

Evaluation of Teachers' Attitude and Competence Towards Implementation of Continuous Assessment Among Adolescents in Ifako Ijaye Local Government Area

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Abstract

Students' assessment is an effective way of monitoring academic progress of any academic programmes. assessment could either be one-short (which is conducted at the end of term, semester or session) or continuous process, which takes place concurrently as the programme progresses in order to diagnose students' performance. However, the National Policy stipulates that educational assessment should in our schools be based on continuous assessment. Based on this, this study evaluated teachers' attitude and competence towards implementation of continuous assessment among adolescents in IfakoIjaye local government area of Lagos State. The study is a correlational study. The population for the study consisted of all adolescents in SS2 in Ifako-Ijaiye LGA. Muti- stage sampling techniques was used to select four schools and two hundred and forty (240) participants comprising males and female's respondents. A self-developed questionnaire titled Teachers' Attitude and Competence Towards Implementation of Continuous Assessment Questionnaire (TACTICAQ) was used as for data collection. The instrument has a reliability coefficient of 6.74 when tested during the pilot study. four (3) research questions and hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance to guide the study. Empirical findings from the study revealed that teachers' competence and attitude towards continuous assessment does not significantly impact on the implementation of continuous assessment in the study area. The study recommends among others that the school authorities should organize meetings and capacity building workshops which should be geared towards improving teachers skills and the expected attitude towards continuous assessment.

Keywords: *Continuous assessment, Adolescents, Teachers' attitude, Teachers' competence*

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Background to the Study

Schools are established for the purpose of teaching and learning. In order to ascertain whether or not learning has taken place, teachers have to evaluate learners. This process of evaluating learners is what is commonly known as assessment. According to Yoloye (2009), assessment is the process by which a teacher collects data about the outcomes of his/her teaching and uses the outcomes for further improvement. In other words, it is an important tool for the sustenance of good performance as well as a veritable instrument for the improvement of poor performance. 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 (Mwebaza, 2010). Assessment can also be defined as systematic process of determining to what extent teaching or learning has influenced the behaviour of the learner (Greaney, 2001). This procedure is usually undertaken by a teacher to find out whether students have learnt what they are expected to learn and the extent to which behavioural objectives have been attained. Assessment can be defined as the process of gathering the data and fashioning them into interpretable form for decision making. It involves collecting data with a view to making value judgement about the quality of a person, object, group or event (Ajuonuma 2006) Educational assessment is vital in teaching and learning process. Through the National Policy on education, the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN, 2013) stated that educational assessment at all levels of education would be liberalized by basing them in whole or in part on continuous assessment (CA). In pursuance of this policy statement.

Continuous assessment can be defined as method of evaluating the progress and achievement of learners in educational institutions with the aim of getting the true possible picture of each learner's ability and helping them to develop their abilities to the fullest. Continuous assessment according to Obe (1980) can be defined as the appraisal technique that systematically covers all the student's performance in class tests, home assignments, projects and other school activities during a given school period such as term, semester, year or entire duration of the course. Okonkwo (2012), sees continuous assessment as a method of evaluating learners' achievement in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains from the moment they become learners until the end of it, these are determined using scores obtained from various instruments and techniques such as tests, projects, rating scale, checklist, observation, interviews and other possible techniques. The evidence in support of continuous assessment in schools is that students who are assessed continuously obtain better results than those assessed through a single examination (Nneji, Fatade & Awofala, 2012; Mwebaza, 2010). This is because continuous assessment allows for more opportunities to test a wide range of abilities over a longer period of time than through a single examination (Eimann, 2002).

However, the significant role of teacher to the success of any education system cannot be overemphasized. This explains why Federal Republic of Nigeria describes quality education in terms of teachers' quality (NPE, 2013). The policy stresses that no education can rise above the quality of its teacher. This further implies that not only teachers' qualification(s) or training that is essential to quality education but also teachers' competence and attitude towards teaching and learning process are germane to the attainment of such educational goals. That

is, teachers' attitude and teachers' competence are also important tools for effective implementation of continuous assessment in the school system.

