

# Understanding Dimensions of No Detention Policy of India

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## Abstract

The paper attempts to identify the various dimensions of the No Detention Policy and explores whether or not the existing policy and its resultant activities and services continue to be effective and efficient in helping children and their education. While analyzing No Detention Policy, certain issues were raised on the continuums regarding the motives of the policy and its adaptability in the existing system of education. On the basis of the content analysis of policy and its various ordinances, five major comparative dimensions (viz. Quantity Vs. Quality, Attendance Vs. Achievement, Planning Vs. Implementation, Holistic Vs. Parts and Assessment Vs. Measurement) were thematized which depict practical implications for the policy makers who have to make strategies and decisions in order to cater this policy in a cogent and systematic manner.

**Keywords:** No Detention Policy, Policy Dimensions and Critical Analysis

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Despite several measures adopted, the aim of providing free and compulsory education to every child up to the age of 14 years has not been fully attained by the government. It has been realized that the growing population, financial and administrative constraints to implement the set policies, socio-economic problems and finally large dropout rate, emerged as bottleneck in accomplishing the pre-determined goal of achieving universalization of elementary education. Although there is data to show that the expansion of primary education and the enrolment has taken place but reality is different. There are large number of pupils who never got enrolled, and also a large portion of pupils in the age group of 6-14 years who were either dropped out or pushed out at different levels of their schooling. The problem of dropout in our education system was pointed out quite early in the evolution of modern education system as introduced by British in India by the Hartog Committee in 1929. It reported that “through out the whole educational system, there is wastage/dropout and ineffectiveness/lack of quality of education.”

After that, considerable importance was given to the problem of dropouts. Different research works were promoted at the

state as well as central level to understand the magnitude of the problem of wastage and stagnation and to find out the variables responsible for wastage/dropout and stagnation/retention in different places at different point of time by different researchers. Looking into the factors responsible for the heavy dropouts leading to the stagnation and wastage it caused, the government took several steps to deal with the problem like legislation for free and compulsory education, provision of schooling facility within 1 kilometer distance from the home of the children, provision of mid- day meal, supply of free uniforms, supply of free textbooks and stationery, attendance scholarships for girls, early child care & education and non- formal education. But despite all the programs and policies, the government has been extending the dates to achieve the targets of Universalisation of Elementary Education (UEE). From 1960 to 1970, then from 1970 to 1988 when the then Indira Gandhi Government announced the “Twenty Point Programme” on January 14, 1982, where point no 16 on “education” was reinforced and the target to achieve UEE was set for 1989-90. In sixth five year plan (1980-85), the problem was attacked from two angles; firstly increasing

enrollment and secondly improving retention. The year 1983 saw another important development to achieve target of U.E.E. Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE) met for its 39<sup>th</sup> session in order to check, the stock of progress of UEE as per “Twenty Point Policy” during 1982-83, to review the policies and strategies experimented or adopted so that pre and effective planning can be done for the upcoming years and to achieve the targets of UEE by 1990. In this meeting, the Board recognized the importance of ‘No detention’ policy for strengthening motivation of students and preventing frustration that occurs from early failure. In order to sustain the spirit of systematic teaching and learning through the liberal policy of promoting the students, the move to implement the simultaneous adoption of non-graded system as well as a system of continuous assessment of attainment was persuaded. In Delhi this policy of No Detention was introduced till grade 1 to 3 recommended by Government of NCT of Delhi, Directorate of Education, Old Secretariat Delhi (with reference to Rule No 41 of Delhi School Education Rule 1973) from session 2001-2002 onwards. It states no child shall be detained on the basis of poor performance in pre- primary classes and class I, II, and III against the wishes of his/ her parent or guardian therefore promotion to next higher class shall be automatic subject to the parent/ guardian agreeing to it and fulfillment of eligible conditions in respect of attendance.

Now, as per Circular passed on June 26, 2008; by Government of NCT, Directorate of Education: School Branch, Old Secretariat; “In order to achieve the goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education and to increase the retention in schools of Delhi, it has been decided to introduce ‘No Detention Policy’ upto class VII, in all the Government schools as well as Government aided Schools of Delhi w.e.f. the present academic session.” Salient features of this policy are that each child will be promoted to the next class, provided the child attends school for more than 75% school days and also undertake all unit tests and terminal examinations. Hence, the major aim of the No Detention Policy as stated in the ordinances passed by Directorate of Education, Delhi, are to achieve the goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education and to increase the retention in schools.

