

# Knowledge and Attitude of Secondary School Teachers Towards Continuous Assessment Practices in Esan Central Senatorial District of Edo State

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## Abstract

The study investigated knowledge and attitude of secondary school teachers towards continuous assessment (CA) practices in Edo Central Senatorial District, Nigeria. The study was undertaken to determine the influence of gender, age, years of experience and area of educational specialization on teachers' attitude towards CA practices in secondary schools in the district. 543 teachers were drawn from the population of 1084 teachers across the district. However, 512 questionnaires were recovered and used for analysis. Mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) and standard deviations (S.D) were used to analyze the research questions while the t-test statistics was used to test the hypotheses. Findings showed that majority of the teachers, perceived CA practices as a systematic and comprehensive system of evaluation but have inadequate knowledge of its cumulative and guidance oriented characteristic. Results also showed that teachers' attitude towards CA practices was negatively skewed. Result of hypotheses showed that years of experience and teachers' area of specialization are the only significant predictors of teachers' attitude towards CA practices among other variables (gender and age). It was recommended that guidance counsellors need in schools to sensitize teachers on the relevance of CAs as a road map for appropriate guidance and decision making among students.

**Keywords:** Knowledge, Attitude, Gender, Continuous Assessment, Area of Specialization

## Introduction

Schools are established for the purpose of teaching and learning. In order to ascertain whether or not learning has taken place, teachers try to evaluate learners. This process of evaluating learners is what is commonly known as assessment. It is the process by which a teacher collects data about the outcomes of his/her teaching and uses the outcomes for further improvement. It is a procedure usually undertaken by a teacher to find out whether students have learnt what they are expected to learn and the extent to which behavioural objectives have been attained. Hence, continuous assessment has become the mode of evaluating students' learning outcome in schools.

Continuous assessment is a method of evaluating the progress and achievement of learners in educational institutions with the aim of getting the true possible picture of each learner's ability and helping each to develop his/her abilities to the fullest. Okonkwo (2002) defines it "as a method of evaluation in which learners' achievement in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains from the moment they become learners until the end of it, are determined using scores obtained from various instruments and techniques such as test, projects, rating scale, checklist, observation, interviews and other possible techniques". Hence, it is a mechanism whereby the final grading of the learners in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of learning; systematically takes account of all their performances during a given period of schooling.

The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2004) stipulated that educational assessment and evaluation shall be liberalized by their being based in whole or in part on continuous assessment of the progress of the individual. In Section 5 of the National Policy on Education, FRN (2004) further recognized the importance of continuous assessment in the certification of junior and senior secondary school student when it stated succinctly that: "the junior school certificate shall be based on continuous assessment and examination conducted by state and federal examinations boards; while the senior school certificate shall be based on continuous assessment and a national examination". This is aimed at finding out what a learner has gained from learning activities in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains.

Continuous assessment is opposed to the concept of a 'one-shot' assessment; or an evaluation in the form of an 'end-of-term' examination. It is a series of continuously updated measurements and judgments by a teacher on students' attainments which may be based on weekly tests, homework, projects and other various sources applied during class instruction to obtain the overall score for a given period. From the foregoing, a federal committee headed by Professor Yoyoye on continuous assessment described traditional assessment method as "a type which is usually external or internally administered and which relies very heavily on testing or examining towards the tail end of an educational programme and takes account of mostly knowledge of students" (Odelola, 2005). This implies that this method was generally based on the result of an end of year examination which is used for making decisions on the student. Thus, the need for a new system of assessment and evaluation was strongly advocated. A more valid and reliable method of evaluation was the continuous

assessment which was introduced in Nigeria school system in 1985 (Odelola, 2005). Among its numerous advantages over the traditional one-short examination, is the fact that it is systematic, comprehensive, cumulative and guidance-oriented in nature.

