Quality of Assessment in Curriculum Practice on Academic Performance of Adolescents in Education District IV of Lagos State: Sociological Implications

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Abstract

A good quality curriculum needs to be inclusive by assisting all students regardless of ability, ethnicity, cultural background, gender, socio-economic status or geographical location to reach their individual potential as learners and to develop their capabilities to the fullest. This could be achieved by the quality of assessment procedures employed. It is in line with this, that this study examined the impact of assessment in curriculum practice on the academic performance of adolescents in Education District IV of Lagos State. With the adoption of descriptive survey research design. Muiti-stage sampling techniques was used in selecting (300) senior secondary school two (SS II) students as participants. To guide the study, four hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance and all the hypotheses were rejected. The instruments used was a researcher constructed questionnaire titled 'Quality of Assessment in Curriculum Practice on Adolescents' Academic Performance Questionnaire (QACPAAPQ) and an Achievement Test on English Language (ATEL) with reliability coefficients of 0.8 and 0.79 each when tested during the pilot study. The study found that there is a significant impact of quality of assessment in curriculum practice and non-uniformity of standard on the academic performance of adolescents. Also, there is a significant influence of incompatibility of standard among schools on assessment in curriculum practice. Based on these findings, it was recommended among others that quality assessment should be adequately used in schools in order to improve students' learning achievements and also, there is the need for a regular value-orientation and re-orientation of all and sundry towards skill-orientation curriculum for honest pursuance of curriculum policies at all levels of education in Nigeria.

Keywords: *Quality of assessments, Curriculum practice, Academic performance and Adolescents*

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Background to the Study

Educational activities are geared towards ensuring that students achieve mastery of educational objectives. In school, the extent to which these objectives have been achieved, is determined by the effectiveness of assessment in curriculum practiced in school as students' success are reflected in their academic performance. Curriculum plays a large role in the academic performance of students. In all systems of education globally, one of the prime and germane considerations of administrators, teachers and students alike is the impact of educational policy on learners. An educational policy that impacts on the learner, specifically on the adolescents, is said to be appropriate and germane to the needs and expectations of the people and the society. And so, without mincing words, the academic performance of adolescents is wholly dependent on the extent to which the curriculum has impacted, transformed and transmogrified their lives from a dormant to a potent state. Therefore, it is imperative for teachers and policy makers to think critically and carefully about the quality of curriculum practice and its impact on students from primary and secondary schools to higher institutions. In this connection, most of the current teaching and assessment and the impact on students seem to dwell on wishy-washy, passive, sterile and unproductive form of learning, which is contrary to the aims of instructors and the National policy on education.

The current 9-3-4 educational policy, which Nigeria operates, was evolved to bring out the latent talents of youths and adolescents with a view to honoring their skills especially in technology and entrepreneurship. By this 9-3-4, basic education in Nigeria shall be of 9 years duration, free compulsory and uninterrupted. It is aimed at reducing illiteracy among the adult population of Nigeria in the nearest future among others. This 9-3-4 educational policy in Nigeria was structured from the 6-3-3-4 system of education; an expression that implies 6 years of primary education, 3 years of junior secondary education, 3 years of senior secondary education and 4 years of the typical tertiary education programmes. According to the national policy of education (2013), certification at end of primary educations is on school- based assessments. The junior secondary (JS) terminal examination is also on school-based assessments through continuous assessments and a final examination conducted by a state ministry of education or the national examinations council (NECO). This examination which hitherto was based on the three-year junior secondary (JS) curriculum is being replaced with the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE), assessment is a composite aspect of the programmes in all these levels of education. Thus far, the afore said policy has proved successful, in spite of its shortcomings. But hitherto, the outlived and defunct educational policy of 6-5-4 was considered too bookish, passive and not technologically prone to the development of youths and adolescents in the society.

