

# Perspectives of Stakeholders from Indian Secondary Schools about Conducting Board Examinations Twice a Year

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## ABSTRACT

Board examinations play a vital role in the academic journey of students and significantly influence teachers' responsibilities. However, the current examination system has been criticized for contributing to student stress, anxiety, inconsistent grading, and over-reliance on rote learning, which has led to a decline in public trust. To address these challenges, the introduction of conducting board examination twice a year, recommended by the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 and National Curriculum Framework-School Education (NCF-SE)2023 represents a major reform in the education system. This study investigates the perspectives of stakeholders on conducting board examinations twice a year in Khurda district, Odisha, India. A descriptive research design and survey method were employed, with a randomly selected sample consisting of schools, head-teachers, teachers, and students. The total sample comprised 10 head-teachers, 100 teachers, and 200 students. The findings indicate that 78.18% of participants believe board examinations twice a year would reduce student stress, 81.81% agree it provides better preparation opportunities, and 86.36% think frequent and timely feedback fosters academic growth. However, 50% of stakeholders expressed concerns about increased teacher workload. Students supported conducting board examinations twice a year, believing it would encourage consistent study habits, reduced stress, and fostered a growth mindset. However, concerns were raised about resource inequalities benefiting well-supported students. These results underscore the potential benefits and challenges of implementing board examinations twice a year, offering valuable insights for policymakers and educators in shaping future examination reforms.

## KEYWORDS

perspectives; stakeholders; board examination; teachers workload; students stress.

## INTRODUCTION

Assessment and evaluation are like the guiding lights of education, both play vital role in shaping students learning journey. Assessment entails methodically gathering and analysing data regarding students' knowledge, skill and capacities. Evaluation aims to ascertain the efficacy of educational initiatives, curriculum, or instructional strategies to inform judgement about policy formation and implementation.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has strong emphasis on competency-based learning, less rote memorization, and an evaluation methodology that is more adaptable and comprehensive, National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2023, which promotes formative and ongoing assessment technique to enhance students learning while alleviating academic stress. In alignment with these policies proposal to conduct board examinations twice a year was introduced. Additionally, the 'Pariksha Pe Charcha' initiatives help students, parents, teachers communicate directly with the prime minister, addressing examination related concerns and promoting effective stress management. Together, these initiatives strengthens both assessment and evaluation approaches (Ministry of Education, 2020).

Board examination, which are essential advancement of both academic advancement and career preparation, are administered by the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), which was founded in 1962. Traditionally these examinations are taken at the conclusion of the tenth and twelfth grades. Beginning with the 2025–2026 school year, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) intends to implement twice-yearly class 10 board examination in accordance with National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. [Addendum 1 26022025.pdf](#). The goal of this modification is to reduce academic pressure while providing students with numerous opportunities to enhance their performance. To improve their grades, students can choose to take one or both test sessions, which will cover the full course (Central Board of Secondary Education, 2025).

The shift to conduct two board examination brings a transformative impact on key stakeholders within the education system. For students lowering the burden of a single high-stake examination would help them feel less stressed, foster better knowledge retention and offering increased flexibility in academic planning. Parents may gain a better picture of child's academic progress, alleviating concerns about one time performance measures. Increased possibilities for formative assessments can help teachers provide students timely feedback and the support they need, which can improve the learning process. A more inclusive and balanced evaluation strategy may be reinforced by policymakers observing high educational standards, increased public confidence in the examination system, and enhanced assessment reliability. In keeping with the global trend toward continuous assessment models, India will be conducting board examinations twice a year for the first time. This project aims to maintain rigorous educational standards while revolutionizing the academic system. It is anticipated that the modification will alter the academic setting and make it more focused on the needs of the students. The initiative seeks to promote student wellbeing, increase assessment reliability, and lessen academic pressure by holding board examinations twice a year.