Continuous assessment (CA) is systematic in the sense that it is planned to suite the age and experience of the children and is introduced at suitable intervals during the school year. Appropriate timing saves learners from being tested to 'death' or becoming bored with too frequent assessments. Comprehensiveness of continuous assessment means that it is not focused on cognition or academic skills alone, but embraces the cognitive, psychomotor and affective domains by which a learner is assessed as a total entity using all the psychometric devices such as test and non-test techniques. Cumulative characteristic of continuous assessment implies that all information gathered on the individual has to be taken holistically before a decision can be taken while the guidance-oriented nature of CAs means that information gleaned from learners, could be used for decision-making on the child; based on his/her educational, vocational and socio-personal needs. Hence, it provides feedback to teachers, school administrators, parents and significant others on learner's outcome and change in behaviour. Such feedback provides information which is used for purposes of improving the child's performance or modifying the content, context and methods of teaching, as well as in making a variety of other decisions.

For a teacher to ensure desirable changes in a learners' behaviour by the end of a lesson, school term or year, there has to be a way of ensuring changes at each step of the process that adds up to the observable terminal desirable changes. This is done to take stock of observed progress or non-progress of learners; and determine the next appropriate step to encourage and maximize learning. In this case, learning or changes in behaviour is continuous, progressive and cumulative. Consequently, it does not take place only at the end of a term or year, but during each minute of every lesson (if possible). Thus, for the teaching-learning process to be effective, the collection of data on a cumulative and continuous basis is a 'must-do' for teachers.

Data collected by teachers during assessment is obtained from a wide range of sources; weekly, fortnightly and termly, are drawn from the three main domains of learning -cognitive, affective and psychomotor (Marcus, 2008). Although, this alternative to the traditional one-shot assessment is highly encouraged by the federal government with all enthusiasm; however, its implementation has been a bane of challenge among teachers and significant others in schools. Observation has shown that teachers, who are the implementers of the curriculum at the classroom level, seem to have little or no knowledge about what continuous assessment as a: systematic (periodic), progressive (comprehensive), cumulative and guidance oriented system of evaluation entails; while some knowledgeable teachers, have negative predisposition or attitude towards it.

### **The Problem**

Teachers' knowledge and attitude towards continuous assessment (CA) practices could be said to be important factors in the implementation of continuous assessment in schools. This is because they are the major implementers of the curriculum at the classroom level. However, observation has shown that most teachers in secondary schools in Edo State are unwilling to undertake some continuous assessment practices such as planning; the time to assess student; the type of test instrument to use; the area of learning domains to assess; the use of scoring technique; how to assess students' overall progress based on their cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains among others.

While a number of teachers are knowledgeable about the need to undertake these practices; some consider it a laborious and uninteresting task. Consequently, some of them shy away from undertaking the various practices involved. Hence, determining the knowledge and attitude of teachers' towards continuous assessment practices in secondary schools in Esan Central Senatorial District of Edo State, constitute the problem of this study.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions are raised to guide the study:

- 1) Do secondary school teachers in Esan Central Senatorial District of Edo State have knowledge of what continuous assessment entails?
- 2) What is the attitude of secondary school teachers towards continuous assessment practices in the district?
- 3) Does secondary school teachers' attitude towards continuous assessment practices differ by gender, age, work experience and area of specialization in Central Senatorial District of Edo State?

### **Hypothesis**

The third research question was hypothesized as shown below:

- 1) The attitude of secondary school teachers towards continuous assessment practices does not significantly differ according to their gender, age, experience and area of specialization in Esan Central Senatorial District of Edo State

## Review of Related Literature

Continuous assessment and assessment, means different things to different people within the educational enterprise. Greaney (2001) defines assessment as any procedure or activity that is designed to collect information about the knowledge, attitude or skills of the learner or group of learners. Thus, in the context of education, assessment can be defined as a predetermined process through which the quality of a student's performance in the three domains of educational objectives (cognitive, affective, and psychomotor) is judged (Awofala & Babajide, 2013). Assessment in its broadest sense can be divided into: unstructured/unplanned and structured/planned assessment. The former (unstructured assessment) covers activities such as: the series of spontaneous questions that teachers ask a sample of the class, during/after an instruction; to determine whether the lesson(s) in the instruction were understood, or even those unplanned class exercises that are given by teachers to students, to occupy them momentarily (without necessarily taking note of them).