It is pertinent to state that having a consistent value and focus on teaching is always important and worthwhile for a good education system. Therefore, curriculum can always be found in all countries education system. However, with different interpretations towards the term 'curriculum', attitudes and values towards pedagogical approach may vary, which in turn affects how students learn in schools. Thus, what is postulated as 'curriculum' in one country may differ from what obtains in another country. The term 'curriculum' is capricious

and has variegated meanings. However, the following definitions may hold sway. Moeller (2005) asserts that curriculum serves as a means to an end; it is a detailed plan with identified lessons in an appropriate form and sequence, which directs teaching. It specifies the activities, assignment and assessments to be used in achieving its goals: what the learner will know and do. A learner focuses on a topic and chooses specific instructional methods to cause learning to meet a given standard. Furthermore, Moeller posits that: "standards are not prescriptions for particular curricular or instructional approaches, but rather are meant to support teachers instead of dictating to teachers what and how they should teach. Teachers are placed in the role of decision making professionals.

A curriculum is meant to serve as a guide, a strategy, a pillar which the educational system of the country is anchored. For example, the Nigerian curriculum has the major objective of motivating learning, enhancing knowledge and abilities and developing positive values or even attitudes. These elements if well harnessed could help achieve whole-person development of students. Traditionally, what we teach is prescribed by the federal, state, Local Government Education Authority, the school, or the publishing company. The textbook and often the exams are fixed, where learning involves little consideration for background knowledge and interests of students. The curriculum links the macro (officially selected educational goals and content) with the micro (the act of teaching and assessment in the classroom/school), and is best seen as 'a series of translations, transpositions and transformations' (Alexander, 2009). However, the teacher is the prime mediator of life in the classroom and the quality of teaching ought to be a primary content of school to improve our evaluation practices. If our evaluation practices do not reflect our most cherished values, they will undermine the values we cherished and as well, affect the academic performance of the students and also, if teaching is weak or insensitive, whatever virtues the curriculum might possess will be for naught.

Operationally, academic performance is the ability to study and remember facts and being able to communicate one's knowledge verbally or written on paper (Answers, 2010). Ward, Stocker and Murray-Ward (2006) opined that academic performance refers to the outcome of education; the extent to which the student, teacher or institution have achieved their educational goals .Academic performance can also be defined as the extent to which a student, teacher or institution has achieved their short or long-term educational goals. It can also be referring to how well a student is accomplishing his or her tasks and studies (Scott's, 2012). Grades are certainly the most well-known indicator of academic performance. Grades are the student's "score" for their classes and overall tenure. Grades are most often a tallying or average of assignment and test scores and may often be affected by factors such as; attendance; an instructor; opinion of the student as well. Grading systems vary greatly by county and school; common scales include a percentage form 1-100, lettering systems from A-F, and grade point averages (GPA) from 0-4.0 or above.

The need for the learner's performance to be assessed is very important in the educational system. This is because assessments of students 'learning outcomes are cardinal to the realization of the objectives of education in any economy. Assessment is important in

education because it provides information about learning that can be used to: diagnose learner strengths and needs, provide feedback on teaching and learning ,provide basis for instructional placement, inform and guide instruction, communicate learning expectations, motivate and focus learner attention and effort, provide practice, applying knowledge and skills, provide a basis for learner evaluation (e.g. grading) and gauge programme effectiveness (Mc Tighe and Ferrara, 2014). Teaching cannot be said to have succeeded until assessment proves so. Durowoju, Onuka and Onabamiro (2010) submit that a good teacher would desire to known whether teaching has really taken place, or whether learners have mastered the lesson taught after the teaching and learning process. Hence, teaching efforts may be completely invalidated if no provision is made for some assessment of progress.

Assessment is regarded as any method used to understand the current knowledge that a student possess. Akker (2003) described assessment as essential component of the curriculum practice. Assessment is a process for obtaining information in curriculum operation in order to make decisions about student learning, curriculum and programs, and on education policy matters, because of this, educators strongly suggest that assessment and curriculum integration in the continuous cycle of curriculum planning, operation, implementation, and evaluation. For example, the attained curriculum both the experienced and the learned are determined by assessment procedures.

The aim of assessments for student, teachers and schools as stated by the Curriculum Development Council (2012) are:
1. For students to understand their strengths and weakness in learning, understand what they should try to achieve next, and how best they might do this and improve their learning based on feedback from teachers and other assessors; and
2. For teachers and school to diagnose the strength and weaknesses in the learning of their students, provide quality feedback and specific advice to student, so that they know how to improve their learning objective/expectations of students, curriculum design and contents, strategies and activities, so that they are better suited to the needs and abilities of their students to enhance learning and teaching effectiveness.

