

Teachers' Perception and Implementation of Continuous Assessment Practices in Secondary Schools in Ekiti-State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined the practices and implementation of continuous assessment in Ekiti State Secondary Schools with special interest in Ado Local Government. The population for the study was the whole number of teachers in Ekiti State secondary school and the sample for the study was 160 secondary school teachers who were randomly selected from four secondary schools in Ado – Ekiti. The study used qualitative and quantitative descriptive survey design to collect and analyze the data. The data were collected through the use of questionnaire. The data collected were analyzed through the use of percentages and students t-test using spss version 17. Findings of the study revealed that state of continuous assessment were found to negate the definition of the National Policy of Education which state that learners should be evaluated in the three (3) domains of educational level. It was recommended that Government should organize seminars, conference and workshop for teachers on the correct implementation of continuous assessment in Secondary Schools.

Keywords: continuous assessment, implementation cognitive, affective, psychomotor

1. Introduction

In the times past, the main mode of evaluation was by means of end of year examination, the end of course examination at the end of Primary, Secondary and Tertiary Education. True enough, many schools have weekly test or quizzes. These test or quizzes are not usually reflected in the end of the year summary of results. At the end of both the primary and secondary education, students were made to sit for external examination. In certifying the child therefore, the teachers has little or no input in the assessment procedure. The funny aspect of the whole issue is that at the secondary school level, the external examining body lures the teachers to do the scoring of their own student.

However, as a result of series of examination leakages and related malpractices there arouse the need for modification. The most obvious modification is to assess the child's work continuously throughout the course and on the basis of this, either wholly certified him or combine such continuous assessment in a predetermined ratio to the results of a back-up examination, hence the introduction of continuous assessment.

Continuous assessment is one of the innovations introduced into Nigerian education by the national policy on Education (2004). The basis for continuous assessment implementation in schools is that one short examination, which was the main mode of examination was inadequate, hence the introduction of continuous assessment.

Continuous assessment is a veritable tool in assessment in that it is comprehensive, systematic, cumulative and guidance orientated. Many schools have since embarked on the implementation of continuous assessment. It is not surprising therefore to find teachers testing their pupils weekly, at the end of each unit or module etc. In recent times, however, these tests have assumed disciplinary status to check noise making, absenteeism, truancy etc. At this juncture, continuous assessment in practice ceases to be a tool for aiding learning. One can only call it what it is "continuous testing" which is contrary to the definition of continuous assessment.

The National steering committee on continuous assessment led by professor Yoloye (1982) regards continuous assessment as a method of ascertaining what a pupil gains from schooling in terms of knowledge, industry, and character development taking into account all his/her performance in tests, assignments, projects and other educational activities during a given period of term, year or during the entire period of an educational level. Continuous assessment according to (Onuka, 2006; Stiggins, 1994) in Birhanu (2013) define continuous assessment as listening closely to student, observing student as they engaged in learning, as they are engaged with materials and trying to understand what they understand.

Generally, continuous assessment can be define as a function for building up cumulative judgment about a student learning activities in term of knowledge, thinking and reasoning behaviors or character development and industry. Going by these definitions, continuous assessment, according to national policy on education (2004) continuous assessment is defined as a mechanism whereby the final grading of a student in cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains take account of all his performances in a schooling period. It is therefore necessary to examine how well this valuable programme is being implemented by various schools across Ekiti state and Ado local government area in particular. Continuous assessment therefore is to assess student in cognitive, affective and psychomotor domain. Laudable as this programme is, it is not without its own problems.

Some of the problem of continuous assessment that could be associated with the teacher include their

skill in test construction Alausa (2006) as cited in Abiy (2013) contended that like using the table of specification before test construction and their attitude towards the continuous assessment approach and record keeping. Apart from the skill of test construction, measuring affective and psychomotor aspect of continuous assessment is almost to the neglect. It will not be out of place to say that measuring the cognitive of learning at three or four weeks interval is what teachers understand as continuous assessment. Obemeata in Alause (2006) states that teacher should be able to measure the learners affective and psychomotor attribute such as attitudes, motives, interest, values etc. it is believed that anti-social behavior such as truancy, lying, cheating, stealing etc. could be corrected by providing affective education in schools.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Ekiti state is one of the states that embrace the implementation of continuous assessment very early, most teachers are yet to understand the correct way the continuous assessment record should be kept, instruments to be used for assessing the three levels of educational domain i.e cognitive, psychomotor and the affective domain. It is against this background that this researcher carried out this investigative study to find out how secondary school teacher in Ekiti- State particularly in Ado local government perceive and implement the scheme of continuous assessment

1.2 Research Question

- How does an average teacher perceive the implementation of continuous assessment?

1.3 Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis one: There is no significant difference in the conduct of assessment in cognitive and non-cognitive domains.

Hypothesis two: There is no significant difference in the professional and non- professional teacher's implementation of continuous assessment in schools.

1.4 Materials and Methods

A descriptive survey design was adopted in this study. The population of the study consisted of all secondary school teachers in Ekiti State. The sample consisted of one hundred and sixty (160) teachers randomly selected from four (4) secondary school in Ado-Ekiti. They were mainly teachers, because teachers are the principal executor of continuous assessment at all levels.