The latter (structured/planned assessment) refers to those planned activities or series of methods by which a person (say a teacher) observes, collects data from a learner at periodic times, to determine the extent of change in a learner's behaviour. It is to this latter aspect that continuous assessment (CA) belongs. According to Duplessis, Prouty, Schubert, Habib & George (2003), continuous assessment refers to making observations and collecting information periodically to find out what a student knows, understands and can do with the target of making an ongoing judgment about how well he/she is doing. Therefore, the above shows that continuous assessment is only an aspect of the 'umbrella term' - assessment.

A few recent works that are germane to this study have been reviewed below. Olatomide and Oluwatosin (2014) examined class teachers' continuous assessment scores input into Primary Six Leaving Certificate (PSLC) in Akoko South-West Local Government Area in Ondo State, Nigeria. Having used descriptive survey, an instrument- 'class teachers' primary six leaving certificate continuous assessment scores input' and structured interview to collect data from 250 respondent, and analyzed them with descriptive statistics, they found that class teachers' CA procedures were systematic, but lacked comprehensiveness and cumulateness. They also found that the summation of scores sent by class teachers to the ministry of education in processing primary six leaving certificates issued to pupils by head teachers was manufactured.

Eseré and Idowu (n.d) in a qualitative study evaluated continuous assessment practices in selected Nigerian secondary schools. A sample of 500 teachers (age range 30-55 years; male=198; female=302) selected from ten schools within Ilorin metropolis by stratified sampling were covered in the study. Data collection was through interviews and focus group discussion which centred around the teachers' continuous assessment practices based on the four basic attributes (systematic, comprehensive, cumulative and guidance-oriented) that characterise continuous assessment. Results show that the continuous assessment practices of most of the teachers were faulty and deviated markedly from policy guidelines.

Byabato and Kisamo (2014) investigated the implementation of school based continuous assessment in Tanzania ordinary secondary schools (O-level) and its implications on the quality of education. Five hundred and forty six (546) O-level teachers from Dar es Salaam, Arusha and Zanzibar participated in the study. Convenience sampling technique was used and data were collected using a questionnaire and analyzed. Based on results, findings showed that the implementation of school based CA are not properly carried out by teachers as many problems such as: lack of teachers' integrity (favouritism and inflation of marks), lack of uniformity in both the assessment tools used and procedures for CA recording and reporting were evident. In general, teachers showed little or no in-depth capacity of the assessment practices.

In Nigeria, Clement and Ayibatunde (2014) examined the causes of the science teachers' indifference to the implementation of Continuous Assessment in Secondary Schools in Rivers State and found that: (1) many science teachers are not professionally qualified and as such lack the skills to construct and administer CA test in Secondary School; (2) large student population or classes; (3) lack of motivation; (4) lack of facilities for record keeping; and (5) attitude and influence of parents and school administrators, are some of the causes for the teacher indifference in CA implementation.

Awofala and babatunde (2013) x-rayed the attitudes of 339 pre-service Science, Technology and Mathematics (STM) teachers towards continuous assessment practices in Nigeria within the blueprint of a descriptive survey research design in a conventional university in the South-western part of Nigeria. Results showed that a higher proportion of the pre-service STM teachers seemed to display positive attitudes toward most of the continuous assessment practices while their attitudes toward some assessment practices tended to be either negative or neutral. Discipline of study was found to be the only potent predictor of pre-service STM teachers' attitudes towards CA practices among others variables (gender and age).