Assessment is a very important and vital aspect of learning, Joshua (2014) submits that assessment is needed in order to know whether learners understood what has been taught. Stiggins (2005) averse that research evidences all over the world show that the consistent or regular application of principles of assessment for learning can give rise to unprecedented gains in students' achievements, especially for low achiever.

Assessment could either be formative or summative. Formative assessment involves assessing students' performances doing the teaching learning process and it enables teachers' to identify the strength and weaknesses of students' the early stage for remedial action, while summative assessment involves assessing student' performances at the end of a given period through testing or examination, (Bako,2015). Through assessment, teachers', parents and the learners become aware of how well or otherwise their performance. Well

planned assessment can help answer the following questions: To what extent have objectives being met? How as instruction impacted on its target population? What changes and improvement should be made? Hence, the need for quality of assessment in education.

The concept of quality of assessment could be best understood by explaining 'quality' and assessment distinctly. In the ordinary sense, 'quality' means the standard of something when compared to other things like it. Quality has to do with how good or bad or the condition or state of something. In the same vein, the word 'assessment' is derived from the word 'to assess' which means to estimate the nature, quality or value of something or somebody'. Assessment therefore, is 'a carefully considered opinion or judgment ', from a practitioner's point of view, assessment is defined as systematic process of determining to what extent teaching or learning has influenced the behaviour of the learner. In this sense, the prime objectives of assessment in education according to Ojerinde (1997), include; stimulation of students to study more than ever, diagnosis of learner's problems, determination of the effectiveness of instructional methodology, selection of students and certification purposes.

However, quality of assessment is the tendency of making sure that the end products of assessment is good standard and highly acceptable in all ramifications. the indices of judging the quality of educational assessment which Ojerinde (1997) and Onwuakpa (1998) classified are as follows; well-articulated national goals; well-planned curriculum at each level of education; quality of personnel (teaching and non-teaching); type of school and instructional facilities available; assessments of procedures and instruments used; capacity for processing examination data; utilization of assessment outcome; quality of students enrolled; and the school environment.

Ayodele (2010) pointed out that at present, there seems to be no uniformity in the conduct of assessment across the school in terms of testing administration and marking of assessment instruments which might make continuous assessment scores vary among schools. Furthermore, the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) stated that any existing contradictions, ambiguous, lack of uniformity in educational practice in different part of the Federation should be removed. It seems there is no uniformity in staff strength, quality of teachers across schools. As it were, while some schools are well staffed, some are grossly under staffed. The difference in the quality of teachers may give differences in the quality of instructions and assessment which could result in difference in students' and in-house (school) Adolescences continuous assessment scores.

According to Ayodele (2010), the differences in the quality of test and other assessment instruments used for in-house (school) adolescents in different schools as well as differences in the procedures of scoring and grading the various assessments in the various schools could pose problem of compatibility of standard. Some teachers may set apparently difficult test items, which students may see as a threat to their class. Over the years, experience has shown that some teacher give tests to students when they are not prepared to teach their lessons. (Ipaye) as referred by Ayodele opined: "that students complained that assessment:

(Formative and Summative) put them on continuous tension. " These types of complaints reflect the student negative attitude to their studies, which may also have adverse effects on their continuous assessment scores. The effects: salutary or adverse, may be reflected in continuous assessment scores. No wonder while Alonge (2003) posits that "class teachers or lecturers engaged students and in –house (school) adolescents in grading and computing their colleagues' results or where assessment scores are awarded arbitrarily like: 29/30 or 30/30 raises a lot of questions about the credibility of the assessment.

It has being observed that systematic way of conducting continuous assessment in various schools is based upon an operational plan whereby all crucial aspects have been predetermined. This operational plan, among other things, addresses two vital issues within every state in Nigeria. (a) The frequency and timing of assessments (b) The relative weight of each assessment. In terms of frequency and timing, there are generally some periodic teacher –made tests within each term plus one terminal examination at the end of each term. The federal government is silent on the number of periodic assessments per term. Hence, one state may decide that each school subject be periodically tested twice per term with one terminal examination at the end of each term while another state may decide to have 4 periodic tests per term and one end of term examination. According to Okafor (2013), continuous assessment marks vary from one school to another, it can be 30:70 or 40:60 respectively. Worrisome is the fact that some teachers award scores on test never administered. Not only that, when the school registers are to be submitted to examination bodies as part of the routine for vetting continuous assessment scores, some schools seem to manipulate continuous assessment scores and submit same to the governing and controlling authority. There is problem of non-uniformity in the quality of assessments instrument, consistency in assessment/administrative procedure and procedure for scoring and grading which varies from teacher to teacher. Ojerinde (2000) states inter alia: "some schools seem to use this advantage to unduly inflate continuous assessment scores of the students to favour their schools. Not only that, some school registrars seem to manipulate assessment scores to ministries of Education to be used with JSS examination for the award of JSS certificate."