### **Rationale of the Study**

The present study got its motive with the emergence of No Detention Policy that has visualized the entire education system on a different perspective. Where the earlier education system emphasizing the process of examination to force the child to work hard to achieve better, certified and quantified the student’s learning/achievement to promote them in the next

higher grade; the prevailing No Detention Policy system talks about the automatic promotion on the basis of attendance in place of achievements. The emergence of new education system has raised certain issues like academic implications of the executed form of No Detention Policy; thrust of the policy is either quality education or quantity education; whether attendance can ensure achievement, whether the role of examination in the system of No Detention Policy is assessment or measurement. Thus, there is an immense need to study the implications of No Detention Policy by analyzing the ordinance related to the policy to understand whether the said policy was implemented as it had been suggested holistically or just partial implementation was done at the execution level. These issues made the researcher enthusiastic to present an in-depth analysis of the policy to establish whether or not the existing policy and its resultant activities and services continue to be effective and efficient in helping children and their education.

### **Review of No Detention Policy related Ordinances/ Documents**

An attempt has been made to gather all the related, important, and available ordinances related to the No Detention Policy. It helps not just in understanding that how the present study is closely linked with our existing education system but also provides an understanding that how and in what circumstances No Detention Policy was adopted in India. The story of No Detention Policy basically started in 1982, when Indira Gandhi Government brought ‘Twenty Point Programme’. In order to achieve the targets by 1990, both in terms of Universalisation of Elementary Education and removal of Adult Literacy under point No. 16 of the Twenty- Point Programme, 39<sup>th</sup> session of the CABE was organized on 6 & 7 June 1983, under the chairmanship of Sh Sheila Kaul, Minister of Education and Social Welfare. In this meeting board reviewed the stock achievements made so far during the Sixth Five Year Plan i.e. (1980-85) and planned the policies and strategies need to be adopted in order to initiate an advance preparatory action for the Seventh Five Year Plan i.e. (1985-90).

**Agendas of 39<sup>th</sup> CABE session** were to revise and increase enrollment rates to achieve UEE with special reference to “Twenty Point Policy”. In order to achieve the targets of enrollment and to propound an effective plan committee focused on the identified problem of “Dropout”, which has come out of discussion as the major impediment in achieving the goals of UEE, in which promotional examination system found to be one of the causative factor in dropouts, which on the other hand leads to wastage and stagnation. To facilitate the targets and to combat the problem coming as a result of

annual promotional examination system, a significant measure was thought about. In 1983, it was suggested to the states to introduce “Ungraded School System” which was introduced in Kerala and “No Detention Policy”. As per this policy every child shall complete one class each year and will be promoted to next higher grade till he/ she completes class 8. This policy discredited, on academic considerations, undue reliance on a one- time annual examination for purposes of promotion/ detention. But at the same time it was realised that doing away with examination altogether would dilute instructional standards. It was, therefore, simultaneously advocated that adequate safeguards by way of periodic assessment and evaluation on a continuing basis should be introduced. This policy had already been introduced in a few states like Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Rajasthan and Utter Pradesh.

As per their suggestions, different states adopted different alternative forms of No Detention Policy such as: Andhra Pradesh, Bihar and Orissa introduced No Detention Policy till the end of elementary stage. In eight states/ UTs namely Assam, Gujarat, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Andaman & Nicobar Island, Goa, Daman & Diu and Pondicherry an ungraded school system has been introduced in classes 1-2. In Tamil Nadu and Utter Pradesh ungraded system covers classes 1-3. In Kerala “No Detention” in class I and minimum detention in the other three classes of primary stage. No detention Policy upto class IV was followed by Rajasthan, West Bengal follows it upto class 5, and Chandigarh follows it upto class 6. Manipur followed a liberal promotional policy upto class V. But seven states/ UTs namely J & K, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Punjab, Tripura, Delhi, and Mizoram did not accept this policy.

Besides this, it was said that C.A.B.E may advise if this policy should be uniformly introduced in all States/ UTs or if there was any need for change and if so, in what respect.

Ministry of Human Resource Development, Annual Report 1983, advocated that much importance was given to Elementary Education in the respective year in order to achieve targets of New 20 Point Programme. Many significant steps were taken during the year in order to gear up the programme and to achieve Universalisation of Elementary Education by 1990 as a part of 20- Point Programme. Out of many steps under ‘Enrolment and Retention Strategy’ comprehensive measures for reducing drop-out rates were suggested to states with reference to the importance felt and accepted in 39<sup>th</sup> session of C.A.B.E as stated above. These include ‘Ungraded School’ system including ‘No Detention’ up to class VIII, conversion of single-teacher primary schools into two-teacher schools,

provision of schooling facilities in all habitations with viable population, setting up of early childhood (pre- school) education centres in rural areas as adjuncts of primary schools, promotion of girl’s education, curricular reform projects, improving physical facilities, improving teacher competence, community participation and, above all, large non-formal part-time education programmes for children who could not join and attend formal schools due to socio- economic reasons.