A radical change towards a more comprehensive, student-centred approach is represented by the proposal to hold secondary stage board examinations twice a year, which closely reflects the objectives outlined in the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2023 and the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020. The goal of this switch from a typical, one-time, high-stake examination to twice a year board examination is to lessen academic pressure, encourage lifelong learning, and enhance student wellbeing. Several studies have highlighted the impact of high-stakes examination on student stress and well-being. Rani (2017) "Academic stress among Chennai students and discovered that high-stakes, single tests are a contributing factor to examination-related anxiety, late-night study sessions, and physical signs of stress". Deb et.al. (2015) "Academic stress among secondary school students in India, finding a strong correlation between academic pressure, parental expectations, and anxiety, leading to adverse psychological effects. finding a strong correlation between academic pressure, parental expectations, and anxiety, leading to adverse psychological effects." Bhattacharji and Kingdon (2017) "Criticized the current

examination system for inconsistent grading and reliance on absolute scores, arguing that this has eroded public trust in the assessment process". Pal & Singh (2019) "The positive impact of supportive interventions, such as stress-management resources, on student well-being, particularly those conducted through the SWAYAM Prabha Channel". Pant et.al. (2013) "Yoga interventions helped reduce examination anxiety and depression, underscoring the benefits of incorporating stress-management strategies". Sharma (2014) "The Indian examination system recognizes the ability of students by examination, where scoring more marks is important, but many institutions are taking admission on the basis of separate entrance examinations, which shows a lack of faith in the traditional examination system". Mary et.al. (2014) "In Tamil Nadu increase in suicides rate due to board examination pressure urging the need to assess students' anxiety and implement a system that focuses on student wellbeing". The past researches have strongly acknowledged the negative effect of single board examination conducted at secondary level. The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) to conducting board examinations twice a year for Secondary stage students is an innovative and timely move. There is lack of research on perspective of stake holders and effectiveness of this initiative remains largely unexplored.

By examining the perspectives of head teacher, teacher, students this study seeks to provide evidence on whether this system can create a more balanced and supportive educational environment. The findings will contribute to ongoing policy discussions, ultimately fostering a more inclusive and effective learning framework in India. Hence it is significant to study the perspectives of head-teachers, teachers and students about conducting board examinations twice a year.

### Objectives

- To study the perspective of teachers and head teachers regarding conducting board examinations twice a year.
- To examine the perspective of students regarding conducting board examinations twice a year.

### RESEARCH METHODS

The survey method was used to meet the objectives of the study, which focused on the perspectives of stakeholders regarding the conduct of secondary stage (10<sup>th</sup> Grade) board examinations twice a year. The population for this study included the all-head teachers, teachers, and students from Kendriya Vidyalaya (KVs), Dayanand Anglo-Vedic School (DAV) schools, Demonstration Multipurpose School, and government schools of Bhubaneswar, Khurda district, Odisha, India. Based on the nature of the study, 10 schools were randomly selected from Bhubaneswar city, Odisha. From each school, the sample was also randomly chosen, consisting of 10 teachers, 1 head teacher, and 20 students, ensuring diverse representation. In total, the sample comprised 10 head teachers, 100 teachers, and 200 students. Among the 110 head teachers and teachers, 52% were female and 48% were male and 200 students included 65% female and 35% male students. The researcher used a perception scale for head teachers, teachers and conducted focus group discussions with students. A self-developed perception scale consisting of 25 items with three response options; agree, *neutral*, and *disagree* was used as a tool. The scale was designed around five key dimensions; stress and pressure management, preparation and study habits, feedback and evaluation, skill development and academic performance, and equity and resource management. The researcher organised twenty focus group discussion sessions across the selected schools, with two groups formed in each school, involving ten students per group. These discussions explored students' viewpoints on conducting board examinations twice a

year. Each session focused on five questions covering different dimensions such as frequency of board examinations, student benefits, opportunities for growth, implementation challenges, and the overall impact on students. Content validity of the tools was ensured by seeking expert comments and suggestions during their development. Data collection was conducted through direct interaction between the researcher and the participants. Data were analysed using frequency and percentage for perception scale and thematic analysis for data from focus group discussion.