Schools can deliberately inflate the grades they give to their students to ensure that the students emerge successful no matter the grades they receive in the final external examinations. Abbas (2000) stated that "candidates' assessment may not be the true reflection of his ability as he might be scored higher than his actual ability". This may be as a result of many reasons such as special interest in such a candidate; the candidate/student may be a teacher's favorite (hallo –effect) etc. Also, inflated grades provide inaccurate feedback and an endemic problem due to its danger on the students' future which undermines the quality and credibility of higher education. Boretz (2014) opined: "that the wide acceptance in academia of the phrase' grade inflation has damaged the academic ethos in general. Therefore, this kind of grade may pave the way for unmerited students to receive honour and this makes grades as meaningless". To all intents and purposes, this may represent intellectual dishonesty. In addition, it was observed that scanty tests and assignments formed the instrument some teachers used in collecting scores for their

assessment and that method of reporting results could be bad. In using assessment to test the true implementation of the country's curriculum practice, in this view, Kolawole (2001) reported that a raw score on any psychological testing is meaningless in the absence of interpretative data. In a nutshell, there is need for general standard if the marks awarded are to be comparable. Research has it that something was wrong in the internal assessments as practiced by schools in the country, these are more prone to abuses and less reliable than external assessments, which makes it very difficult to compare scores obtained from one school with another.

It is pertinent to assert that continuous assessment should not only be concerned with the cognitive aspect of the learner, but also considers other facets of the learner such as skills, attitudes and values. Nichoson (2001) describes continuous assessment as an instrument for promoting learners' skills, knowledge, attitudes and values. Interestingly, the implementation of continuous assessment demands that learners be assessed throughout the course of study bearing it in mind that specific outcomes are to be achieved and techniques to be used. Thus, continuous assessment can be seen as an ongoing process that measures a learner's achievement during the course of a grade or level, providing information that is used to support a learner's development to enable improvement to be made in the learning and teaching process as a result of the effectiveness of assessment in curriculum practice. It is against this backdrop that this study sought to investigate the impact of assessment in curriculum practice on the academic performance of adolescents in Education District IV of Lagos State.

Statement of the Problem
Assessment is an indispensable component of curriculum practice. In systems of education, one of the prime considerations of administrators, teachers, and students alike are the outcomes of learning, what ability students can demonstrate because of increase in their knowledge and changes in understanding because of experiences in school or college. Concern for how learning takes place in schools/colleges and how instruction and assessment affect the quality of learning is desirable, for students need to acquire knowledge and competencies that can be transferable in the work place. Therefore, educators need to think carefully about the quality of curriculum practice and learning assessment in schools/colleges. Most of the current teaching and assessment in schools/colleges seems to induce passive, reproductive form of learning that is contrary to the aims of education. Most of the time teachers/instructors emphasize on factual knowledge, bind students too firmly within currently acceptable theoretical framework, and do the same while assessing learning which ought not to be.

Research findings such as Adeyegbe (2003), Okpala and Utoh (2005) and Falaye and Ojerinde (2005) has shown that a number of challenges beset assessing learners objectively in Nigerian schools. These challenges include learners' population, poor understanding of the concepts of continuous assessment, lack of standardized instruments for use in continuous assessment, non-comparability of scores and standards across schools and subjects, poor funding, lack and non-use of ICT in record keeping in schools and lack of

storage facilities. Other factors have been spotted out as opposing quality of assessment in curriculum practice is anchored in respect of assessment which include; Improper implementation of the curriculum by most schools, Lack of unified and generally acceptable methods of administering test/examination to students, presentation of distorted, manipulated and inflated assessment scores by schools. More so, the assessment methods that teachers use are not effective in promoting good learning and grading practices tend to emphasize competition rather than personal improvement among others. On the long run, despite the immense contribution of curriculum as the backbone on which the educational system of the country is built on, in respect of assessment by providing information that is used to support a learner's development to enable improvement to be made in the learning and teaching process on the academic performance of students and the development of the society. It benefits/usefulness are yet to be felt by all concerned. It is in view of this problem, that this study was carried out to determine the Impact of Assessment in Curriculum Practice on the academic performance of Adolescents in Education District IV of Lagos State.