At the state level in Delhi, as per the Instructions Regarding Assessment, Evaluation and Promotion of Students from one class to another for classes I to XI (Rule 41 of Delhi School Education Rules 1973) devised by Directorate of Education Old Secretariat, Government of National Capital Territory of Delhi on 8 September, 2001 which were in action in the current sessions, Promotion Rules for Pre- Primary classes to class III are: No child shall be detained on the basis of poor performance in pre- primary classes and class I. II and III against the wishes of his parent or guardian. Promotion from these classes to the next higher classes shall be automatic subject to the parent or the guardian agreeing to it and fulfillment of eligibility conditions in respect of attendance.

Then on 26 June, 2008; an order was passed from Directorate of Delhi, NCT of Delhi. In this order it has been mentioned that in order to achieve the goals of Universalisation of Elementary Education and to increase the retention in schools of Delhi, No Detention Policy had been introduced upto class VII, in all the Government as well as Government aided Schools of Delhi w.e.f. the present academic session. Therefore all the head of the schools of Government and Government Aided Schools were ordered to promote, all those students who were detained on the basis of results of examinations of March-April till VII, in the next higher class by 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2008. The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Bill, 2009 also said that no child admitted in a school should be held back in any class or expelled from school till the completion of Elementary Education. Consequently, the schools would have to take extra remedial coaching for, every child’s performance, instead of sending them away. Though the said argument sounds quite impressive but it becomes a bit difficult to imagine that when and where these remedial classes will be taken, as most of the teachers say they are short of time to take their regular classes.

The above said ordinances evoke many questions and made the researcher to think critically on many issues of No Detention Policy.

## Objective of the Study

- To analyze the National and Delhi State Level Ordinances related to No Detention Policy at the Elementary Level and its implications.
- To explore the guiding principles embedded in the policy framework of No Detention Policy at the Elementary Level.

## Methodology

In order to have the in-depth view of the policy, various ordinances/documents available in NUPEA library, Department of Education, MCD & SCERT; Directorate of Education, Govt. of NCT, Delhi; were collected and then content analysis method was done to have the more insight of the policy.

## Analysis of the Study

After reviewing the related ordinances of the policy, certain issues have been raised on the continuums and *five major comparative dimensions (viz. Quantity Vs. Quality, Attendance Vs. Achievement, Planning Vs. Implementation, Holistic Vs. Parts and Assessment Vs. Measurement)* were extracted and analyzed on government schools of Delhi which are as follows:

### 1. Quantity Vs. Quality

The ambit of the present continuum is to throw some light and understand the Policy and ordinances with a perspective that what has been major thrust of the policy, quantity of enrollment to achieve statistics of Universalisation of Elementary Education, quality of education in order to provide better education or both in the formulation and implementation of the No Detention Policy. It is also concerned to find the clause/s or talk/s about how the quality of education will be enforced and the standards will be maintained especially in a system where the previously determined rules have been changed completely. Some of the clauses from different ordinances have been illustrated in the present section in order to analyze and have a better understanding of the approach (quantity or quality) that has been adopted in the ordinances.

“Central Advisory Board of Education 39<sup>th</sup> session, 1983 recognized the importance of ‘No detention’ policy for strengthening motivation of students and preventing frustration that occurs from early failure. Ministry of Human Resource Development, Annual Report 1983 regarded it as comprehensive measures for reducing drop-out rates have been suggested to states. These include ungraded school system including ‘No detention’ up to class VIII etc.

Directorate of Education, Circular 2008 elaborated that in order to achieve the goal of Universalisation of Elementary Education and to increase the retention in schools of Delhi, it has been decided to introduce ‘No Detention Policy’ upto Class VII.”

In the light of above assertions made in different ordinances to analyze the objectives of No Detention Policy, many ambiguous statements had been found which did not clarify objectives; beside adoption and framing of this policy. Central Advisory Board of Education, the highest body in Policy formation, values the No Detention Policy as “it will help in strengthening motivation among students and will prevent the students from frustration that occurs from early failure”; the motive seemed to be one and only one that was to help the child, which later on would help in achieving the higher goals of Universalisation of Elementary Education. The annual report published by MHRD says that No Detention Policy has been suggested to the states as “a measure for reducing dropout”. The objective seemed to be departing from its original thought; the aim confined to just maximum retention and nothing more than that. With a similar, but broader aim, Directorate of Education, Delhi, reasoned out its order favoring No Detention Policy, passed in July 2008, that No Detention Policy had been introduced “to achieve the goals of Universalisation of Elementary Education” and “to enhance the retention” here also aim had encircled itself in the boundary of retention. The said statements taken from different ordinances show how the objectives behind No Detention Policy changed at the Administrative level itself. One can imagine, if the objectives get manipulated at the higher level, what would happen to them at the lower levels.