Adebowale and Alao (n.d) examined the methods adopted by teachers in the implementation of the provisions of a continuous assessment policy in Ondo State in Nigeria. Data were collected from teachers selected randomly from all schools in two non-cosmopolitan Local Government Education Authorities of the state and were analyzed using simple percentages, t-test, and ANOVA. Results indicated a non-uniform strategy of implementing continuous assessment policy provisions and are found to be independent of factors like gender,

duty posts, teaching experience, and qualifications, as no significant difference were found in the score of respondents on all of these factors.

Nneji, Fatade, Awofala & Babatunde (2013) investigated the attitudes of 305 Science, Technology and Mathematics (STM) teachers towards assessment practices in Nigeria. Their sample was selected through stratified and random sampling techniques from 171 Senior Secondary Schools in three Local Government Areas of Lagos State while data were collected using a survey instrument and analysed using frequency count, percentages and Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) statistics. Findings showed that a higher proportional of the STM teachers seemed to display positive attitudes toward most of the assessment practices while their attitudes toward some assessment practices tended to be either negative or neutral. However, they found that gender, teaching experience and professional training might be factors in STM teachers' attitudes toward assessment practices. On the other hand, Odili (2014) evaluated the continuous assessment (CA) skills competences of secondary school teachers in Delta State. This was to ascertain their ability to carry on with CA which is the mode of evaluating learning outcomes in the schools. A sample of 102 teachers was randomly selected using stratified sampling approach. Results showed that the teachers were competent in CA skills. Furthermore, their experience and training did not significantly influence their competences in test construction and use of assessment outcomes.

### Method

The descriptive research design using the survey method was adopted in this study to examine knowledge and attitude of secondary school teachers towards continuous assessment practices in Esan Central Senatorial District of Edo State. The population of the study comprised of all the 1084 teachers in the 69 public secondary schools in the District as shown in the provisional figure from the Post Primary Education Board (PPEB), Benin City, Edo State (2014 survey). A sample of 543 teachers was drawn for this study. The simple random sampling technique was used to draw out 50% proportion of all the teachers from each of the five (5) local government areas in the district.

The instrument used for the collection of data was a questionnaire adapted from Okpala & Onocha (1985). The questionnaire was modified and titled: "Teachers' Continuous Assessment Knowledge and Attitude Questionnaire-TECAKAQ" The questionnaire was divided into Section A and B. Sections B was categorized into Part 1 and 2. Section A dealt with teachers' demographics such as: sex, age, years of experience and area of specialization on their subject area. Part 1 of Section B was designed to elicit information on teachers' knowledge about continuous assessment (CA) characteristics while Part 2 of the same section dealt on teachers' attitude towards CA practices.

Part 1 of Section B contains 16 items. Four (4) items were raised to find out whether teachers understood continuous assessment as: a systematic; comprehensive; cumulative and a guidance-oriented system of evaluation. Part 2 of Section B contains twenty six (26) CA practices validated by Okpala & Onocha (1985). All the items in Section B were rated on a four point likert scale: Strongly Agreed (SA)\_4, Agreed (A)\_3, Disagreed (D)\_2 and Strongly Disagreed (SD)\_1. The content and construct validity of the instrument was carried out by two experts in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction (Ambrose Alli University). Copies of the instrument were given to them to ensure that the items were relevant, clear and unambiguous in measuring what it was intended to measure.

The reliability of the instrument was carried out using the test-retest method. This method was used to obtain responses from a total of 30 teachers from six (6) randomly selected schools outside the study area. The instrument was administered to them and re-administered after a few weeks to the same set of teachers. Their responses in the first and second test were analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The result of the coefficient produced an r-value of 0.73 which shows that the instrument is reliable. The researcher administered the questionnaire to teachers after due permission was taken from the school authority. The mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) and standard deviation (S.D) was used to analyze the research questions while the t-test statistic was used to test the research hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The test was conducted using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20.

### Results

Results from the analyses and test of hypotheses are presented below:

**Research Question 1:** Do secondary school teachers in Esan Central Senatorial District of Edo State have knowledge of what continuous assessment (CA) entails?