The issues surrounding teachers' attitude cannot be understated in ensuring successful implementation of continuous assessment. Just as human attitude is a crucial factor for success in every activity in life. For example, if a person develops positive attitude to his/her job, it will have a corresponding positive effect on his/her likelihood of attaining success on the job. The positive attitude will serve as a 'push factor' for an individual to struggle to attain excellence in whatever activity the person is involved in, and also vice versa. Many teachers have negative attitude towards conducting continuous assessment because of laziness in marking and this has been affecting the way they conduct their continuous assessment activities in the classroom. By and large, continuous assessment demands different approaches and methods based on the level of students and nature of the subject. For Yoloye (2009) teachers must employ varying techniques at different occasions to obtain students' continuous assessment scores. This many fail to do, and they restrict themselves to one or two assessment activities in a term simply because they are not interested in marking and reporting students' performance. Thus, this kind of attitude negatively affects effective implementation of continuous assessment as it disrupts the objectives of continuous assessment.

Teachers' negative attitude to continuous assessment activities cannot be divorced from their negative attitude as student teachers to assessment-related courses while in the training college or university. In light of this, Ojo (2008) asserted that many education students in the higher institutions (teachers in training) do not hide their dislike for Tests and Measurement courses, probably because of their quantitative nature. Stressing further that in many cases they deliberately absent from classes and even when they attend, they hardly pay attention in such class, and where this is even not the case, they give little attention to the course(s) immediately after the semester examination, thereby throwing away their lecture notes on the grounds that the course has been completed and they should have nothing to do with its note again. In this sense, many teachers in teaching profession do not have knowledge of measurement and evaluation. Hence, most teachers' negative attitude to continuous assessment started right from their training period, to the extent that many had forgotten assessment-related principles before graduation and employment into teaching service. This explains why some teachers have a nasty attitude in conducting continuous assessment and perhaps accounts for their little expertise in conducting continuous assessment activities. Hence, teachers' negative attitude or low interest towards continuous assessment emanated from their training which is connected with lack of professional attitude.

However, teachers' negative attitude towards implementation of continuous assessment has been identified as one of the major setbacks to achievement of its objectives. In support of this, Sarwar (2011) identified the following reasons as major challenges in implementing continuous assessment, these among others includes: large class, teaching/ learning resources and teachers' attitude .Brookhart (2012) opined that teachers' negative attitude towards test instrument used is a way to have what they perceived as negative consequence for their students. That is, when the tester uses a wrong instrument for his/her testee, then the objective of such test has been thwarted.

Birehanu (2014) argued that continuous assessment programme can only succeed if teacher implements it accordingly. Stressing that in a situation where a teacher does not have a clear understanding of its basic philosophy and procedures for implementation, then its success will be in question. In other words, teachers must understand continuous assessment procedures and its basic philosophy so as to achieve the objectives. Marso and Pigge (2013) sees lack of orientation and assistance from the concerned individuals, insufficient training and lack of adequate materials as factors that makes it difficult for teachers to appreciate and implement continuous assessment as expected of them. Invariably, conflicting teachers' attitude towards continuous assessment equally affects its effective implementation in most schools (Brookhart, 2012).

The use of continuous assessment gained recognition of government as stipulated in National Policy on Education that educational assessment and evaluation shall be liberalized by being based in whole or in part on continuous assessment of the progress of the individual (FRN, 2013). Definitely, continuous assessment is aimed at finding out what a learner has gained from learning activities in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains. That is why Odelola (2015) affirmed that continuous assessment brought a new look to assessment practice which is different from end of examination (one-shot) results used for making decisions on the students previously.

