



Article : Examination Reforms-A shift from numerical marking to grading

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Abstract

Examination form an integral part of any education system and an in-depth study of the system remains incomplete without studying the examination system in vogue under it. A movement was started for examination reform, which gathered momentum with the establishment of Central Examination unit of trained evaluation officers by the Govt. of India in 1958. The outstanding feature of the new reform movement is the emphasis laid on the modern concept of evaluation which has found increasing acceptance in educational circles in India in recent years. The grades would give more reliable picture of students' ability than the prevalent marking system. One cannot claim that grading system is flawless but compatibility it is better than of pass/fail system With the help of grading, it reduces mal classification of students' on the basis of unreliable marks. High achievers will get relieved from competition.

Introduction

Examination form an integral part of any education system and an in-depth study of the system remains incomplete without studying the examination system in vogue under it. From times immemorial the institutions for examinations has formed an integral part of teaching learning process. Students are often put to weekly or monthly test and then they have the examinations. Are tests composition? Such questions come to our mind when we try to know the nature of the term.

The word "examine" is taken from the Latin word "examen" which means the pointer of a balance. That pointer indicates whether the weights in two pans are equal or not. In an examination, a candidate is weighed as if in a balance and is compared with some standards. For every examination the standards are set by the examining authorities and then through these examinations, the examining bodies

compare the studies with those standards. The word “test” is different. It is derived from the Latin Word “testum” which means a small earthen pot. In these earthen pots the metallic mixtures were tried out by melting them. The term “test” when applied to a classroom situation stands for a device to find out whether the matter taught is still in the mind of the learner or not. In a test only such questions are included which help the teacher to know if his teaching has gone across. The term examination is broader than the test. In a test it is not fair to ask for something which has not been taught, whereas, in an examination questions of all sorts can be asked provided these are not beyond the standard which the examination seeks to establish. In addition, examinations are more formal than the tests. For every examinations date sheet is announced in advance, question papers set, seating arrangements made and the students sit in the examinations for writing answers in a formal way.

Reforms in examinations system

According to Kothari Commission, “The evils of the examination system in India are well known to everybody. The baneful effects of the system on education in general and secondary education in particular, have been discussed in the reports of various commissions and committees. The Secondary Education Commission, after reviewing the defects of the secondary education stage, recommended a new approach to school evaluation and made a number of concrete proposals for the improvement of external examinations and the method of internal assessment. As a result of these proposals, a movement was started for examination reform, which gathered momentum with the establishment of Central Examination unit of trained evaluation officers by the Govt. of India in 1958. The outstanding feature of the new reform movement is the emphasis laid on the modern concept of evaluation which has found increasing acceptance in educational circles in India in recent years. It will thus be seen that according to the general view-point of educationists all over the world the first step towards bringing about reform of examination system is to widen its scope and to substitute it by a more comprehensive term such as “evaluation” as highlighted by the Kothari Commission as well.

Pass/Fail System:

Britishers introduced Pass/Fail System in 1847 and till date its elimination has not become possible. The term 'Pass' is defined as, one is able to live a comfortable life in future while as 'Fail' is translated as failure in life. The candidate who failed in the examination i.e. not able to get promotion in another class. These individuals become outcast in the eyes of educated circles. So it is high time to get rid of Pass/Fail system by introducing the grading system.

Grading on the curve was considered appropriate at that time because it was well known that the distribution of students' intelligence test scores approximated a normal probability curve. Since innate intelligence and school achievement were thought to be directly related, such a procedure seemed both fair and equitable. Grading on the curve also relieved teachers of the difficult task of having to identify specific learning criteria. Fortunately, most educators of the early twenty-first century have a better understanding of the flawed premises behind this practice and of its many negative consequences.

A shift from numerical marking to grading:

The grades would give more reliable picture of students' ability than the prevalent marking system. One cannot claim that grading system is flawless but compatibility it is better than of pass/fail system. It is an admitted fact that an assessment of human potential is very difficult what still we have to try a demarcation line it may be easy to criticize the grading system but it is the certainly difficult to give an alternative system which will be reliable and valid. The word 'grade' is derived from a Latin word 'Gradus' which means 'Step'. Before developing the grading system, it is of great importance to understand the meaning of each 'grading symbol',. Grades are awarded to convey students' performance and relative positions of the students with respect to their counter parts. The traditional making system implies a 0-100 scale. The grading system reduces the 101 points scale (0-100) to a short range of five point or nine point scale. It removes the defects of the grading system.

For the purpose of awarding merit scholarships, the Grade Point Average is determined Kraft (1978) is of the opinion that during the china's

cultural Revelation, grading was greatly deemphasized to help in creating a “Classless Society”. But the country backtracked to “basics” after sometime.

