

SCHOOL-BASED ASSESSMENT AS AN INNOVATION IN NIGERIAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM: THE IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

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Abstract

The study examined the challenges of school-Based Assessment as an innovation in Nigeria educational system. A total of 300 teachers were involved in the study: 200 primary school and 100 junior secondary school teachers in Owerri metropolis. A well validated researcher designed questionnaire formed the instrument of this study. Chi-square (χ^2) statistical analysis was used to test the three (3) formulated hypotheses. The result of analysis revealed that teachers' training in assessment techniques, teachers' commitment as well as large class size are challenges of implementation of school based assessment. In-service training in test contraction and validation was recommended for the teachers for effective implementation of SBA in equipping the learners with literacy, numeracy and basic life skills. It will also improve students' attitude in class attendance and other factors that improve their better learning.

Changing in Nigeria educational system has created needs for constant innovations and reforms in her education. This is necessitated by the realization of the systemic ineffectiveness in the old education theory and practice; thus calling for educational assessment is an inseparable and proper use of various forms of evaluation for monitoring the academic process or otherwise of student/pupils and the general performance of educational system (Akinsola, 2007).

Hence Nwana (1979) opined that no matter how effective the teacher, how intelligent the pupils, how adequate the audio visual equipment, if no provision is made for some evaluation of progress, the teaching effort may be invalidated. Assessment is an integral part of teaching and the derived education improvement cannot be realized without effective assessment (Essien 2010). However, one of the innovation in assessment is changing school Based Assessment (SBA) from "assessment of learning" to "assessment for learning"

School based assessment (SAB) according to Onuka and Oludipe (2006) is an assessment practice that broadens and expands the forms, mode, means and scope of assessment in the school in other to facilitate and enhance learning by providing immediate feedback. SBA comprised of continuous and terminal (or final) assessment carried out in the school, which impact on the child's readiness, capacity and interest to learn.

However, the current assessment practices in the schools in the school as identified by National Teacher Institute (2006) heavily relies on the outcome of final relies external examinations. This has led to:

- i. Teachers concentrating or hurrying to cover the syllabus without regards to learner's understanding
- ii. Learners perpetuating poor study habits of careless with their studies at other times and becoming serious and sometimes super-active and dubious during these public examinations,
- iii. Parents becoming over anxious, restless and being over active in "helping" their child/ wards dubiously to pass the public example examination. Consequently, many pupils/students have graduated with certificates, and yet lack literacy, numeracy and equipment with basic life skills (Essien, 2010).

SBA techniques according to Onuka and Amoo (2007) have been impression that all the matter in the school is to obtain a certificate at the end of a course. Whereas, SBA seeks to verify learners' performance and uses feedback, identify inadequacies in the measuring instrument, student

attitudes including lecture attendance and other similar factors such findings then used to improve the situation and enhance better learning outcomes and serves the purpose of education better than assessment of learning (Essien, 2010).

Continuous assessment (C.A) is a form of SB A in which students are assessment in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains, a number of times and at certain intervals. C.A involves the use of a variety of assessment instruments, assessing various components of learning, not only thinking process but including behaviors, personality traits and manual dexterity (Nwana, 2007). Reform in education that led to the introduction of SBA, redefined the basic education teachers' roles as well as other stake holders in the school system. SBA and its demands have to be understood by them as a foundational step to its successful implementation.

It is against the above background that this paper focused on the challenges in the implementation of SBA. This is with a view to making relevant suggestion that bother proper implementation of school-based assessment as an assessment for learning.

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant influence of teachers training in assessment techniques on the implementation of SBA.
2. There is no significant influence of teachers' commitment on the implementation of SBA.
3. There is no significant influence of large class size on the implementation of ABA.

Methodology

Teachers in both primary and junior secondary schools in Owerri metropolis constituted the population of the study. A simple random sampling technique was used to select 20 public primary schools and 10 junior secondary schools for the study. Ten (10) teachers were selected from each of primary and junior secondary schools making a total of three hundred (300) teachers. The research instrument used for the study was a researcher designed questionnaire. In order to established both face and content validity of the instrument, the questionnaire was given to two (2) experts in the field of educational measurement and evaluation. Alpha reliability of the instrument was 0.79 meaning that is suitable for the research.

Result:

Hypotheses 1: There is no significant influence of teachers' training in assessment technique on the implementation of SBA.

Table 1: Teachers' Training in Assessment and Implementation of ABA.,

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	S.D	X ²	Decision
1	Teachers' poor knowledge of scoring and interpretation of test scores influence SBA implementation.	95	135	40	30		
2.	Poor understandings of the concept of SBA by the teacher are crucial problems of effective implementation of SBA in schools.	85	120	60	35	17.97	Rejected
3.	Poor in-service training /workshop/seminar for all teachers hinder their Proper implementation of SBA.	100	120	45	35		
4.	Poor understanding of the rationale for SBA have subjected SBA to great deal of abuse by the teacher.	91	100	69	40		

Alpha 0.05

df=9

size of students / pupils has greater influence on the implementation of SBA. Therefore, large class size of students forms a challenge of SBA as an innovation in Nigerian educational system.

Conclusion

The results of the study presented in table 1, 2 and 3 are quite revealing. There is an indication that teachers' training in assessment techniques, teachers commitment as well as large class size of students are challenges of implementation of School - Based Assessment as an innovation in Nigerian educational system.

The findings of this study are in consonant with the reports of Emeka (1996), Uwadie (1998), Badmus (1999), Kayode (2003), and Akinsola (2007) who reported among other findings that teachers' poor understanding of assessment concept and their poor knowledge of scoring and interpretation of test scores, lack of relevant competencies, teachers' commitment and large class size are crucial challenges of effective implementation of SBA as an innovation in Nigerian educational system.

Recommendation

It therefore recommended in this study that teachers should be provided with the opportunity for regular in-service training / workshop / seminars in test construction and validation. This will make them too familiar with operational procedures and guidelines of implementing SBA.

Government at every level should motivate the teachers to become more committed to the effective implementation of School - Based Assessment, and see SBA as an "assessment for learning" not "assessment of learning".

However, with the above recommendation for this study, pupils / students will not only be graduate with certificate but equipped with literacy, numeracy as well as basic life skills. It will also improve students' attitude in class attendance and other factors that will improve their better learning.

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