**Table 1:** Summary analysis of Mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) score and Standard deviation (S.D) on Secondary School Teachers' knowledge of Continuous Assessment (CA) characteristics

S/n	Variables	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Remark
	<b>Systematicism</b>				
1	Assessment of students should be done anytime a teacher feels like	512	2.37	1.06	Disagreed
2	The slated date for assessment should be properly communicated to students	512	2.60	1.00	Agreed
3	Teachers should always evaluate students' previous knowledge on a topic before teaching a new one	512	2.30	1.04	Disagreed
4	It is important for teachers to consider the instrument e.g essay tests, multiple choice test, practical to use before assessing students	512	2.84	0.99	Agreed
	Overall mean ( $\bar{X}_1$ ) = 2.53				
	<b>Cumulativeness</b>				
5	Many instruments should be used to assess a student's actual performance	512	2.55	1.06	Agreed
6	End of term examination is enough to determine a students' learning outcome	512	2.23	1.12	Disagreed
7	In assessing a student, their scores in test, assignments, practical etc are as important as the school examination	512	2.80	1.06	Agreed
8	Apart from students' knowledge on a subject, their behaviour and skills should also be evaluated	512	2.54	1.07	Agreed
	Overall mean ( $\bar{X}_2$ ) = 2.53				
	<b>Cumulativeness</b>				
9	Continuous assessment should cover students' class and take home assignments as part of their terminal examination results	512	2.67	1.06	Agreed
10	Teachers should make use of students' test results as part of their annual examination results	512	2.51	1.12	Agreed
11	Students' individual and group activities should be used as a template for assessing students' progress	512	2.21	1.10	Disagreed
12	Exam scores of a student on a subject is not enough to tell whether a student passed or failed	512	2.38	1.08	Disagreed
	Overall mean ( $\bar{X}_3$ ) = 2.44				
	<b>Guidance-orientedness</b>				
13	Students' performance on tests and examinations helps school counsellors to guide students on the choice of subject to take	512	2.38	1.15	Disagreed
14	Students' progress can be identified when teachers record their students' scores in structured quizzes and assignments	512	2.29	1.05	Disagreed
15	Continuous assessment helps principals to compare students' performance in their previous and current class	512	2.15	1.07	Disagreed
16	Continuous assessment can help teachers to identify area(s) of recurrent learning difficulties among student	512	2.57	1.08	Agreed
	Overall mean ( $\bar{X}_4$ ) = 2.35				
	<b>Grand mean = 2.46</b>				

Significant mean ( $\bar{X} \geq 2.50$ )

From Table 1 above, the result shows that the overall mean score on teachers' knowledge of systematicism of continuous assessment (CA) practices is 2.53; comprehensiveness is 2.53; cumulateness is 2.44 while guidance oriented nature is 2.35. This implies that teachers acknowledge CA as a systematic and comprehensive system of evaluation but are not so knowledgeable about its cumulative and 'guidance oriented nature. However, the grand mean is less than the cut off mean (i.e  $2.46 < 2.50$ ). Hence, it is concluded that majority of the teachers in secondary schools in Esan Central Senatorial District of Edo State do not have adequate knowledge of what continuous assessment (CA) constitute or entails.

**Research Question 2:** What is the attitude of secondary school teachers towards continuous assessment practices in Esan Central Senatorial District of Edo State?

**Table 2:** Summary of Mean score and Standard deviation on secondary school teachers' Attitude towards Continuous Assessment (CA) practices in Esan Central Senatorial District of Edo State