However, teachers' expertise and knowledge in carrying out continuous assessment is questionable as students seem not to get feedback from continuous assessment conducted on them. Rather, Nitko (2015) noted that students have mixed feelings that they are always under surveillance for every mistake they commit, which have a negative impact on the students' performance. That is, lack of competence on the part of teacher can mar the outcome of continuous assessment. In support of this, Ellington and Earl (2007) observed that teachers' competence include planning and proper implementation of continuous assessment in accordance with objectives of the subject or lesson. Therefore, teachers need to have a well-developed knowledge and skills to be creative in their implementation of continuous assessment. Also, teachers should have a well-organized plan of assessment to maximize the success of continuous assessment, while challenges surrounding its implementation can be overcome by carefully planning and good expertise (Elligton & Earl cited in Gahsaw, 2014).

In relation to implementation of continuous assessment in many secondary schools in Nigeria, the quality of items used in the classroom for tests and examinations could serve as determinant of teachers' knowledge and skills in continuous assessment. Obviously, the quality of the items in terms of its validity and reliability (two important issues that are of very high importance in testing) as well as the appropriateness of the items in relation to difficulty level and discrimination index. Owing to teachers' negative attitude and competence challenges, scholars argued that class teachers do not care to investigate the validity, reliability nor analyze their test items before using them.

Ojo (2008) maintained that many teachers only adopted questions from the items of text books or public examinations for use in their classrooms. Of course, this practice reveals teachers' lackadaisical attitude and lack of competence in conducting and implementing

continuous assessment. It is against this backdrop, the study deems it fit to evaluate teachers' attitude and competence towards implementation of continuous assessment in secondary schools among adolescents in Ifako-Ijaye local government area of Lagos State.

Statement of the Problem

Evidently, teachers' skills, technicalities, knowledge and attitudes are essential factors for effective implementation of continuous assessment. Conversely, observation has shown that most teachers in senior secondary schools in Nigeria especially in Ifako-Ijaye L.G.A of Lagos State are unwilling to undertake technical know-how and skills of continuous assessment such as planning; the time to assess student; the type of test instrument to use; the area of learning domains to assess; the use of scoring technique; how to assess students' overall progress based on their cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains among others.

Indeed, some teachers are knowledgeable about the need to effectively implement continuous assessment but many of them consider it a laborious and uninteresting task- display of attitude towards it. Also, some of them eschew undertaking the various technicalities and skills involved. However, it is disheartening that some teachers attitudes and competencies towards the implementation of continuous assessment is quite saddening. This is because many shows non-challant attitude and in competencies in the assessment of their students, which may be as a results of laziness, lack of requisite training and skills needed. Students are not assessed using a wide variety of instruments and they are also not assessed in affective and psychomotor domains. The implication of this is that the overall ability of the child is not assessed.

It is on these bases, that this study seeks to find out whether the problems stated above are the main contributory factors of teachers' attitude and in competencies towards continuous assessment effective implementation of continuous assessment in the Senior Secondary Schools in Ifako-Ijaye LGA, Lagos State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to evaluate teachers' attitude and competence towards implementation of continuous assessment in secondary schools among adolescents in Ifako-Ijaye local government area of Lagos State. The specific objectives were:-

1. To examine the extent at which teachers' attitudes towards continuous assessment impact on the implementation of continuous assessment within senior secondary schools in Ifako-Ijaye L.G.A, Lagos State.
2. To ascertain the extent at which teachers' competence (display of skills) towards continuous assessment impact on the implementation of continuous assessment within senior secondary schools in Ifako-Ijaiye LGA of Lagos State.
3. To find out the extent at which teachers' competence and attitude towards continuous assessment impact on the implementation of continuous assessment in Ifako-Ijaiye L.G.A of Lagos State.

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 significant level:

H₀₁: Teachers' attitude towards continuous assessment does not significantly impact on the implementation of continuous assessment within senior secondary schools in Ifako-Ijaiye LGA of Lagos State.

