

ASSESSMENT OF TEACHERS' COMPETENCY SKILLS IN IMPLEMENTATION OF CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE AT SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN JIGAWA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study investigated the teachers' competency skills in implementation of continuous assessment in English language in senior secondary school in Jigawa state. Survey research design was used for the study, in a population of four hundred and twenty one (421) English Language Teachers. Data for the study was collected using Questionnaire titled "Teachers' Continuous Assessment Implementation Competency Skills Scales (TCICSS) with reliability index of 0.89. The statistical techniques used for data analysis was descriptive statistics and Z-scores using SPSS. The results of the study revealed that, English language teachers with Masters' degree and Bachelor degree have the high level of competency skills in the implementation of continuous assessment. From the findings of the study, it was concluded that continuous assessment is a factor that ensure educational quality of students in schools. The study recommended that, since continuous assessment is part and parcel of the of curriculum implementation in the educational system, English language teachers who are the main players in the curriculum implementation process should be trained professionally and build more competence in them to execute and properly implement continuous assessment as spelt out in the National Policy of Education.

Keywords: Assessment, Teachers' Competency Skills, Continuous Assessment Implementation

Introduction

Education in Nigeria is no more a private enterprise only, but also huge government venture. It witnesses a progressive development and dynamic intervention with active participation of all stakeholders geared toward a positive change in students' behaviour, improvement in learning and in the entire school system. The government strives to eliminate existing contradiction, ambiguities and lack of uniformity in educational practices at the different level of education. This will ensure an even and orderly development of the system in general. One of the most important areas of great concern in educational practices by the government is a form of assessment administered in every school programme in order to measure and ensure the level of achievement and skills gained at the end of each term and subsequent requirement for the promotion of students to the high level of study.

Schools are established for the purpose of teaching and learning. The main reason a teacher plans and delivers instruction is to aid the student to learn. But the question is, how does the teacher know that

learning has taken place? How can it be ascertained what the student knows and can do, as result of having gone through the lesson or course? How could the teacher know if the methods and materials used are effective? What evidence does the teacher gives to parents to convince them that the money being spent on their children's education is not being wasted. To answer these questions among others, educational experts and policy makers have come up with the concept of "Assessment" as a relevant tool.

The teachers' competence skills, designates the skills, knowledge and abilities that a teacher possesses and brings to teaching context. These are stable characteristics of the teacher that may not change when situations change. According to Katane and Silvia, (2006) "competence or skill signifies a more or less consistent ability to realize particular sorts of purposes to achieve desired outcomes." Therefore, competency skills in implementation of continuous assessment refers to the ability of teachers to carry out the assessment process effectively i.e. judging, valuing and ranking pupils by various evaluation techniques.

According to Airasian, (1996) continuous assessment 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 years. 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 devises 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 Continuous Assessment means that information obtained 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' outcome and change in behavior. Such feedback provides information which is used for purposes of improving the Childs performance or modifying the content, context and methods of teaching, as well as in making a variety of other decisions.

According to Raven and Stephenson (2011), the concept of competency refers to an individually or inter individually available collection of prerequisites for successful action in meaningful task domains; in the following, the individual aspect, which dominates the social and behavioral literature, will be accentuated .An important reason for this focus on the individual perspective is the fact that schools are the primary, 'Educational settings' over the course of individual development. Each single student must acquire necessary competencies and acquired education as preparation for his/her later social and professional life. This means, Competency refers to the skills and personality of a teacher in handling the instructional process with the help of instructional method, teaching aids and resource. Katane and Selvi (2006) stated that, competency is 'a set of knowledge skills and proficiency in creating meaningful experience when organizing an activity'. As a professional, a teacher needs to plan and implement the leaning process, evaluate the learning outcome, provides guidance and training, conduct a research, develop and managing school program and professional competency.

Therefore, the above definitions show that the competency refers to the skills and personality of teachers that assumed to have an influence on the development of continuous assessment items, scoring and grading of the students' academic performance.

National Education Association (N.E.A.) established standard for teacher competence in student association, the associations subscribed to the view that students' assessment is an essential part of teaching and that good teaching cannot exist without good student assessment. Training to develop the competencies covered in the standards should be an integral part of preserves preparation.

For assessing the English language, the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading and writing, continuous assessment is necessary as the progress and processes of the development of these skills can be evaluated only through continuous assessment which is formative in nature. The purpose of this kind of assessment is the assessment during the process of learning for its improvement.

The continuous assessment in English includes assessment of conversational skills which is to be done using oral technique and also observation technique. It also includes unit tests, half yearly exams and assignments which use the written mode. The role and status of English language has changed vastly in the last three decades. It is increasingly being used for technical, scientific and business communication and especially for international contacts. English, today, is undoubtedly the most important and widely used world language. Being also the language of information technology, English serves as our 'window on the world'- as the language in which the latest developments in different fields of knowledge are available. With the 'change in the role and function of English language in an average Nigerians' life, the approach of teaching English in schools has also changed. Consequently the focus of English language teaching in schools has been mainly on reading and writing skills rather than on over all communication skills, the emphasis has shifted from only reading and writing to offer communication skills of listening and speaking.