Purpose of the Study
Specifically, the study intends to:
1. Determine the influence of assessment in curriculum practice on the academic performance of adolescents.
2. Determine the impact of quality of assessment in curriculum practice on the academic performance of adolescents.
3. Find out the influence of gender difference in the academic performance of adolescents as regards the incompatibility of standard among schools on assessment in curriculum practice.
4. Determine the relationship between non-uniformity in the quality of assessment instrument/grading system and academic performance of adolescents.

Hypotheses
The following null hypotheses postulated were tested at 0.05 level of significance:
1. There is no significant influence of assessment in curriculum practice on the academic performance of adolescents.
2. There is no significant impact of quality of assessment in curriculum practice on the academic performance of adolescents.
3. There is no significant gender difference in the academic performance of adolescents as regards the influence of incompatibility of standard among schools on assessment in curriculum practice.
4. There is no significant relationship of non-uniformity in the quality of assessment instrument/grading system and the academic performance of adolescents.

Research Design
The study adopted a descriptive survey research design, utilizing the quantitative approach. The design entails the collection and use of data systematically from a given population to describe certain characteristics features of the population. The design is considered

appropriate for this study being that the work is intended to collect certain data from small group with the view to describing the whole population vis-à-vis determining the impact of quality of assessment in curriculum practice on the academic performance of adolescents in education district iv of Lagos- state.

Population of Study
The target population for this study was the Senior Secondary Two (SS2) students from both government-owned and private secondary schools in Education District IV of Lagos State. The estimated senior secondary student's population for the entire Education District IV was 32,899 of which 11,446 were Senior Secondary Two (2) students. There are 92 senior secondary schools in Education District IV of Lagos State.

Sample and Sampling Technique
Multi-stage sampling technique was used to select the sample of the study. Simple random sampling technique was employed in the selection of the schools used for this study. This involves the use of balloting method to select the schools. The names of the secondary schools in each of three education zones that made up the Education District IV were written on pieces of papers and folded while a neutral person was called upon to pick two school at random from each the education zones until the six schools were completed. Fifty (50) senior secondary two (2) students were selected by stratified random selection (25 males and 25 females) from each school. Hence, the sample size totaled to three hundred (300) senior secondary school two (2) students.

Research Instruments
The instrument used for this research work was a researcher constructed questionnaire titled 'Quality of Assessment in Curriculum Practice on Adolescents Academic Performance Questionnaire (QACAPAAP). It was made up of three sections: A, B and C). Section A contained the bio-data of the participants such as gender, class -type (Science, Commercial Arts), school type (Private and Public) and age, while section B contained items that measured the variables in the study such as assessment in curriculum practice (AC) and quality of assessment (QA). However, the questionnaire was designed on a four (4) points Likert-type of measuring scale with four (4) responses keys in form of 1 – Strongly Agreed (SA), 2 – Agreed (A), 3 – Disagreed (D) and 4 – Strongly Disagreed (SA). This order of values only assigned to responses on positively – keyed items, while the response on the negatively – keyed items were scored in reversed order.

Section C was an Achievement Test on English Language (ATEL) using the S.S.C.E standardized achievement test 2016 – 2017 to determine the academic performance of the respondents. The multiple-choice questions on English Language consisting of twenty questions, each question carried 5 marks, thus, the achievement test was scored on 100%.

Validity of Research Instrument
For the questionnaire to be valid in gathering necessary data in this research work two out of the types of validity methods was employed by the researcher, namely content and construct

validities. Content validity, sometimes called logical or rational validity, is the estimate of how much a measure represents every single element of a construct. For example, an educational test with strong content validity was represented as the subject actually taught to students, rather than apply unrelated questions, while construct in the research instrument (questionnaire) was centered and emphasis was laid on the research questions raised in this research work. Furthermore, in an attempt at ensuring the validity of the instrument, the questionnaire was given to senior colleagues and experts in the field of measurement and evaluations that ensured that the content of the instrument correspond with the research questions raised for the study.