Nevertheless, from the laid objectives of No Detention Policy, CABE’s recommendations seemed to be more holistic. The approach adopted by CABE seemed to be more eclectic as they tried to maintain a good balance between quantity and quality by recommending No Detention Policy for increasing retention achieved through Non Graded system, Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation system for maintaining and improving quality. Therefore assertions made by CABE sound to be more scholarly and sensible than the objectives laid down in other ordinances. Objectives defined in MHRD report and in order passed by Directorate of Education seemed to be quite vague. If one has not read the recommendations of CABE given in 1983, it would become difficult to swallow and digest the No Detention Policy with the arguments attached to it. In fact, it binds the mind with the thread of confusions and unanswered questions for example: In a formal education system like the Indian education system, where it is graded system and have certain syllabi for each grade which is spirally

linked with the next higher grade's syllabus; can it be expected the child to move from one grade to the next higher grade without achieving the competencies of the lower grade in which he/she was studying without which, it is not just difficult but impossible for a child to grasp the skills and competencies of the next grade?

In order to have a comprehensive study with respect to these changing objectives which can affect or influence the system, If one could view No Detention Policy with the vision that C.A.B.E had formed, i.e. to strengthen motivation among students and to prevent them from early failure, then briefing of the supervisors, teachers, parents and other associated people; changes in the curriculum and betterment in the teaching-learning environment became mandatory. It helped in developing the positive attitude in all the associated people towards the new system and helped in developing professional skills in them. But, just opposite to it, No Detention Policy is just to increase retention because automatic promotion of the child to next class means that the system will retain the child.

Moreover, evaluation system as a feedback system has already been accepted which reveals evaluation as therapeutic system how this particular system will be unique in organizing remedial classes is not clear. When Point No. 25(1) of the bill said that the appropriate government or local authority should ensure that the pupil-teacher ratio would be maintained in each school within six months from the incorporation of this Act i.e. approximately one teacher over thirty students, at least one classroom for every teacher, separate toilets for boys and girls, safe and adequate drinking water facility to all children, playground, teaching learning equipments for each class as required and so on. Here it is to be considered from the past records that government has made such promises several times but could not achieve it for a single time. And now the situation has changed to the limit that it does not permit to bring any change as there is deficiency of more space to open any new schools. In such a situation how it sounds to reduce the teacher pupil ratio, a bit difficult to imagine.

The disparity between the objectives laid down by different bodies of education like C.A.B.E, MHRD and Directorate of Education showed somewhere there was a lack of communication between these apex bodies. Due to this, the concept has filtered down to the extent that it makes one to critically appraise the academic and administrative implications of No Detention Policy to understand what is our aim distributing more and more Elementary passing certificates to label the country with 100% UEE or providing Quality

Education in those Elementary years of schools?

## 2. Attendance Vs. Achievement

Directorate of Education, Delhi Instructions regarding Assessment, Evaluation and Promotion of Students (Rule No. 41 of Delhi School Education Act, 1973) has the followings points to be considered to evaluation of the policy which are:

- Point no. 19 “No student shall ordinarily be eligible to appear at any test whether terminal or comprehensive, who has not put atleast 75% actual attendance of the total attendance during the session up to the date of each test.”
- Point no. 25 “If shortage of attendance at the time of comprehensive test is more than 10% and not more than 15% and the head of the institution is satisfied with the genuineness of the reasons of shortage submitted by the student and his/her parent or guardian, the head of the institution may recommend his case for condonation of shortage of attendance to concerned Education Officer who may approve such condonation and allow the student to take comprehensive test...”
- Point no. 26 “If the shortage of attendance at the time of comprehensive test, for whatever reason or reasons, is more than 15% i.e. the actual attendance is less than 60% of the total attendance during the session, the student shall not be eligible to appear at the comprehensive test and shall be detained...”
- Point no. 28. “No child shall be detained on the basis of poor performance in pre – primary classes and classes I, II, and III against the wishes of his/ her parents or guardian. Promotion from these classes to the next higher class shall be automatic subject to the parent or the guardian agreeing to it and fulfillment of eligible conditions in respect of attendance.”