H₀₂: Teachers' competence (display of skills) towards continuous assessment does not significantly impact on the implementation of continuous assessment within senior secondary schools in Ifako-Ijaiye LGA of Lagos State.

H₀₃: Teachers' competence and attitude towards continuous assessment does not significantly impact on implementation of continuous assessment in Ifako-Ijaiye L.G.A of Lagos State.

Research Methodology

Research Design

The study adopted correlation survey design method. According to Ilogu (2005), Correlational survey research design is a research method that seeks to find out whether relationship exists between two or more variables. Such studies often will have to show the direction and magnitude of the relationship between the variables. In this study, the researcher examined the implementation of continuous assessment as a dependent variable as it relates to teachers' attitude and competence as independent variables among Adolescents in Secondary School in Ifako-Ijaye Local Government Area, Lagos State.

Population The target population for this study comprised of all senior secondary two (SS II) students in the public senior secondary schools across Ifako-Ijaye Local Government Area, Lagos State.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

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 four schools randomly. Sixty (60) senior secondary two (2) students were selected using stratified random sampling (30 males and 30 females) from each school. Hence, the sample size totaled to two hundred and forty (240) senior secondary school two (2) students.

Research Instrument

A researcher developed questionnaire titled *Teachers' Attitude and Competence Towards Implementation of Continuous Assessment Questionnaire (TACTICAQ)* was used to elicit information from the respondents. It consisted two sections A and B. Section A comprises items seeking information on bio-data of the respondents such as: name of school, status of respondent, class, age, gender while section B focused on issues pertaining teachers' attitude and competence as relating to implementation of continuous assessment in senior secondary schools. which consisted of a 30-item questionnaires on a four (4) point likert responses of

rating scale scored in the following order: Strongly Agree = (SA) 4, Agree= (A) 3, Disagree= (D) 2 & Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1. It has a reliability co-efficient of 0.67 when tested during the pilot study at 0.05 level of significance. The research instrument was validated using face, content and experts validity procedure.

Data Analyses

Descriptive Analysis of Data

Table 1: Demographic Information of the Respondents

Variables	Levels of Variables	No of Students (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	118	49.1
	Female	115	47.9
	Unidentified Responses	7	3.0
	Total	240	100.0
Age Group	Less than 12 years	0	0.0
	12 -14 years	15	6.2
	15 - 17 years	180	74.1
	18 - 20 years	29	11.9
	21 years above	0	0.0
	Unidentified Responses	16	7.8
	Total	240	100.0

Table 1 informs that from the two hundred and forty(240) students' responses obtained, 118 (49.1%) were males, 115 (47.9%) were females, while 7 (3.0%) did not identify their gender. Majority (180, 74.1%) were between the ages 15 to 17 years, this was followed by students within ages 18-20 years (29, 11.9%), and then those that were between 12-14 years of age (15, 6.2%), 16 (7.8%) did not identify their age groups, while none of the students were between less than 12 years of age, none of them were not 21 years above.

Hypothesis 1: Teachers' attitude towards continuous assessment does not significantly impact on the implementation of continuous assessment within senior secondary schools in Ifako-Ijaiye LGA of Lagos State.

Table 2: An “r” statistical table showing the relationship (a measure of impact) between Teachers' Attitude towards Continuous Assessment and Implementation of Continuous Assessment

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Df	r-cal.	Sig. Value (p)	Decision
Teachers' Attitude towards Continuous Assessment	240	17.81	4.22				
Implementation of Continuous Assessment	240	17.53	3.12	238	0.089	0.171	Accept H ₀

$$p = 0.171 > 0.05$$

As revealed in the table above, the calculated “r” (r-cal. = 0.089) at 238 degrees of freedom is less than the obtained level of significance (p-value) $0.171 > 0.05$ (*statistical benchmark*). Invariably, the null hypothesis is therefore accepted hence, teachers' attitude towards continuous assessment does not significantly impact on the implementation of continuous assessment within senior secondary schools in Ifako-Ijaiye LGA of Lagos State.

