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ASSESSMENT OF TEACHERS CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT PRACTICE IN LINE WITH EDUCATION POLICY IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS

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Abstract

The study examined the extent to which primary school teachers in Delta State, practice continuous assessment in line with the educational policy in Nigeria. Two research questions were drawn and two hypotheses formulated for the study. A sample of 1000 primary school teachers was randomly drawn using proportionate stratified random sampling technique based on sex and location of teachers. A 4-point scaled questionnaire was used. The validity of the instrument was determined through expert judgement and factor analysis. The instrument has face and construct validities. The reliability of the instrument was established Cronbach Alpha. A reliability coefficient of 0.90 was obtained as a measure of internal consistency. The data collected were analyzed. The research questions were answered with the use of mean. The hypotheses were tested with z – test at .05 level of significance. The result showed that the extent of teachers practice of continuous assessment in line with the education policy was low. There was no significance difference between male and female teachers as well as rural and urban teachers on the practice of continuous assessment in line with the educational policy or National Policy on Education. It was noted that continuous assessment should be practice in line with the National Policy on Education.

Keyword: *Assessment of Teachers, Continuous Assessment Practice, Educational Policy*

Introduction

The practice of Continuous Assessment (C.A.) by primary school teachers in Delta State of Nigeria was as recommended in the National Policy on Education of the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN, 1981, 1998 & 2004) and the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and

Technology (FMEST, 1985). The educational policy states the goals of primary education as follows:

- (a) Inculcate permanent literacy and numeracy and ability to communicate effectively.
- (b) Lay a sound basis for scientific and reflective thinking.
- (c) Give citizenship education as a basis for effective participation in and contribute to the life of the society.
- (d) Mould the character and develop sound attitude and moral in the child.
- (e) Develop in the child the ability to adapt to the child's changing environment.
- (f) Give the child opportunities for developing manipulative skills that will enable the child function effectively in the society within the limits of the child capacity.
- (g) Provide the basic tools for further educational advancement, including preparation for trades and crafts of the locality (FGN, 2004, p.14).

The Federal Government of Nigeria (2004) pointed out that the goals of Universal Basic Education (UBE) at the primary level are the same as primary education. The UBE in Nigeria is guided by the Jomtein Declaration and framework of action on education for all. The classifications of UBE as stated by Osadebe (2014a) are:UBE I (primary one) UBE II (primary two) UBE III (Primary three) UBE IV (primary four) UBE V (primary five) and UBE VI (Primary Six). The duration of UBE is nine years but 6 years for primary education. Teachers are expected to teach and assess the pupils' behaviour in the areas of cognitive, affective and psychomotor. The introduction of continuous assessment would help teachers to determine students overall behaviour. They should practice it as required by the educational policy. The focus of the policy was to continuously assess students' behavior in cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains as well as make judgement about each pupils behavior for record keeping. The record could be used to guide and promote the pupils. Continuous Assessment (CA) forms an integral part of primary or Basic Education. Therefore, the practice of continuous assessment by teachers in Delta State of Nigeria should be in line with the Handbook published by the Federal Ministry of Education,, Science and Technology (1985). The Handbook pointed out that progress along the educational cycle would be based on continuous assessment. The teachers are expected to assess pupils behaviour in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains.

The extent to which teachers assess students' behaviour needs to be determined. Assessment would help to determined whether or not teachers are fully practicing C.A in line with the Federal Government recommendations as in the Handbook of continuous assessment. A situation where teachers do not properly implement a country's educational policy, it poses a serious problem to educational development. This needs to be corrected through research as in the case of this study.

Literature Review

The study focused on the assessment of continuous assessment practice in Delta State in line with the educational policy for primary education in Nigeria. Assessment would help to determine the extent to which primary school teachers practice continuous assessment in line with the educational policy. This will also help government to determine the educational development in primary schools and make improvement where necessary. It has been pointed out that assessment is the use of valid and reliable instruments or techniques to obtain information about individuals behaviour upon which judgment is made (Osadebe, 2013).