### **Data Analysis**

#### ***Perspectives of Head-Teachers & Teachers on Conducting Board Examinations Twice a Year***

The first objective is to study the perceptions of secondary school head teachers and teachers regarding conducting board examinations twice a year. The researcher has focused on aspects such as how this change will positively and negatively affect students and how it will impact the overall education system.

**Table 1. Stress and Pressure Management**

Sl. No	Items	Agree N (%)	Neutral N (%)	Disagree N (%)
1.	Reduces pressure and stress on students	86(78.18%)	14(12.72%)	10(9.09%)
2.	Creates pressure to perform well within a shorter time frame	34(30.90%)	20(18.18%)	56(50.90%)
3.	Creates a burden on slow learners to complete the syllabus	43(39.09%)	13(11.81%)	54(49.09%)
4.	Increases stress on students	39(35.45%)	21(19.09%)	50(45.45%)
5.	Impact students' motivation and engagement in studies	25(23.63%)	18(16.36%)	66(60%)

The survey on conducting board examinations twice a year reveals mixed opinions. A large majority 78.18% believe two board examinations reduce stress and pressure, while only 9.09% disagree. However, 50.90% do not think frequent examinations create more pressure, with 30.90% feeling it does. Opinions on the impact on slow learners are divided, with 49.09% disagreeing that it burdens them, but 39.09% expressing concern. Regarding overall stress, 45.45% disagree that it increases, while 35.45% believe it does. Most respondents 60% do not think frequent examinations harm motivation and engagement, though some 23.63% see potential downsides. Overall, there is strong support for the approach, with some concerns about time pressure and slow learners.

**Table 2. Preparation and Study Habits**

Sl. No.	Items	Agree N (%)	Neutral N (%)	Disagree N (%)
1.	It provides scope for better preparation for the examination	90(81.81%)	14(12.72%)	6(5.45%)
3.	Boosts student's confidence	84(76.36%)	21(19.09%)	5(4.54%)
4.	A balanced distribution of workload and study time	87(79.09%)	15(14.54%)	7(6.36%)
5.	Eliminates rote memorization	55(50.00%)	35(31.81%)	19(17.27%)

The data showed strong support for conducting board examinations twice a year. A majority 81.81% agreed it improved preparation, and believed it encouraged consistent study habits. Most respondents 76.36% felt it boosted student confidence, while 79.09% thought it balanced the workload. However, opinions on reducing rote memorization were mixed, with 50.0% agreeing and 31.81% remaining neutral. Overall, the approach was seen as beneficial for preparation, study habits, confidence, and workload management, though its impact on deep learning remained uncertain.

**Table 3. Feedback and Evaluation**

Sl. No.	Items	Agree N (%)	Neutral N (%)	Disagree N (%)
1.	Provides continuous and timely feedback	95(86.36%)	12(10.90%)	2(1.81%)
2.	Reinforces regular review and mastery of content	77(70.00%)	27(24.54%)	4(3.63%)
3.	Improves long term retention	70(63.63%)	24(21.81%)	14(12.72%)
4.	Helps in holistic assessment	72(65.45%)	22(20.00%)	15(13.63%)
5.	Provides meaningful feedback	89(80.90%)	13(11.81%)	6(5.45%)

The data showed strong support for conducting board examinations twice a year, with 86.36% agreeing it provided timely feedback and 70.00% believing it reinforced regular study habits. Most respondents 63.63% felt it improved long-term retention, and 65.45% agreed it enabled holistic evaluation. Additionally, 80.90% found the feedback from biannual examinations valuable. While there was broad support, some uncertainty remained about the impact on retention and holistic evaluation. Overall, the approach was seen as beneficial for enhancing the educational process.

