18	4.94	4.43	4.80	3.26
<i>SD</i>	.69	.86	.95	.93	.77	.95	.59	1.08
<i>Comparison (High vs. Low)</i>								
<i>F</i>	17.275	2.309	29.164	9.119	48.969	1.986	2.383	0.795
<i>p</i>	<.001	0.129	<.001	0.003	<.001	0.159	0.123	0.373
<i>R</i> ² _(ADJ)	0.01	0.001	0.02	0.01	0.03	0.001	0.001	<.001
<i>d</i>	-.20	.07	.26	-.15	-.34	.07	.08	.04

Only 4 scales have differences beyond chance, but these explain very little of the difference. Hence, Low- vs. High-stakes were considered the same

Summary

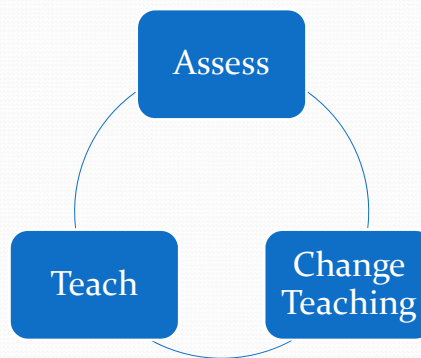
- Low- and High-stakes prompts produced equivalent responding with little meaningful difference between conditions
- However
 - Belief in an assessment purpose tended to positively predict a parallel use of assessment
 - Improving student learning is achieved by teaching for exams is reasonably widely accepted
 - **Emphasis on Improvement rather than evaluative role of assessment should increase Diagnostic practices (i.e., changing teaching because of what we learned about students from the assessment)**

Take home message?

Formative

- Teacher discovers 'bad' news
- Shares safely with colleagues & leaders to discover new solutions
- Lead instruction & learning
- Collegial relationships

Formative



Why the same?

- Our prompt for Low and High-stakes conditions did not sufficiently trigger differences in opinions
- In practice there is no real difference in how low- (**by the teacher within the classroom**) and high-stakes (**by external examination authorities or boards** (e.g., **CBSE**) assessments are conducted in Indian schools
- *Discussion: What does this mean to you?*