The focus of assessment is to analyzed information provided by test, interview observation and to combine the information to make complex and important judgments about individuals (Murphy & Davidshofer, 1988; Eggen & Kauchak, 1994; Osadebe, 2014a). There are two forms of assessment. These include continuous assessment and single assessment usually called examination. The focus of this study is on continuous assessment. It has been pointed out that continuous assessment is the frequent use of valid and reliable instruments or techniques such as test, observation questionnaire interview among others to obtain information about students behaviour upon which judgment is made. Continuous assessment is focused on the three domains of behaviour. These include cognitive, affective and psychomotor. Primary school teachers are expected to teach the pupils in their subject areas and then assess them frequently in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains (Osadebe, 2013b). This will help to determine students' behaviour after teaching and learning. Continuous assessment is systematic, comprehensive, cumulative and guidance oriented (FMESST, 1985, Osadebe 2015).

It is systematic because continuous assessment practice by any teacher needs a good planning. This includes planning of the lessons to be taught and evaluating pupils at the end of every lesson. Continuous assessment is comprehensive because it helps to assess pupils in the cognitive affective and psychomotor domains of behaviour. In addition various instruments such as test, observation, questionnaire, interview among others are used to assess the pupils continuously (Osadebe, 2013b). Continuous assessment is cumulative because data from one stage leads to data in another stage. That is decision about a pupil takes into consideration the previous decision made. Continuous assessment is guidance oriented because the result of pupils assessment could be used to guide them. The primary school teachers are expected to teach their pupils and assess them continuously after teaching and learning in the areas of cognitive affective and psychomotor domains. This is in line with the educational policy for primary education. The various learning outcomes or objectives in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor should be assessed as recommended by FMEST (1985), Aiken (1976), Gronlund (1985), Ukwije and Orluwene(2012), FGN (2004) and Osadebe (2014b). Primary school teachers should be familiar with the objectives in the domains of behaviour of pupils. It appears that most of the teachers do not have enough knowledge for instructional objectives. These problems have made it necessary to present domains of behaviour and learning outcomes

(Osadebe, 2014b). There are six levels of the cognitive domain of the taxonomy of educational objectives as pointed out by Bloom (1956) Gronlund (1985) and Osadebe (2014a). These include Knowledge, Comprehension, Application, Analysis, Synthesis and Evaluation. The cognitive domain deals with a student's intellectual ability. That is how the student thinks and reasons. The instrument used in measuring students cognitive behaviour include; achievement test, aptitude test and intelligent test. There are five level of affective domain. These are receiving, responding, valuing, organization and characterization by a value or value complex (Krathwohl, 1964 & Osadebe, 2013). The affective domain refers to how the students feel, express emotion, appreciation, interest and general conduct of behaviour. The techniques often use to measure students affective behaviour includes questionnaire, observation, and interview among others. There six levels of the psychomotor domain. These include: perception, set, mechanism, complex overt response, adaptation origination (Gronlund, 1985), and (Osadebe, 2014). It is an aspect of behaviour that shows how a learner makes use of the body for educational purpose. This includes, handwriting, playing football with the leg and other physical activities. There are different models of psychomotor domain. Ukwuije (1996) and Kpolovie (2002) presented the model of Simpson. These include; perception, set, mechanism, complex overt response, adaptation and origination.

The psychomotor domain describes the skills of students. It requires skills in writing, speaking, dancing, running, drawing, jumping, driving among others. The main instruments for assessment include test and observation. It has been pointed out that when continuous assessment is investigated, the three domains of behaviour including cognitive, affective and Psychomotor should always be identified (Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 1985; Federal Government of Nigeria, 2004; Osadebe, 2014a). This will help to understand the focus of continuous assessment in schools. Harrow (1972), Gronlund (1985) and Osadebe (2013b) emphasized six levels of[psychomotor domain. The levels are hierarchical. where the first level is reflex and the last level creative. These include reflex movement, fundamental movement, and perceptual ability, physical ability, skilled movement, and non-discursive communication. At the end of instruction the learner should be able to assemble, build, calibrate. Change, clean, compose, connect, create, design, dismantle, drill, fasten, fix, follow, grind, grip, crawl, hammer, heat. Hook, identify, locate, make, manipulate, mend, mix, nail, paint, sand, saw, sharpen, set, sew, sketch, start, stir, use, weigh and wrap.

Cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of behaviour are interrelated. A learner may exhibit all the forms of behaviour during and after an instructional process. Various techniques are needed to assess the learners behaviour. These techniques include test. observation, oral question, anecdotal record. Questionnaire, sociometry, interview, among others. Information collected with these assessment techniques, are used for decision making. There are related studies on continuous assessment practice from different dimensions. These include: Omole (2007), Osadebe (2014a), Christensen (2013b) and Odubenu (2015). The studies were more in

secondary schools. No specific study known to be researcher has been carried out in primary school on the practice of continuous assessment. This is gab the study covered.

Continuous assessment is expected to be practice by male and female primary school teachers who are also in rural and urban areas. The successful practice in line with educational policy depends on the teachers. This is a good reason to investigate teacher continuous assessment practice in primary schools among their sex and location. The practice of continuous assessment by primary school teachers in this study considered the sex and location of the primary school teachers. Therefore, two research questions were answered on the sex and location of teachers. Two hypotheses were also tested at .05 level of significance. The following are the Research Questions:

- (1) What is the extent of male and female teachers' practice of continuous assessment in primary schools?
- (2) What is the extent of rural and urban teachers' practice of continuous assessment in primary schools?

The following are the null hypotheses

1. There is no significant difference between male and female teachers' practice of continuous assessment in primary schools.
2. There is no significant difference between rural and urban teachers' practice of continuous assessment in primary schools.

Methodology

The study assessed the extent to which primary school teachers in Delta State practice continuous assessment in line with the education policy in Nigeria. The dependent variable of the study was practice of continuous assessment. The independent variable include sex and location of primary school teachers. Therefore, the practice of continuous assessment in primary school depends on the sex and location of the teachers. A sample of 1000 primary school teachers was randomly drawn using simple and proportionate stratified random sampling techniques based on the sex and locating of teachers (600 male and 400 female). A 4-point scaled questionnaire was used. The validity of the instrument was determined through expert judgment and factor analysis. Thus, the instrument has face and construct validities. The reliability of the instrument was estimated through Cronbach Alpha. A reliability coefficient of 0.90 was obtained as a measure internal consistency. The data collected were analyzed in line with the research questions and hypotheses. The research questions were answered with the use of mean. A bench mark of 40 was used as a mean for decision making on the research questions. Therefore, a mean of 40 and above indicates high practice of continuous assessment by primary school teachers. Below 40

indicates low practice of continuous assessment by teacher. The hypotheses were tested with Z-test at .05 level of significance.

Discussion

The result of the study showed that the extent of continuous assessment practice by primary school teachers in line with the educational policy of Nigeria was low. There was no significant difference between male and female as well as rural and urban primary school teachers on the practice of continuous assessment in line with the educational policy in Nigeria. The result was similar to that of Omole (2007) Osadebe (2014) and Odubenu (2015) who carried out their studies on continuous assessment and found low implementation by teachers. There was no significant difference between male and female as well rural and urban teachers in terms of the low practice of continuous assessment. The low practice, was at variance with Federal Government of Nigerian (1981, 1998 & 2004) policy on continuous assessment and Federal Ministry of Education science and Technology (1985) Handbook on continuous assessment, who supported high practice of Continuous Assessment. They emphasized that continuous assessment should be practice by teachers in line with the educational policy of Nigeria.

Conclusion

The study was carried out to assess the extent of continuous assessment practice by primary school in line with the National Policy of Nigeria. It was found that the extent of continuous assessment practice by primary school teachers in line with the educational policy was low. Therefore, primary school teachers should be encourage to practice continuous assessment in line with the educational policy for primary schools. There should be effective monitoring and evaluation by government to ensure the successful practice of continuous assessment in line with National Policy on Education.

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