Reliability of Research Instrument
A pilot study was conducted on 20 senior secondary two (2) students in a nearby school which was not included in the main study. Cronbach's Alpha reliability analysis was employed with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to determine the reliability coefficient of the research instruments. At coefficient value of 0.79, the instrument was adjudged to be reliable. The alpha coefficient was 0.79, suggesting that the items have relatively high internal consistency and adjudged to be reliable

Descriptive Analysis of Data
Table 1: Demographic Information of the Respondents

Variables	Levels of Variables	No of Students (n)	Percentage (%)
	Male	150	50.0
	Female	150	50.0
Gender	Total	300	100.0
	12 -14 years	39	13.0
Age Group	15 - 16 years	185	61.7
	17 – 18 years	76	25.3
	Total	300	100.0
	Science Class	97	32.3
	Commercial Class	105	35.0
Class Type	Arts Class	98	32.7
	Total	300	100.0

Table 1 informs that from the three hundred (300) students' responses obtained, 150 (50%) were males, while the same number, 150 (50%) were females. Majority (185, 61.7%) were between the ages 15 to 16 years, this was followed by students within ages 17-18 years (76, 25.3%), and then those that were between 12 – 14 years of age (39, 13%). Many (105, 35%) of the students was commercial class students, 98 (32.7%) of them claimed to be in arts-oriented students, however, 97 (32.3%) students were Science-oriented students.

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant influence of assessment in curriculum practice on the academic performance of adolescents.

Table 2: An "r" statistical table showing the relationship (a measure of influence) between assessment in curriculum practice on the academic performance of adolescents

Variables	N	Mean	SD	df	r-cal.	r-tab	Decision
Assessment in curriculum practice (X)		15.39	3.67				
Academic Performance (Y)	300			298	0.47	0.195	**Reject H$_o$**
		8.00	2.50				

$p = 0.000 < 0.05$

Table 2 revealed that a positive as well as direct relationship was observed between assessment in curriculum practice and the academic performance of adolescents. This was evidenced with a yield of the calculated "r" (r-cal. = 0.47) greater that r-tabuleted 0.195 at 298 degrees of freedom given that the obtained level of significance (p-value) is 0.000 < 0.05 *(statistical benchmark).* By implication, the null hypothesis is therefore rejected; hence, there is a significant influence of assessment in curriculum practice on the academic performance of adolescents.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant impact of quality of assessment on the academic performance of adolescents.

Table 3: An "r" statistical table showing the relationship between quality of assessment and academic performance of adolescents

Variables	N	Mean	SD	df	r-cal.	r-tab	Decision
Quality of Assessment (X)		14.07	3.11				
Academic Performance (Y)	300			298	0.53	0.195	**Reject H$_o$**
		8.00	2.50				

$p = 0.000 < 0.05$

Table 3 revealed that a positive as well as direct relationship was observed between quality of assessment and the academic performance of adolescents. This was evidenced with the yield of a calculated "r" (r-cal. = 0.53) greater than r-tabulated 0.195 at 298 degrees of freedom given that the obtained level of significance (p-value) is 0.000<0.05 *(statistical benchmark).* By implication, the null hypothesis is therefore rejected; hence, there is a significant relationship between quality of assessment and academic performance of adolescents.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant gender difference in the academic performance of adolescents as regards the influence of incompatibility of standard among schools on assessment in curriculum practice.

Table 4: Independent-Samples *t*-Test of gender difference in the academic performance of adolescents as regards the influence of incompatibility of standard among schools on assessment in curriculum practice

Students' Gender	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	d.f.	t-cal.	t-tab	Remark	Decision
Male (X)	150	8.00	2.50					
Female (Y)	150	5.00	2.00	298	2.23	1.98	Significant	H_o Rejected

$p = 0.000 < 0.05$

The numerical evidences from table 4 show that the male students (with an average of 8.00 perform better academically as regards the influence of in compatibility of standard than their female counterparts who's averagely scored 5.00. This difference in the mean (average) academic performance attracted a *t-calculated* value of 2.10 greater than t-tab value of 1.98 whose significant level at 0.05 given 298 degrees of freedom. By implication, the null hypothesis is rejected; hence, there is a significant gender difference in the academic performance of adolescents as regards the influence of incompatibility of standard among schools on assessment in curriculum practice.