Statement of the Problem

Continuous assessment just like any other government policy cannot be implemented effectively if there are underlying problem. Many subjects taught in the secondary schools also have their own share of these identifiable problems. An identification of existing problems will provide an insight on the impediment that prevents teachers from complying with the spelt out guidelines on its implementation, (Ortyo-Yande, 2014).

Most teachers lack the skills on process as well as the practice of keeping the records of learners' achievement as they are scored and graded according to the weightings given to each component area that has been assessed.

Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study was to assess the level of teachers' competency skills in the implementation of continuous assessment in English language at senior secondary schools in Jigawa State, Nigeria. Specifically the study set out the following objectives:

1. To assess the level of teacher's competence skills in the implementation of continuous assessment at various educational zones across the State? .
2. To also determine the level of competency skills among professionally trained teachers and those that are not professionally trained in the implementation of continuous assessment in English language at senior secondary schools in Jigawa State.

Research Questions

1. What is the Levels of Teacher's Competence in the Implementation of Continuous Assessment at Various Educational Zones across the State?
2. What are level of competency skills among professionally trained teachers and those that are unprofessionally trained in the implementation of continuous assessment in English language at senior secondary schools in Jigawa State?

Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significance gender difference in the Level of Teacher's Competency skills on the Implementation of Continuous Assessment in Jigawa State.

Methodology

The researcher adopted the survey type of research design. According to Anikweze, (2013) survey involves a detailed and critical examination of a topic or situation with a view to finding out what is and how it is. (West and Khan in Anikweze 2013) stated that most assessment and evaluation studies are survey. The design involves collection of data from individuals using questionnaire. Therefore, this design is appropriate for this research work, because the anonymity (quality) of survey allows respondents to answer with more candid and valid answers. And to get the accurate data, the survey type will remain completely confidential, as such; the researcher intends to find out Teachers' Competency skills in the implementation of Continuous Assessment in teaching English language in Jigawa State. The population of this study comprised all the Four hundred and twenty English language teachers in Jigawa state. A total of two hundred and one (201) research subjects was drawn from the population used as sample size for this research, this figure is obtained from Research Advisor (2006), table for determine sample size.

To ensure equal representation of every member of the research subjects, a multi stage cluster sampling was adopted. This sampling technique gives an equal chance to every subject in the population of being selected for the study. In Jigawa state there are three senatorial zones each with three educational zones, that is a total of nine educational zones in the state. So, in the first place, there are cluster of three educational one in each senatorial zone in Jigawa state in which two educational were randomly selected to represent each senatorial zone. That is a random selection of two (2) educational zones from Jigawa North west, two educational zones from Jigawa North East and two educational Zones from Jigawa Central to represent the sample size. Then in each of the educational zone the researcher used proportionate stratified random sampling technique and selected a sample size base on gender. Lastly simple random sampling was conducted in selecting the English language teachers that respond to research instrument.

The data for this study were collected by the researcher personally with the assistance of some school teachers in each school sampled for the study in order to ensure maximum confidentiality of the subjects. The assistants were train and some remuneration was given to them after the assistance. The procedure for data collection involved the following steps: First, the researcher identifies the samples in each school visited. The purposes of the study were carefully reviewed at this stage with participants before they were involved in the study. Secondly, the data collection instrument for this study was distributed to the research subjects (Teachers). The researcher read the set of instructions to the respondents, thereafter, he read the actual items contained in the questionnaire, although, each respondent had a copy of the instrument. The respondents were ask to follow the researcher while reading the items and respond to each items by ticking the appropriate responses. The reasons for this procedure is to ensure that every respondent spends the same amount of time as possible on each question, ensure that sample subjects complete the task at the same time, facilitate class control and reduce any effort of poor reading skills (Masrh 1984 cited in Yakasai, 2000).

Lastly, the researcher gives the respondents some few minutes to check their responses. They were also given a chance to ask questions pertaining to meaning of any word or expression they found difficult to understand. Respondents were asked to fill the questionnaire as honestly as possible. This procedure assists in minimizing the problem of mortality (Yakaisai 2000). No respondent was allowed to go home or even outside the class room with the instrument.

Data Analysis Procedures

The data for this study were statistically analyzed using descriptive statistics and t-test for independent sample respectively. The descriptive statistics (Simple percentage) was used in answering the research questions, while Z-scores was used to test all the two (2) null hypotheses in this study. The used of Z-scores was justify based on the fact that the researcher was looking for the gender difference not a relationship. The statistical analyses were tested using (0.05) level of significance using SPSS.

Results

Table 1: Demographic Data of the Respondents

Category	Frequency	Percentage%
Male	173	86
Female	28	14
Total	201	100

Source: Field Survey, 2018

As the table above indicates, out of the 201 respondents 86% were males whereas 14% were females. Therefore, there are more male in the sample than female

Table 2: Qualification of Respondents

Category	Frequency	Percentage%
Masters Degree	2	1
Bachelor Degree	38	19
N. C. E.	152	76
Others	9	4
Total	201	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021

The table above shows that, out of 201 respondents, 1% are masters degree holders; 19% are bachelor degree holders; 76% are N. C. E. holders while the remaining 4% of the sample have others qualifications.