S/n	CA practices	N	Mean	Std. dev	Remark
1	Testing students before teaching a new topic	512	2.26	1.08	Negative
2	Testing students after teaching any topic	512	*2.68	1.09	Positive
3	Giving examination and test scripts back to students after scoring	512	2.29	1.12	Negative
4	Students assessing their own progress	512	2.12	1.12	Negative
5	Making students' test results part of their terminal and annual examination results	512	*2.64	1.07	Positive
6	Using students' individual activities as a template for assessing students' progress	512	2.27	1.15	Negative
7	Using students' group activities as a template for assessing students' progress	512	2.06	1.02	Negative
8	Using students' rating in assessing the teaching effectiveness of teachers	512	2.22	1.08	Negative
<b>Informing your students at the beginning of the term about:</b>					
9	the number of examinations or tests scheduled for the term	512	2.07	1.16	Negative
10	the topics on which examinations and tests would be based	512	*2.60	1.09	Positive
11	the respective dates for each test and examination	512	*2.53	1.11	Positive
12	the type of instruments to be used in specific tests and examinations (e.g. essay tests, multiple choice test, laboratory practical)	512	2.47	1.18	Negative
<b>Making students' performances in tests and examinations known to:</b>					
13	other students in the school	512	2.09	1.04	Negative
14	parents of the students	512	*2.88	0.99	Positive
15	all the teachers in the school	512	2.11	1.06	Negative
16	administrators outside the school	512	1.94	1.02	Negative
17	professional service providers in the school (e.g. guidance counsellors, medical team)	512	1.87	0.98	Negative
<b>Gathering students' assessment data using:</b>					
18	multiple choice (objective) tests	512	*2.93	1.00	Positive
19	observational instruments	512	2.03	1.06	Negative
20	essay tests	512	*2.57	0.99	Positive
21	rating scales	512	2.03	1.11	Negative
22	sociometric instruments	512	2.00	1.01	Negative
23	projects	512	2.16	1.05	Negative
24	laboratory practical	512	*2.56	1.12	Positive
25	structured quizzes	512	2.08	1.04	Negative
26	anecdotal records	512	1.95	1.02	Negative
Overall mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) = 2.28					

\* Items with positive attitude ( $\geq 2.50$ )

From Table 2 above, the result shows that teachers have positive attitude towards eight (8) continuous assessment practices (Items 2, 5, 10, 11, 14, 18, 20 and 24) at a mean score range of 2.56 to 2.93. However, the overall mean score (2.28) is less than the cut off mean of 2.50. Thus, it is concluded that teachers have negative attitude towards continuous assessment practices in secondary school in Esan Central Senatorial district of Edo State.

**Hypotheses:** The attitude of secondary school teachers towards continuous assessment practices does not significantly differ according to their gender, age, experience and area of specialization in Esan Central Senatorial District of Edo State

**Table 3:** Summary of t-test analysis on teachers' attitude towards CA practices according to gender, age, experience and area of specialization in Esan Central Senatorial District of Edo State

Variables	Options	(n=512)	$\bar{X}$	S.D	d.f	t-cal.	Sig.	Alpha	Remark
<b>Gender</b>	Male	260	2.28	0.41	510	0.53	.593	0.05	NS
	Female	252	2.29	0.32					
<b>Teachers' age</b>	Below 26years	204	2.29	0.36	510	0.11	.913	0.05	NS
	26years & above	208	2.28	0.45					
<b>Years of experience</b>	Below 7years	220	2.20	0.33	510	4.16*	.000	0.05	S
	7years & above	292	2.35	0.46					
<b>Area of specialization</b>	Non-specialty in Education	284	2.20	0.34	510	5.10*	.000	0.05	S
	Specialty in Education	228	2.39						

\* Significant t-values

NS - Not Significant

S –Significant

Result in Table 3 indicates that the calculated t-value of 0.53 for teachers' gender and 0.11 for teachers' age are not statistically significant ( $p > 0.05$ ). Therefore, it is concluded that the attitude of teachers towards continuous assessment practices in secondary schools, does not differ by gender and age. However, the calculated t-value of 4.16 for teachers' years of experience and 5.10 for area of specialization are statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). Hence, the result indicates that teachers' attitude towards continuous assessment practices in secondary schools differ significantly by their years of experience and area of specialization in Esan Central Senatorial District of Edo State.