Hypothesis 4: There is no significant influence of non-uniformity in the quality of assessment on the academic performance of adolescents.

Table 5: Independent-Samples *t*-Test of influence of non-uniformity on the academic performance of adolescents

	Schools	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	d.f.	t-cal.	t-tab	Remark	Decision
Non-uniformity	Private Schools	150	9.00	3.00					
	Public Schools	150	5.00	2.00	298	2.51	1.98	Significant	H_o Rejected

$p = 0.000 < 0.05$

The numerical evidences from table 5 show that private schools (with an average of 9.00 perform better academically as regards the influence of non-uniformity than their public school's counterparts who's averagely scored 5.00. This difference in the mean (average) academic performance attracted a *t-calculated* value of 2.51 greater than t-tab value of 1.98 whose significant level at 0.05 given 298 degrees of freedom. By implication, the null hypothesis is rejected; hence, there is a significant influence of non-uniformity on the academic performance of adolescents.

Summary of Findings

1. There is a significant influence of assessment in curriculum practice on the academic performance of adolescents.
2. There is a significant impact of quality of assessment on academic performance of adolescents.
3. There is a significant gender difference in the academic performance of adolescents as regards the influence of incompatibility of standard among schools on assessment in curriculum practice.
4. There is a significant influence of non-uniformity in the quality of assessment on the academic performance of adolescents.

Discussion of Findings

Hypothesis one as evidenced from table 2 revealed that there is a significant influence of assessment in curriculum practice on the academic performance of adolescents. This finding supports Ayodele (2010) who reported that assessment and evaluation will enable students themselves to adjust their performance to meet criteria and expectations. Olarenwaju (2004) pointed out that assessment provides a richer and more comprehensive picture of student learning that allows students to have more than one way to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. Strickland and Strickland (2006) noted that assessment in curriculum practice becomes an extension of learning by offering concrete, plausible and understandable feedback rather than simply a number of letters that offers little in the way of improving achievement.

Hypothesis two as evidences from table 3 revealed that there is a significant relationship between quality of assessment and academic performance of adolescents. This finding is in line with Ivowi (2008) who reported that assessment is an indispensable component of curriculum practice. In systems of education, one of the prime considerations of administrators, teachers and students alike are the outcomes of learning, what ability students can demonstrate because of increase in their knowledge and changes in understanding because of experiences in school. Ivowi (2008) conclude that assessment provides information that is used to support a Lerner's development to enable improvement to be made in the learning and teaching process on the academic performance of students. Pretorious (2007) described assessment as a tool which assists the learner and the educator in ascertaining the learner's progress in school. It helps in the development of the learner by identifying learning problems and monitoring progress. Assessment is the means of obtaining information which enables educators, learners and parents to make professional judgments about the learner's academic performance. Nichoson (2001) described assessment as an instrument for promoting learners' skills, knowledge, attitude and values. Thus, assessment can be seen as an ongoing information that is used to support a learner's development to enable improvement to be made in the learning and teaching process as a result of the effective of assessment in curriculum practice.

Hypothesis three as evidences from table 4 revealed that there is a significant gender difference in the academic performance of adolescents as regards the influence of incompatibility of standard among schools on assessment in curriculum practice. This

finding supports Ayodele (2010) who noted that the differences in the quality of tests and other assessment methods used in schools as well as differences in the procedures of scoring and grading the various assessments in the various schools and subject could pose problems of comparability and in incompatibility of standard. Ipaye (2002) also noted that students complained that formative continuous assessment put them on continuous tension. These types of complains reflect the students' negative attitude to their study, which may also have adverse and unpleasant effects on their academic performances.

Hypothesis four revealed that there is a significant influence of non-uniformity in the quality of assessment on the academic performance of adolescents. This is in line with Ayodele (2010) who noted that the current system and manner of assessment of students' during the term and at the end of the term vary from state to state. What is obtain in one state may not necessarily be obtained in another state. Even within a state itself, schools differ in how they conduct continuous assessment test on students in their schools. Government schools (public schools) have their method, while private schools have their own style. This current disparity and discrepancies have left a flawning lacuna on the true academic abilities of adolescents in schools. Lack of uniformity has brought more setbacks than progress to the educational sector of the country. Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) among other ideas stated that any existing contradictions, ambiguities, lack of uniformity in educational practice in different parts of the federation should be removed.
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Conclusion
Over time, scholars have asserted that assessment in curriculum practice has a critical role in determining student's academic performance. The study concluded that there is a significant relationship between adolescent's academic performance and each from of assessment in curriculum practice, gender difference, incompatibility of standard, among other, qualities of assessment.