“No child would be detained in class IV, V, VI and VII on the basis of their performance in the various examinations taken for evaluation and promotion to next class, provided the child attends the school more than 75% school days and also undertakes all Unit Tests and terminal examinations.” (Directorate of Education Circular, 26 June, 2008)

According to the above ordinances, it is clear that performance of students has not been seen as necessary criteria for promotion in the next higher grade. Instead 75 % attendance has been given due importance to promote a child in the next

higher grade. Though the ordinance passed in 2008 tried to be liberal in terms of performance but it was very much strict in terms of 75% attendance. Similarly, as per 1973 Act, Rules of promotion and retention considered relaxations upto 60% attendance in the matter of genuine reasons. Even though it is very much clear that Rules are revolving around the attendance and emphasizing attendance to be an important, basic and the only criteria for the promotion.

No doubt the presence of a child in the classroom is necessary for the actual classroom and formal learning, but along with this just physical presence does not serve the whole purpose as it does not ensure actual learning always for example 'A child might be physically present into the classroom but cannot be ensured their mental presence which might be lost due to some disorder or unknown problem or due to his/her presence, in his/her own dream world', In these specified cases the child might ensure his/her physical presence but might not have learnt anything and therefore may not achieve even Minimum Levels of Learning. Similarly, not being in the classroom does not always mean no learning, e.g. 'There can be a child who is competent enough to learn various concepts and have attained Minimum Level of learning devised for that particular grade in which he/she is studying but for certain genuine reason could not attend the classes regularly and hence could not maintain minimum required attendance to be called a condonation case i.e. 60% or below.'

This showed, though the presence of the child is very much important and it's good to take this factor into account but totally relying on that, which took to the limit that the child will be detained automatically and will not be permitted to give his/her examinations, is problematic. It can bring more harmful results. It can harm child's intrinsic motivation and can cause frustration. Hence, the issue is quite controversial which is more important, attendance or learning attainments? There is a need to review the current policy to make it more holistic and liberal policy especially with reference to attendance and promotion rules. Secondly, when promotion to the next higher grade will become an automatic subject, irrespective of poor performance in the decided evaluation tools, what would be the guiding principles for a student to learn a particular content which is important but he/she finds it difficult or of not his/her interest being enough to pursue? What will happen to the motivation of the children, who were motivated to study to pass the exams and to get promotion in the next higher grade? Thirdly, as per Directorate of Education, ordinances 2008, the policy will be effective up to class VII whereas from class VIII onwards children will be promoted on the basis of their performance in the three terminal tests. This brings an obvious

dissonance in one's mind that how these children will suddenly adjust to the rules of class VIII when they reach that level. Will it not add the pressure on the child's mind, which is already going through the biological changes of adolescent age and facing many social adjustment problems due to growing up expectations of the peer group, family and society? Hence, will it not be better to distribute this stress in all the grades rather than packing it and suddenly throwing it in class VIII? No Detention up to class VII can generate serious problem in long run, therefore it is matter of great concern and needs serious attention.

### **3. Planning Vs. Implementation**

Planning is an important factor which is essential to make the vision reality. It's an old saying "a man who does not plan ahead will find trouble at his door". Planning mean scheme, arrange beforehand, the way of proceeding to achieve an objective as planning a campaign, a journey or a policy like No Detention. Planned and non planned things makes a difference, where planning clarifies the line of action to be followed in advance, unplanned activities leaves the person in an ocean where person is unsure where to go and which path to follow.

Therefore whenever a policy is planned to achieve certain goals or objectives, it is important to strategies its implementation. Briefing all the concerned members, public opinion, group discussions, conducting pilot studies are some of the methods, which are usually taken into account before implementing any policy at the mass level, so that everyone affected can understand the concept and its utility to bring required changes in their plan of action accordingly.

But if one takes a look towards the circular passed in June 2008,

"All the heads of the schools of Government and Government Aided Schools were ordered to promote, all those students who were detained on the basis of results of examinations held in March- April 2008 till VII, in the next higher class by 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2008[Directorate of Education Circular (26 June, 2008)]."

It can be observed that no time was given to the teachers and principals to bring any change. Infact this policy suddenly came in force in the middle of the session and changed the already implemented rules of April 2008. It is very ironical to see how this policy plays with the students. It first fails the students and after one month's regular study suddenly realises to promote these students. What would be the obvious reaction of previously passed students such as bullying and labeling, and their teachers, who must have established a rapport due to

previously spent one month together in the new session, towards newly promoted students? How will the administration and teacher ensure a comfortable environment for these students in such a situation?