### Discussion

The result of the analysis in Table 1 showed that majority of the secondary school teachers in Esan Central Senatorial District of Edo State have inadequate knowledge of what continuous assessment (CA) constitute or entails. Olatomide & Oluwatosin (2014) found similar result in their study on class teachers' Continuous Assessment scores input into primary six leaving certificate (PSLC) in Akoko South-West Local Government Area in Ondo State, Nigeria. They found that the CA procedures of most of the class teachers were systematic but lacked comprehensiveness and cumulateness and the summation of scores sent by teachers to the Ministry of Education (MOE) were inappropriate. Corroborating this, Marcus & Ayibatonye (2014) found that many of the science teachers are not professionally qualified and also lack the knowledge/skills to construct and administer CA test in secondary schools. Hence, their continuous assessment was haphazardly carried out. In Byabato and Kisamo's (2014) study among Tanzanian teachers, they also found that the implementation of school based CA are not properly carried out by the teachers as many problems such as: lack of teachers' integrity (favouritism and inflation of marks), lack of uniformity in both the assessment tools used and procedures for CA recording and reporting were evident. In general, they noted that "teachers showed little or no in-depth capacity of the assessment practices".

Result from Table 2 showed that teachers have positive attitude towards carrying out the following CA practices: testing students after teaching any topic; making students' test results part of their terminal and annual examination results; informing students at the beginning of the term about the topics on which examinations and tests would be based and the respective dates for each test and examination; making students' performances in tests and examinations known to their parents and gathering students' assessment data using multiple choice (objective) tests, essay tests and laboratory practical. This is in consonance with the findings of Awofala & Babajide (2013) who found that teachers' attitudes toward some assessment practices, tended to be either negative or neutral.

The test of hypotheses (Table 3) showed that the attitude of teachers in the district towards continuous assessment (CA) practices in secondary schools does not differ by gender and age. However, years of experience and area of specialization were found to be significant predictors of teachers' attitude towards CA practices. Findings agree with the result of Awofala & Babajide (2013) that found that gender and age, might not be factors in pre-service Science, Technology and Mathematics (STM) teachers' attitudes toward continuous assessment practices, but concluded that discipline of study (area of specialization) was the only potent predictor of pre-service STM teachers' attitudes towards CA practices. Findings of Nneji, Fatade, Awofala and Awofala (2012), showed that teaching experience and professional training might be factors in STM teachers' attitudes toward assessment practices. On the other hand, Odili (2014) evaluated the continuous assessment (CA) skills competences of secondary school teachers in Delta State and found that the teachers were competent in CA skills. Furthermore, he found that teachers' experiences and training did not significantly influence their competences in test construction and use of assessment outcomes in the state.

## Conclusion

Secondary school teachers in Esan Central Senatorial District of Edo State have inadequate knowledge of what continuous assessment (CA) entails. Majority of them, have positive attitude towards carrying out continuous assessment practices like testing students after teaching any topic; making students' test results part of their terminal and annual examination results; and gathering students' assessment data using multiple choice (objective) tests, essay tests and laboratory practical among others. Based on findings, it is concluded that years or experience and area of specialization of teachers are significant predictors of teachers' attitude towards CA practices.

## Recommendations

Arising from the study are the following recommendations:

- 1) Monitoring and supervision of continuous assessment (CA) implementation should be stepped up by the Ministry of Education in secondary schools in Edo State. This should not be done with the objective of finding defaulters among teachers; but with some sense of 'checks and balances' in putting some sanity into assessment practices in schools.
- 2) Regular workshops and seminars should be organized for teachers in schools to give boost to their knowledge and understanding of continuous assessment procedures, instruments and neutralize confusion and misunderstanding in implementation.
- 3) The need for guidance counsellors to head CA committee in secondary schools in Esan Central Senatorial District of Edo State is strongly recommended. This would help sensitize teachers on the importance of CAs as a road map for guiding and monitoring students' progress on their cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of learning; as against continuous cognitive testing.

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