This presupposes that when these variables are present and positive, there is the likelihood that students will perform well in school. Also, the study establishes that effective assessment on curriculum practice enables student to achieve their objective/goal in life as a person and education in general. From the findings of the study, valid and tangible recommendations have been provided which when duly implemented, would help in addressing the yawning gap between the intended and the implemented curricular on students' academic performance.

Implications for Curriculum Experts/planners
The implications for curriculum experts/planners of this findings are also highlighted below:
1. Curriculum experts/planners should utilize every opportunity to sensitize both the school administrators and teachers on the importance of creating a cohesive learning environment to motivate student to learn.
2. Also, the curriculum planners should carry the teachers and school administrators along when planning the curriculum.

3. There is need for government involvement on the area of provision of essential materials needed for effective teaching and learning to be achieved.
4. The curriculum experts/planners should find a way to educate the students on the need to focus on their studies. There is also need to organize programmes that will help adolescents to air their views about the curriculum practice. The role of the curriculum experts/planners to achieve success in life is inevitable.
5. As fresh students may encounter frustrating situation in secondary school, the curriculum planners should consider it necessary to organize orientation programmes for new intake into secondary schools at all levels. They would need to be guided.

Sociological Implications
The federal government of Nigeria as captured in the National Policy on Education has adopted education as an instrument par excellence in realizing her national goals, and effect national development. To this end, the educational goals and objectives at the various levels of our school system – primary, secondary and tertiary levels are drawn for our five main national goals (FGN, 2014). Furthermore, our curriculum content expresses our social needs, values and aspirations, to empower education to serve as tool for national development. The curriculum is the backbone of our educational system. Hence, Quality Assessment in Curriculum Practice is unto Societal Progress, Assessment in curriculum practice in a quality assurance measure in educational process, practice and outcomes. It is assessment for quality societal impact.

This study has vividly shown that quality assessment in curriculum practice impacts secondary school students' academic performance This is quite significant given the role of secondary education in the society which are :to prepare an individual for useful living in the society and; to prepare individuals for higher education. Improving students' academic performance through quality assessment in curriculum practice guarantees quality educational outcomes. Also, of further social relevance is the fact that, quality assessment should be an integral part of every sector of our national life to optimize the social and economic development of the nation.

Recommendations
Based on the research findings, the following recommendations are proffered:
1. Quality assessment should be adequately used in schools in order to improve students' learning achievements.
2. Teachers should ensure that they use various tools such as assignments, discussion, projects, oral questions and even observation to assess students in order to improve learning.
1. Teachers' should set questions that are not biased. Rather, standard questions should be constructed .This can be done by validating the instrument before they are used.
2. There is the need for a regular value-orientation and re-orientation of all and sundry towards skill-orientation curriculum and honest pursuance of curriculum policies along this direction at all levels of education in Nigeria.

3. The changes and innovations in the curricular in this world of globalization should give room to open ended system which emphasize inter-disciplinary approaches and discourse to curricular issues and implementation.
4. There is urgent need for a paradigm shift, from theoretical teaching and literary application to a practical application of knowledge necessary for employment and skill development.
5. Modern pedagogical approaches to curricular implementation in Nigeria educational institutions should be installed in curriculum delivery and the implementers of curriculum should update their knowledge and skills from time to time so as to keep pace with modern trends in curriculum issues and educational reforms in Nigeria and in the wider world.
6. There is the need for consistency in policy formulation and sincere pursuance of its objectives through the curriculum implementation.
7. There should be a harmonious curriculum among the three tiers of government, the state government and the local government. There should be nothing like the federal government curriculum. There must be one truly indivisible curriculum; called the national curriculum
8. The curriculum department, in all ministries of education must be resuscitated to closely monitor and supervise the implementation of the current curriculum in schools. Deviant schools should be sanctioned.

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