**Table 4. Skill Development and Academic Performance**

Sl. No.	Items	Agree N (%)	Neutral N (%)	Disagree N (%)
1.	Helps in skill development	78(70.90%)	20(18.18%)	11(10.00%)
2.	Encourages skill integration in curriculum	55(50.00%)	34(30.90%)	19(17.27%)
3.	Allows teachers to identify learning gaps	70(63.63%)	28(25.45%)	11(10.00%)
4.	Prepares students for higher education	70(63.63%)	20(18.18%)	21(19.09%)
5.	Overshadow ability of critical thinking	19(17.27%)	18(16.36%)	73(66.36%)

The data showed that conducting board examinations twice a year was widely seen as beneficial for skill development 70.90%, identifying learning gaps 63.63%, and preparing students for higher education or careers 63.63%. However, only 50.00% believed frequent examinations actively encouraged skill development, with many respondents remaining neutral or unsure. A majority 66.36% disagreed that frequent examinations hindered creative or critical thinking. Overall, the approach was viewed positively, though some uncertainty remained about its role in fostering specific skills.

**Table 5. Equity and Resource Management**

Sl. No.	Items	Agree N (%)	Neutral N (%)	Disagree N (%)
1.	Providing multiple assessment opportunities	74(67.27%)	22(20%)	13(11.81%)
2.	Hamper equitable access to resources and support for all students	20(18.18%)	14(12.72%)	75(68.18%)





3.	Challenges in maintaining healthy work-life balance of teachers	26(23.63%)	28(25.45%)	55(50.0%)
4.	Create difficulty in adapting new teaching strategies	11(10.0%)	18(16.36%)	79(71.81%)
5.	Lead to inequity among learners	12(10.90%)	32(29.0%)	65(59.0%)

The data showed mixed perceptions on conducting board examinations twice a year. A majority 67.27% believed it promoted equity by providing multiple assessment opportunities, while 68.18% disagreed that it created resource disparities. However, 50% agreed that twice board examinations increased teacher workload, raising concerns about work-life balance. Most respondents 71.81% felt the examination did not hinder adapting new teaching strategies, and 59.0% disagreed that the examination led to inequity among learners. Overall, the approach was viewed positively for fostering fairness, though concerns about teacher workload persisted.

### *Perspectives of Students on Conducting Board Examinations Twice a Year*

- *Frequency of board examinations:* Students frequently made the case for holding board examinations twice a year, pointing out several important advantages. Students felt less stressed by a single, high-stakes test because of the increased examination frequency, which encouraged continuous study habits and a development mentality where mistakes were seen as opportunities for learning. Additionally, by lowering the probability of depression and suicide attempts, this method enhanced well-being. Some pupils, however, expressed worries about possible disadvantages. Because pupils who have greater means or support may have an edge, there were also worries about inequality getting worse. Therefore, it was thought that holding board examinations twice a year would help to encourage regular study habits and overall wellbeing. However, addressing potential challenges such as resource inequalities would be crucial to ensuring the system supports all students' academic success.
- *Students benefit:* After the responses were analysed, it was shown that giving board examinations twice a year had several advantages for both students and educational institutions. Students were able to participate in their studies more regularly and with greater confidence thanks to this strategy, which promoted lifelong learning and decreased stress. Better comprehension and retention of the information resulted from the twice a year board examination, which encouraged continuous study as opposed to last-minute cramming. Students gained vital life skills like flexibility, resilience, and time management. Students' mental health would benefit from the lessened stress as well, since it would promote a growth mentality and lessen worry. All things considered, holding board examinations twice a year was in line with contemporary teaching methods that prioritize ongoing evaluation, student welfare, and holistic growth, all of which helped to create a more encouraging and productive learning environment.
- *Opportunities for growth:* After reviewing the responses, it became clear that conducting board examinations twice a year had significant benefits for students' academic pressure, personal growth, and development. This approach facilitated effective learning by providing timely feedback and supporting the development of academic skills and resilience. Weaker students received assistance and chances to get better, which made their academic experience more well-rounded. Students were able to improve their study methods through numerous assessment opportunities,

which improved their academic achievement and personal growth. They were able to conquer difficult subjects, concentrate on their areas of weakness, and flourish in a supportive learning environment thanks to the system. Twice a year board examination encouraged wellbeing, personal development, and academic achievement while giving pupils the tools they needed for long-term progress.