The main instrument used for the study was a set of questionnaire and oral interview on selected teachers. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. Section A sought information on Bio data of the respondent while parts B contains question on how teachers assess students in three major areas of continuous assessment which is the cognitive, affective and psychomotor. Data collected were analyzed through the use of percentages, cut off mean and student's t-test using SPSS

1.4.1 Presentation of Results

The results of data collected were presented as follows.

Research Question: How does an average teacher perceived the implementation of continuous assessment?

Table 1: Teachers' perception of implementation of continuous assessment

S/N	ITEMS	SA%	A%	D%	SD%	Mean
1	I understand continuous assessment to be test conducted at intervals of three or four weeks	73 (45.6)	77 (48.1)	2 (1.3)	8 (5.0)	3.34
2	Continuous assessment means continuous testing.	54(33.8)	94(58.8)	2(1.3)	10(6.3)	3.2
3	Test is the only instrument of continuous assessment	22 (13.8)	44 (27.5)	35 (21.9)	59 (36.9)	2.18

Table 1 item 1 shows that 93.7% of the respondent (teachers) understand C.A to be test conducted at internal of 3 or 4 weeks, item 2 show that 92.6% of the respondent (teachers) understand continuous assessment to mean continuous testing while 41.3% percentage agree that test is the only instrument of continuous assessment.

1.4.2 Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis one: There is no significance difference in the conduct of assessment in cognitive and non-cognitive domain

Table 2: T-test showing the conduct of assessment in cognitive and non-cognitive domains

Variable	N	Mean	SD	DF	T-cal	T-table	Decision
Cognitive domain	160	6.09	2.28	159	14.383	1.960	REJECT
Non-cognitive domain	160	3.34	1.22				

P<0.005

TABLE 2; shows that there is a significant difference in the conduct of assessment in cognitive and non-cognitive domains ($t=14.383$, $p<0.05$). The null hypothesis is rejected

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in the professional teachers and non-professional teacher's implementation of continuous assessment in schools.

Table 3: T-test analysis of the implementations of ca by professional and non- professional teachers

	N	Mean	SD	DF	T-cal	T-tab
PROFESSIONAL	113	34.10	4.48	1.58	1.44	1.960
NON-PROFESSIONAL	47	32.94	4.98	1.58	1.44	1.960

P>0.005

The result on table 3 shows that there is no significant difference in the way professional teachers and non-professional teacher's implement continuous assessment in schools.

1.5 Discussions

The result of the findings showed that majority of teachers in secondary schools does not understand the concept of continuous assessment beyond test that are conducted in the interval of 3 or 4 weeks. This finding showed that teachers just based continuous assessment on the cognitive to the neglect of other domains of educational level

Teachers thinking of continuous assessment as "continuous test" conform to Kapambuwe's (2010) findings in Zambia. Which was clearly revealed in research question one item 1 where ninety three percent (93.7%) indicated that continuous assessment are test conducted at the interval of 3 or 4 weeks in the cognitive domain to the neglect of affective and psychomotor domain. This study agree with Ugodunwa and Mustapha (2005) and Opoola (2006) that submitted that many practising teachers at all levels of education are incompetent in conducting effective and efficient assessment of learners achievement.

Also Ajuonuma, (2007) submitted that the overall ability of the child is not assessed which run contrary to the definitions of continuous assessment as contained in national policy of education (2004) which emphasizes a comprehensive assessment of the child; this study also agreed with Ajonuma (2007) that students are not assessed in affective and psychomotor domains. This implied that the student at the end of their schooling, are not employed or given job according to their cognitive, affective and psychomotor abilities, thus their potential are not maximally utilized for optimum development of the nation.

The findings in hypothesis two showed there is no significant difference in the way and manner the professional and non-professional teachers implement continuous assessment in schools, this may be because most of the teachers are familiar with assessment in the cognitive alone. These findings also agree with Idowu and Esere (2009) which submitted that most of the teachers are familiar with assessments in the cognitive domain. This may not be unconnected with the fact that some of the teachers were not professionally trained. This suggests that the untrained or non-professional teachers do exactly what their professional counterparts do. Though, it was only 47 out of the 160 teachers that are not professionally trained. It was also discovered from the study that observation and checklist were not being used in the assessment of affective domain. It was learnt that marks awarded were just been given as they occur to the teaching whereas if these strategies has been properly used, it would have helped the students to change their own way of actions and modeling which was in line with Obemeta in Alausa (2006) that teachers should be able to measure the learners affective attribute believing that anti-social behavior such as lying, cheating, stealing, etc. could be corrected

1.6 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

- Government should organize, seminars, conferences and workshop for teachers on correct implementations of continuous assessment in schools i.e how and what instrument to use to assess the affective and psychomotor domains of student
- There should be a department of test expert to teach the concept of test construction, item analysis validity and reliability of a test
- Government should not employ at all any one that is not a professional teacher

- Upgrading of teachers should be on continuous bases

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