Table 3: Area of Specialization

Category	Frequency	Percentage%
English Language	192	96

Other Subjects	9	4
Total	201	100

Source: Field Survey, 2018

The table above indicates that 192 respondents which constitute 96% of the sample are English language specialist while the remaining 4% are not English language specialist. With that, this revealed that majority of the respondents are English language specialist

Table 4: Research Questions:

What is the Levels of Teacher’s Competence in the Implementation of Continuous Assessment at Various Educational Zones across the State?

Educational Zones		Frequency of the Responses					
		High Competent	%	Moderate Competent	%	Low Competent	%
Dutse Zone	Education	20	5	10	2	7	1
			4		7		9
			%		%		%
Hadeja Zone	Education	21	5	10	2	7	1
			5		6		9
			%		%		%
Ringim Zone	Education	25	5	12	2	9	2
			4		6		0
			%		%		%
Kazaure Education Zone		24	7	6	1	4	1
			0		8		2
			%		%		%
Birnin Kudu Education Zone	Kudu	15	7	2	1	3	1
			5		0		5
			%		%		%
Kafin Hausa Education Zone	Hausa	18	6	3	1	5	1
			9		2		9
			%		%		%

Source: Field Survey, 2018

From the above table the percentage of the responses were found for each Education Zone. The data shows that, Birnin Kudu Education Zone has the highest percentage of English Language Teachers with higher competency in the Implementation of Continuous Assessment; Kazaure has 70% teachers with high competency 18% moderate competency and 12% with low competency. Also, Kafin Hausa Education Zone has 69% English language teachers with high competency 12% with moderate competency and 19% with low competency. Dutse Education Zone has 54% with high competency 27% with moderate competency and 19% with low competency. Similarly, Hadejia has 55% with high competency 26% with

moderate competency and 19% with low competency while, Ringim Education Zone has 54% of English language teachers with high competency in implementation of continuous assessment 26% with moderate competency and 20% with low competency.

Testing Hypothesis: There is no significance gender difference in the Level of Teacher's Competency on the Implementation of Continuous Assessment in Jigawa State.

Table 5: Z Scores of the Gender Difference on the Level of Teacher's Competency on the Implementation of Continuous Assessment in Jigawa State

Zone	Male ($\bar{x}=7.85, sd=5.56$)		Female ($\bar{x}=6.73, sd=4.82$)	
	Xi	Z - scores	Xi	Z - scores
Dutse Education Zone	4.7	-0.67	7.5	-0.56
Hadejia Education Zone	4.8	-0.56	5.1	-0.48
Ringim Education Zone	3.7	-0.45	4.7	-0.43
Kazaure Education Zone	3.5	-0.34	4.5	0.39
Birnin Kudu Education Zone	2.9	-0.27	4.2	-0.35
Kafin Hausa Education Zone	2.7	-0.23	3.4	-0.28

The data presented in the above table, shows Z scores for gender difference on the Level of teacher's competency on the Implementation of Continuous Assessment in Jigawa State. The table shows the mean, standard deviation and Z-Score of the selected Education zones. From the table it can be seen that in all six educational zones there are significant difference on the teachers' competency in the implementation of continuous assessment. In Dutse Education Zone male teachers have Z scores of 0.67 while female have 0.56, Hadeja Education Zone male teachers have Z scores of 0.56 while female have 0.48, Ringim Education Zone male teachers have Z scores of 0.45 while female have 0.43, Kazaure Education Zone male teachers have Z scores of 0.34 while female have 0.39, Birnin Kudu Education Zone male teachers have Z scores of 0.27 while female have 0.35 and Kafin Hausa Education Zone male teachers have Z scores of 0.23 while female have 0.28.

Conclusion

This research project is designed to evaluate the implementation of continuous assessment and to find out the level of competency skills of teachers towards implementation of continuous assessment in SSS II in some selected secondary schools in Ringim Local Government Area of Jigawa State with the aim of improving the implementation of continuous assessment in the schools as stated in the National Policy on Education. Relevant data was collected to each research question and hypothesis and was analyzed with their outcome for authentic of the study. The continuous assessment implementation should be given full support of government by providing administrative support needed by the implementers of the continuous assessment programmes, experts should be invited as guest lecturers to educate teachers to update their competency skills on continuous assessment implementation in the schools, this will aim at stimulating teachers' interest in implementing continuous assessment as stipulated in the National Policy on Education N.P.E, (2004).

Recommendations.

In view of this study the following recommendations are offered.

1. Since continuous assessment is part of the educational system, English teachers who are the main players should be trained professionally to execute and properly implement continuous assessment as spelt out in the National Policy of Educators.
2. Government should create an enabling and motivating environment for the teachers for better educational productivity.
3. Regular workshops and seminars including in-service training will be given to the teachers to update their knowledge on continuous assessment implementation.
4. Principals and school administrators should provide adequate record keeping system for continuous assessment so that scores can be stored for a long time and would be easily retrievable when needed.

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