- *Implementation challenges:* However, administering board examinations twice a year presented serious difficulties because of the hurried examination schedule, which made it hard to offer individualized help for a variety of learners. This put a strain on resources and increased parental pressure to maintain regular study habits. The system ran the risk of putting testing ahead of a comprehensive education, which might have a negative impact on the standard of instruction and the wellbeing of parents, instructors, and students. Students, especially weaker ones, experienced heightened pressure to perform, leading to increased stress, with limited time left for personal growth or extracurricular activities. Adopting a holistic strategy that addresses these issues, creates a positive learning environment, and upholds the integrity of the examination process is essential to ensuring students' academic performance and well-being.
- *Impact on students:* The consequences are that slow learners may face problems in taking the stress to fulfil the expectations of parents and may fear failure to score more marks than the previous examination. The relentless cycle of preparation and assessment can affect the students' mental and physical health, creating an unsustainable pressure cooker environment. Diverse learners may face problems in dealing with the pressure to perform well. Some of the dimensions include highlighting the advantages of holding board examinations twice a year. The allocation of academic pressure, chances for growth, and more time for review and concentrated study are a few of these. Board examinations twice a year help may help many students to succeed academically by giving them the opportunity to grow from their mistakes and modify their strategy. Overall, even if the data highlights the opportunities and difficulties of two times board examinations, it also emphasizes how crucial it is to take a balanced strategy that puts students' welfare first while maintaining high academic standards.

### Major Findings

- Most head-teachers and teachers (78.18%) believe conducting board examinations twice a year help to reduce student stress more evenly throughout the year. However, 50.90% feel the increased frequency of examinations may create pressure within a shorter timeframe.
- An overwhelming percentage of head-teachers and teachers (81.81%) agree conducting board examinations twice a year offer better preparation opportunities and encourage consistent study habits. 76.4% say examinations boost student confidence whereas only 50% think it reduces reliance on rote memorization.
- Majority of head-teachers and teachers (86.36%) agree that more frequent examinations provide continuous and timely feedback crucial for academic growth. 80.90% find this feedback meaningful. But only 63.63% of head-teachers and teachers think it can improve long-term retention of learning.
- Majority of head-teachers and teachers (70.90%) agree board examinations twice a year aid in skill development. However, 63.63% believe it help to identify and address learning gaps.

- About percentage (67.27%) of head-teachers and teachers agree board examinations twice a year contribute to a more equitable system. But 50% of them are concerned about increased teacher workload.
- As it would promote regular study habits, lower stress levels, and a growth attitude, students favoured holding board examinations twice a year. Concerns were expressed, regarding resource disparities that would favour students who received enough support.
- Twice a year board examination can encourage lifelong learning, improve memory, and lessen last-minute cramming. Students believed it may enhance their mental health would boost their confidence, improve time management skills, and foster resilience and adaptability while also supporting mental well-being.
- Students stated that taking several tests helped them improve their study strategies, concentrate on their areas of weakness, provide cope of improvement and support slow learners.
- As examinations became more frequent, parental pressure increased and educational resources were strained. The quick assessment cycle caused some students, particularly the poorer ones, to struggle, which raises concerns that excessive testing might overshadow holistic learning.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The findings indicated a significant proportion of respondents (78.18%) agreed that board examinations twice a year could reduce student stress. This aligns with Rani (2017) findings on the intense pressure of single, high-stakes examinations. Conducting board examinations twice a year could ease this pressure by offering students an opportunity for improvement. Some of the positive impacts on student engagement and preparation were notable. Most respondents (81.81%) agreed that conducting board examinations twice a year improved readiness and encouraged consistent study habits, while 76.4% stated it boosted student confidence. Additionally, 79.09% believed it would allow for a balanced distribution of study time. This resonates with Pal & Singh (2019) research, which underscores the importance of supportive interventions in enhancing student well-being and academic performance.