Moreover, if the child is promoted even if he/ she has not attained enough for that particular level, can we expect the child to perform better and achieve the Minimum Level of Learning decided for the next higher grade? Along with that can we expect the teachers to take care of these children along with already present diverse group in their classes? Have our teachers' been prepared to deal with such a situation? Have they been convinced about the policy because if we will not brief the teacher and other involved groups, we will never be able to accomplish what we intended to accomplish.

Added to this, as when the policy was implemented teachers and students were on May-June holidays, so how the work of promotion was managed by the school? Would it be done during the holidays itself or after that? Did this policy cause any confusion or problem or it went well in terms of administrative works? Did teachers face any kind of difficulty in teaching the new regrouped classes or it was well planned and structured before its implementation? How much confusion, inconvenience and disharmony would have been created due to such an unthoughtful and sudden implementation of the policy, which did not give time to anybody in the school circle to think and work.

### **Holistic vs Parts**

CABE in 1983 suggested "the implementation of Liberal Policy of promotion will require simultaneous adoption of non- graded system as well as a system of continuous assessment of attainments". Point no 11 points out "To ensure that systematic teaching and learning take place, the implementation of liberal policy of promotion will require simultaneous adoption of non-graded system as well as a system of continuous assessment of attainments."

MHRD's Annual report 1983 stated "non- graded system along with No Detention Policy as a measure for reducing dropout". "Comprehensive measures for reducing drop-out rates have been suggested to all the states and five Union Territories which include ungraded school system including 'No detention' up to class VIII, conversion of single-teacher primary schools into two-teacher schools, provision of schooling facilities in all habitations with viable population, setting up of early childhood (pre- school) education centres in rural areas as adjuncts of primary schools, promotion of girl's education,

curricular reform projects, improving physical facilities, improving teacher competence, community participation and, above all, large non-formal part-time education programmes for children who cannot join and attend formal schools due to socio- economic reasons."

Directorate of Education, Circular (26 June, 2008): orders that "All the prevailing practices of qualitative improvement in school education and learning achievement of student will continue with a more focus on achievement of Minimum Level of Learning and achievement of competencies at each level."

If both (CABE and MHRD) recommendations are compared, it will be observed, MHRD did not tell about continuous assessment of attainments, which showed that this policy had been suggested just to reduce drop-out at the MHRD level and not to help students learn and perform better; and hence did not feel the need to pay any special attention towards continuous assessment of attainments.

Then, Directorate of Education, Delhi further mystified the whole concept by deleting non- graded system itself from the original thought as suggested by CABE in 1983.

By closely analysing these three programmes (Non Detention Policy, Non Graded System and Comprehensive Assessment System), it is found that they are quite interlinked and interwoven. The system defined by CABE in which all these three need to be adopted together, is actually an entirely different system which got most popular in 1960s particularly at the Elementary level. In fact it was adopted by many countries later. A typical Non Graded School as discussed earlier has students who are one or two years apart in age, in one group. Each group therefore will have students of two or three grades i.e. first, second, and third graders, and so on.

As the children in the multiage group are having different interest and skills, the curriculum is usually crafted based on the needs of a specific child/group. One common approach is to teach thematic units on animals or measurement or on any other concept, and students read, write, and work on the projects relating to the unit as per their level and ability. Schools using such a thematic based curriculum usually use narrative assessment and prepare portfolios reporting strengths, weaknesses, and academic progress of each and every student in place of traditional evaluations method.

Some of these Non Graded Schools keep students for two or more years with the same teacher in order to develop more family like relations among them. It helps the teacher in understanding the psychological and emotional needs of every

student and can plan and work effectively for the betterment of the students. Moreover, there are several reasons beside the adoption of Non Graded school system apart from the above discussion. Firstly, it can increase the enrollment in the schools more effectively if the grade levels are combined. In addition, some of the teachers, administrators, and policy makers has realised the requirement of adopting effective Non Graded System and implemented for at least up to primary levels as it leads to the better performance of the students as compared to those who studied in the Graded System. Secondly, the system elevates the students to progress at their own pace and helps the students in constructing their mental models slowly and gradually. Thirdly, it helps in coming out of the flaws of traditional classrooms where teaching learning process left out underachievers as well as gifted students and works on the principle of majority i.e. average students. In non graded system, different ability students are grouped together so that more skilled can help the less one and that how they learn to cooperate. Not just this, the non graded system eradicates the problem of bullying and helps in developing the spirit of social responsibility. Lastly, students who may have the most difficulty in a traditional school do better in a Non Graded school as one study identifies boys, African Americans, underachievers, and students from poorer families as those likely to perform better and feel better about themselves in Non Graded schools and these students score, better on achievement tests than their peers, and the improvement is greater the longer they stay in a Non Graded program (Woodward, 1998).