Hypothesis 2: Teachers' competence (display of skills) towards continuous assessment does not significantly impact on the implementation of continuous assessment within senior secondary schools in Ifako-Ijaiye LGA of Lagos State.

Table 3: An “r” statistical table showing the relationship (a measure of impact) between Teachers' Competence towards Continuous Assessment and Implementation of Continuous Assessment

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Df	r-cal.	Sig. Value (p)	Decision
Teachers' Competence (display of skills) towards Continuous Assessment	240	17.39	3.65	238	0.338*	0.000	Reject Ho
Implementation of Continuous Assessment	240	17.53	3.12				

$p = 0.000 > 0.05$

As revealed in the table above, the calculated “r” (r-cal. = 0.338*) at 238 degrees of freedom is greater than the obtained level of significance (p-value) $0.000 > 0.05$ (*statistical benchmark*). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected hence, teachers' competence (display of skills) towards continuous assessment significantly impact on the implementation of continuous assessment within senior secondary schools in Ifako-Ijaiye LGA of Lagos State.

Hypothesis 3: Teachers' competence and attitude towards continuous assessment does not significantly impact on implementation of continuous assessment in Ifako-Ijaiye L.G.A of Lagos State.

Table 4: An “r” statistical table showing the relationship (a measure of impact) between Teachers' Competence and Attitude towards Continuous Assessment and Implementation of Continuous Assessment

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Df	r-cal.	Sig. Value (p)	Decision
Teachers' incompetence towards Continuous Assessment	240	17.94	4.31				
				238	0.094	0.142	Accept H ₀
Implementation of Continuous Assessment	240	17.53	3.12				

$p = 0.142 > 0.05$

As revealed in the table above, the calculated “r” (r-cal. = 0.094) at 238 degrees of freedom given that the obtained level of significance (p-value) is $0.142 > 0.05$ (*statistical benchmark*). The null hypothesis is accepted, therefore, teachers' competence and attitude towards continuous assessment does not significantly impact on the implementation of continuous assessment within senior secondary schools in Ifako-Ijaiye LGA of Lagos State.

Summary of the Research Findings

The results of the data analysis carried out were summarized as follows:

1. Teachers' attitude towards continuous assessment does not significantly impact on the implementation of continuous assessment within senior secondary schools in Ifako-Ijaiye LGA of Lagos State.
2. Teachers' competence (display of skills) towards continuous assessment significantly impact on the implementation of continuous assessment within senior secondary schools in Ifako-Ijaiye LGA of Lagos State.
3. Teachers' competence and attitude towards continuous assessment does not significantly impact on the implementation of continuous assessment within senior secondary schools in Ifako-Ijaiye LGA of Lagos State.

Discussion of the Findings

The results of the findings of hypothesis one revealed that teachers' attitude towards continuous assessment does not significantly impact on the implementation of continuous assessment within senior secondary schools in Ifako-Ijaiye LGA of Lagos State. This is contrary to Alausa (2013) who submitted that teachers possess negative attitude towards continuous assessment, and that this is tantamount to the absence of adequate orientation and training, lack of skill and knowledge without which they cannot appreciate and value the conduct or implementation of continuous assessment. Owolabi (2011) admitted that his observed negative attitude of teachers towards continuous assessment was due to the fact that teachers are underpaid, unrestrained and over-worked (i.e. teachers are saddled with the burden of teaching too many students per class, as such they become disinclined and impatient to spend quality time to implement proper continuous assessment techniques. Whereas, Adeneye (2013) and Abiy (2013) observed that teachers and students have a positive

attitude towards continuous assessment and they assumed that they would practice it in the teaching learning process to promote students' intellectual, emotional, physical and social interaction skills.