Regular feedback, by 86.36% of respondents as meaningful for growth, parallels the findings of Bhattacharji & Kingdon (2017), who critique the current system's inconsistent grading and emphasize the need for more formative, continuous assessment methods. The perceived increase in pressure to perform within shorter timeframes (50.90%) and heightened stress for slow learners (45.45%) complicates this. Mary et.al. (2014) highlighted the need for a system which focuses on student wellbeing. Deb et.al. (2015) found a strong link between academic stress, parental pressure, and anxiety, potentially creating a cycle of continuous assessment anxiety for struggling students. Pant et.al. (2013) highlighted benefits of yoga in effective stress-management. Sharma (2014) found lack of faith in traditional examination system; focus should be on overall development, not only scoring marks. Teacher workload and work-life balance remain significant concerns, with 50% noting challenges in this area. Effective implementation of the board examinations twice a year requires addressing teacher workload and supporting slow learners as well as diverse learners and focusing on students' wellbeing to ensure sustainability.

Despite challenges, 67.27% found this system would be equitable. While it offers benefits like reducing peak examinations stress, fostering consistent study habits, and improving feedback and content mastery, concerns were raised about resource inequalities favouring well-supported students. The system enhanced continuous learning, improved material



retention, and reduced examination -related anxiety. It fostered a growth mindset and helped students develop essential skills like time management, resilience, and adaptability, aligning with modern educational practices. Conducting board examinations twice a year provides timely feedback and multiple chances for improvement, benefits weaker students in refining study techniques.

Students argued that while the system helped distribute academic pressure and provide additional revision opportunities, slow learners faced difficulties coping with frequent examinations, emphasizing the need for a balanced approach that maintained academic rigor while prioritizing student well-being. Future studies could explore targeted interventions to enhance the positive outcomes and address the identified challenges.

## CONCLUSION

This study explored the impact of conducting board examinations twice a year from the perspectives of stakeholders like students, teachers, and headmasters. Emphasizing both advantages and drawbacks of conducting board examinations twice a year. The shift from a single annual examination to a twice-year system gives students a scope of improvement, identifies learning gaps, and improves their performance. The introduction of twice-yearly board examinations, as recommended by National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2023 and National Education Policy (NEP) 2020., is a major reform in the educational system that attempts to balance assessment demand and enhance learning outcomes. The more frequent evaluations provide faster feedback, enabling students to address weaknesses promptly. By distributing examinations across the year, this system reduces the stress associated with a single high-stakes test, supports mental well-being, and discourages last-minute cramming. Furthermore, this system wants to cultivate critical life skills like perseverance, flexibility, and time management—qualities important for growth and success in both academic and professional growth. However, there are several changes that must be made to conduct twice-yearly board examinations. To accommodate more frequent assessments, schools might need to reorganize their curriculum. Instead of concentrating on a single test, teachers may start employing formative evaluation and continuous assessment. Furthermore, more resources will be needed by educational institutions and boards to administer and assess tests effectively. ensuring a smooth transition to the new system.

Although there are many benefits to the two times board examinations system, its effectiveness depends on strong institutional support, thoughtful curriculum redesign, and a focus on the holistic development of the students. A holistic approach will be essential to ensuring that more frequent assessments improve learning and promote holistic development. Future studies should concentrate on creating plans to lessen these difficulties, such as giving slow learners more assistance and looking into ways to make the administration of tests and feedback procedures more efficient. Educational institutions can leverage the advantages of administering board examinations twice a year to all students by resolving these issues and fostering a more supportive and equal learning environment.

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