But if these are compared in our present education system with the above defined system or as discussed by CABE, if it could be seen, though there is a system which keeps students with one teacher for five years at the primary level but what about its' implication at the Elementary Level where the system neither have graded system nor any multiage learning programme, nor individual based curriculum, nor holistic and individualized assessment, nor any such defined continuous, comprehensive, and diagnostic evaluation system. If No Detention is adopted in isolation without considering Non Graded system and Comprehensive Assessment System that mean we are diluting the whole purpose of education.

No Detention in isolation would definitely make sure that no child would be detained on the basis of poor performance in examinations but it will not ensure the quality learning among the children because Delhi Government Schools do not possess such required curriculum, environment and system which are essential to fulfill all the objectives such as to increase retention,

to motivate the students and to prevent the students from frustration that occurs due to early failure.

Directorate of Education, Delhi in the order passed on 26 June 2008 says that more focus will be given on achievement of Minimum Levels of Learning and achievement of competencies at each level, it does not provide clarifications regarding the what kind of changes which would be brought about and when would they be brought about?

Also, as our Education system does not possess basic required things to make the education joyful experience which further can make the students intrinsically motivated to study therefore taking out the external motivating factor, such as promotion, can make the situation worst nothing else then that.

Moreover, No Detention System in isolation can influence the mindsets of the people the other way round. Now, children may become careless towards their education and they may not feel the need to study because they know they are going to be promoted to the next class anyway.

At the same time teachers may also misuse the policy by not teaching these students properly thinking children will get promotion in any case and would reach in the next class where there would be any other teacher and therefore it will become his/ her headache to teach these students. Though, Directorate of Education has introduced many such provisions such as evaluation of teachers' teaching on the basis of students' performance but there also many inherent lapses exist that we will discuss later in Assessment vs Measurement point. This shows filtering the concept and implementing just a part of it in isolation can mystify the whole concept and in place of achieving something we may loose what we have as well.

Therefore this policy seems to be convincing holistically because of its' convincing arguments, benefits and usages as suggested by CABE and as accepted worldwide but the form in which we have accepted it in our present education system, it just shows its hollowness.

## **5. Assessment Vs Measurement**

The last significant comparative dimension (assessment Vs. measurement) signifies the continuous evaluation system. Directorate of Education, Government of NCT, Delhi proposed in 2003 the Continuous and Comprehensive Evaluation Programme (CCEP) to inculcate the habit of understanding the concepts rather than sheer retention based on remembrance, it is felt imperative that the children are comprehensively

examined on the basis of whole course being taught to them in a specific period and the examination is based on the concept rather than on memory. Under this scheme, four additional examinations would be conducted in a year for the students from classes III- XII in addition to the routine three terminal tests. The examination would consist of objective type question on all subjects and on all topics which are to be covered in that particular quarter. In order to have more clarity of CCEP, the major features were extracted and analyzed which are as:

- i) Point no. 4 of CCEP “After the examination and assessment of the results, subject- wise and teacher wise performance will be given to the individual teacher. It may be noted that individual child’s performance would not be given to the school or to the subject teachers. However, the analysis of the class results would be provided to them.”
- ii) Point no. 5 of CCEP “The first test for the students would become a base line to evaluate the performance of these classes and each subsequent test would give the relative performance of the class and the teacher as compared to the previous test and the base line.”
- iii) Point no. 6 of CCEP “Evaluation of subject teacher would also be done on the basis of the test results. For the purpose of evaluation of teachers, weightage would be given to the increase in the performance.”
- iv) Point no. 7 of CCEP “There would be a system of reward and punishment after the evaluation of the teachers is done using the results of CCEP.”

First of all it is difficult to understand as to know why the system to be called as a continuous and comprehensive evaluation system? If it be seen conceptually, continuous and comprehensive evaluation system means to keep a record of individual performance comprehensively based on his/her conceptual understanding so that the teacher can help the child based on his/her performance. This is what we find when we read the introduction of the CCEP rules giving the details about objectives behind CCEP, which says CCEP has been proposed to inculcate the habit of understanding the concepts therefore examination would be based on the concept rather than on memory. It sounds good when we read these words, but reality is something different and more diplomatic when we relate the words with the reality.