The grading is being done by different methods for the present article, direct conversion of marks will be taken and a normal curve is developed on the same data. Great psychologists and statisticians have preferred three scales for grading. The nine point scale, seven point scale and five point scale. For the present article two curves have been developed, i.e. for a nine point scale and a five point scale. If one decide to use nine point scale, measurement scale is divided into nine equal parts and the grade value ranges from 1 to 9 (Mean = 5, S.D. = 2 approx. Base line unit 5. While classifying students’ performance into nine categories using stanine scale. The two extremes are merged to make nine categories instead of eleven. In case of seven point grade scale value ranges from 1 to 7 (Mean = 4, S.D. = 1.5 approx.) and in case of five point scale the grade value ranges from 1 to 5 (Mean = 3, S.D. = 1 approx. Base line unit 1).

Five point scale showing S.D. intervals and Percents Score from 1 to 5.

The grade should be allotted to each subject separately so that if one is interested to see the

On a stanline scale, the grade-wise distribution of cases is given below:

S.No.	Grade	Range of Marks	Description	S.D.	% in each interval	Grade value
1	A	90% and above	Outstanding	1.75σ to α	45	9
2	B	80% to less than 89%	Excellent	1.25σ to 1.75σ	7%	8
3	C	70% to less than 79%	Very Good	0.75σ to 1.25σ	12%	7
4	D	60% to less than 69%	Good	0.25σ to 0.75σ	17%	6
5	E	50% to less than 59%	Above Avg.	-0.25σ to 0.25σ	20%	5

6	F	40% to less than 49%	Avg.	0.75σ to -0.25σ	17%	4
7	G	30% to less than 39%	Below Avg.	-1.25σ to -0.75σ	12%	3
8	H	20% to less than 29%	Marginal	-1.75σ to -0.25σ	7%	2
9	I	Below 20%	Unsatisfactory	$-\alpha$ to -1.75σ	4%	1

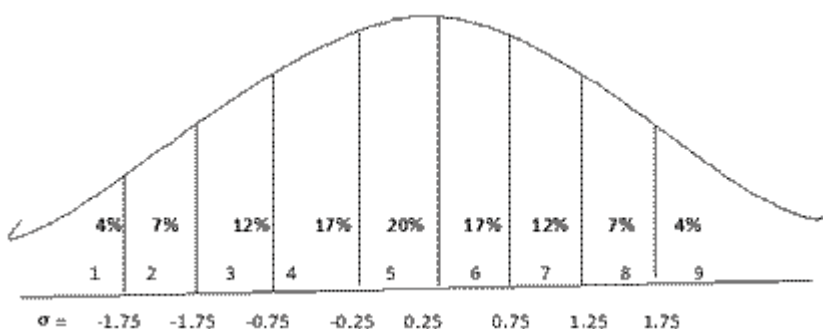
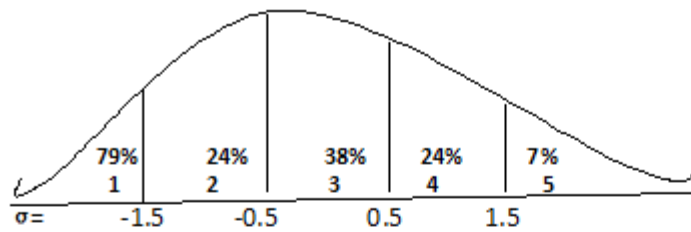


Table II on a five point scale, the grade-wise distribution is given below:

S.No.	Grade	Range of Marks	Description	S.D.	% in each interval	Grade value
1	A	75% and above	Distinction	1.5 to α	7%	5
2	B	60% to less than 75%	Ist Division	0.5σ to 1.5σ	24%	4
3	C	45% to less than 60%	2 nd Division	-0.5σ to 0.5σ	38%	3
4	D	33% to less than 45%	3 rd Division	-1.5σ to -0.5σ	24%	2
5	E	Below 33%	Unsatisfactory	$-\alpha$ to -1.5σ	7%	1



With the help of formula GPA can be calculated given below:

$$\text{G.P.A.} = \frac{\text{Sum of grade value}}{\text{No. of grades}}$$

An example of a student namely; Ankush Koul in matriculation examination on a time scale is given below:

Student	Grade Awarded					
	Eng.	Maths	Science	S.Sc.	Hindi	G.P.A.
Mr. Ankush Koul	B	C	D	A	B	7.6

$$\text{G.P.A.} = \frac{8+7+6+9+8}{5}$$

$$\text{G.P.A.} = \frac{38}{5}$$

$$\text{G.P.A.} = 7.6$$

Conclusion:

1. GPA helps us to select a candidate for a particular purpose.
2. With the help of grading, it reduces mal classification of students' on the basis of unreliable marks.
3. High achievers will get relieved from competition.

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