Here the problem starts with the evaluation system itself as it would be objective question answer based and would be quarterly. That means four times in a year. It’s true that quarterly

examinations would give the line of development about the students’ performance but researcher does not get convince that it will give us an authentic data about the students’ understanding because results are controlled by many variables such as nature of questions, nature of concepts, students’ health, weather, and wrong means adopted during the exam etc. So in order to get such an authentic picture in which we can really judge each student’s line of performance to make right judgments about his/ her understanding, we need a very specialized examinations and way to conduct it so that we can control the effect of all the exogenous variables. It would require very scientific approach to evaluate the students’ real learning. Otherwise it would be difficult for a person to decide whether the reason beside better performance is real understanding or used wrong mean or it is just a matter of luck for example child might have cheated the answer or might have blindly ticked them.

It’s the reality that objective type questions would reduce the chances of making children rote memorize long answers that children usually do because of lack of understanding and then reproducing the same in exams puts an extra burden on them. This burden has become such an evil that it has started eating the lives of many students. The National Crime Records Bureau has shown that students’ suicides rose by nearly 7% between 2006 and 2007 (Chhaphia and Mukherjee, 2008). But if we think that objective type questions would reduce this extra burden then we are with a wrong impression as objective type questions too demands marks. In fact, more chances of loosing the marks are there as, such questions demands more exact answers and to give right answers one needs to rote memorise the facts. There are guides and question banks available give students’ a ready material to learn.

Thus the comprehensive assessment seems to be an extra burden on children and nothing more than that. It’s true that children face psychological traumas when they are retained but at the same time their fear starts with the marks in their examinations therefore many students kill their lives or try to harm themselves before the examination results. And in a system like ours, students will face three terminal tests, four Continuous and Comprehensive Examinations plus weekly test. Researcher strongly feels adding CCEP paper is an added pressure. In place of it, Researcher acknowledges the need to adopt some other methods to keep a record of students’ learning attainment or development. For this Researcher does not believe in increasing the number of examinations to make the evaluation comprehensive. Infact, Researcher feels that the student can be evaluated from their daily class room performances. It gives

a teacher more comprehensive understanding about the students leaning and development, because it is the most natural way of assessment and child can also be seen in his/her natural behaviour and way.

Another important feature of this is the teacher's evaluation on the basis of students' performance. Then it looks a bit erotic to put an extra burden and bundle of fear on the students to evaluate teachers' performance. Then question is, Can a teacher be made responsible or impute her on the basis of students' performance in the comprehensive tests keeping the situation where students who could not pass the previous level suddenly promoted in the higher level and asked to compete with the competencies of previous level and new higher level due to implementation of No Detention Policy?

Point No. 4, 5, 6 and 7 all points out towards teachers' evaluation. The system wants to judge the individual teacher, not the student's performance, so that they can impute the teacher and can hold him/her responsible for everything that what is written clearly in point 6 & 7. Teachers are issued memos and are asked to give reasons for poor performance knowing the system where there are more than 60 students with one teacher sometimes even more and where students are suddenly promoted due to sudden implementation of the policies like "No Detention" in between the sessions. Why would a teacher not be motivated to prompt his/her students to cheat to prove themselves as a good teacher in the eyes of administrators and parents? When it's just a matter of teacher's performance not a matter of students, why would not be teachers motivated to manipulate with the students' performance and scorings to show their good results. So the CCEP seems to be just a mechanism which would neither help the children to improve their performance, nor teachers to improve their teaching.

## Conclusion

Indian Education system is said to be second largest in the world. No doubt, the system can claim it to be one of the largest, but it cannot make similar claims for efficiency, quality and achievement of learners (Aggarwal, 2001). Similarly NPE 1966, NPE 1986, revised NPE 1982, now proposed Right of children to Free and Compulsory Education Bill, and many such documents reiterated, time to time, the urgency to address quality concern in school education but quality cannot improve by itself. It requires focus on not just attendance but also on performance. However, in actual practice it seems once again

quality has been compromised at the cost of quantity by strengthening attendance over performance. In favor of the said statement, statements in the ordinances seem to be not just affecting the internal efficiency of the educational system but also strengthening and ensuring the situation where only a few graduates of the school and higher education system attains the expected skills and competencies. Moreover, the philosophized and realised goals of No Detention Policy can easily be challenged because of the widening gap among the school facilities; quality of teaching, socio-economic conditions where primary/elementary schools operate and the noticed disparity in the ordinances passed at the various planning and implementation level. However, constant supervision on external and internal systems working for education such as teacher education institutions, curriculum reforming agencies, evaluation body, policy planning institutions, schools and all the administrative machinery can bring things back on track. Hence, if sound inter-linkages are established at inter and intra institution/agencies/bodies, it will unite and channelize the agenda in the right perspective. It's a high time that there is a need to understand the present system and to adopt an eclectic approach.

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