Results from hypotheses two from the study revealed that teachers' competence (display of skills) towards continuous assessment significantly impact on the implementation of continuous assessment within senior secondary schools in Ifako-Ijaiye LGA of Lagos State. This is supported by scholars like Agaton and Pattalitan (2016), Bamidele and Benjamin (2016), Alufohai and Akinlosotu (2016), Omolara and Adebukola (2015), Sultan and Shafi (2014) and Nbina (2012) that teachers' competence (alongside their attitudinal disposition) towards continuous assessment significantly relates with the implementation of continuous assessment, and also exerts impact on academic achievement of secondary school students. For Kapambwe (2010), teachers' competence in the implementation of continuous assessment involves the giving of assessment tasks or activities of various types/forms at different times, in such a way that the marks scored by the students accumulate to some aggregates at the end of the month, semester or academic year in order to give reports on students and educational progress.

The findings from hypothesis three discovered that teachers' competence towards continuous assessment would have impacted on the implementation of continuous assessment but when attention is paid to the teachers' attitude towards continuous assessment generally, the reverse is the case. Many teachers use instruments without making reference to their validity and reliability. These findings are consistent with UBEC (2003) Ugodulunwa and Mustapha (2005) and Opoola (2006)'s submissions that many practising teachers in our secondary education are incompetent in conducting effective and efficient assessment of learners achievement: that many do not know how to construct and use appropriate instrument, and that they use instruments without making any reference to their validity and reliability. In addition, it was also observed by Ajuonuma (2010) that many teachers do not implement the following in construction and implementation of continuous assessments. These are

Make use of tables of specification in constructing test items: construct test items so as to reflect the construct they are designed to measure: assess students in affective and psychomotor domains: summarize and transform scores into standard scores for uniformity purposes: compute and use item analysis, item difficulty and discrimination indices: assess students using a wide variety of techniques other than testing: plan remedial course based on information got from assessment: attend workshops/seminars on C.A implementation procedures/practice: give students scripts after scoring and mark student's notes. The above data are in conformity with the findings of Ogomaka (2006), Ajuonuma(2006) and Opoola (2006) that the above continuous assessment implementation practices/items are not implemented in by teachers in our secondary education

Takele (2014) observed that teachers' competence could impact on continuous assessment implementation when teachers possess technical know-how and display skills to ensure that continuous assessment is used for students' improvement. In this sense, effective

implementation of continuous assessment promotes the use of various assessment techniques by competent teachers thereby ensuring achievement of curriculum objectives. This explains why Gahsar (2014) contended that proper handling of continuous assessment at high school level is essential to its effective implementation. Again, Abiy (2013) observed that teachers and students have a positive attitude towards continuous assessment and they assumed that they would practice it in the teaching learning process to promote students' intellectual, emotional, physical and social interaction skills.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings, it could be inferred that as far as senior secondary schools within Ifako-Ijaiye Local Government Area is concerned, teachers' competence towards continuous assessment appreciably (noticeably) impacts on the implementation of continuous assessment, although such noticeable impact was not exerted by their teachers' attitude towards the implementation of continuous assessment.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion in this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. School Authorities should organize meetings and programmes which should be geared towards orientating their teachers on the expected attitude towards continuous assessment.
2. Students should encourage their teachers by exhibiting and expressing good attitude towards any tasks they are asked to do for the sake of continuous assessment. Probably, this will help to change their teachers' attitude towards continuous assessment.
3. The Nigerian Government/Ministry of Education should assist the school authorities to financially back up orientation programme for teachers. Government intervention in such programme might help to add credibility in attracting relevant resource personnels with up-to-date skills in the practice of continuous assessment
4. Seminars, conference and workshops should be organized regularly for teachers in the secondary school to expose them acquire the skills required to practice CA in the school. These seminars/conferences/workshops should also embrace programmes that will up-date the knowledge and skills of the serving teachers on the various CA techniques. This will help them implement CA in our schools adequately.
5. Computer usage should be introduced and computers made available to schools to facilitates to facilitates the implementation of CA practices. Apart from facilitating instructions, computer introduces innovations to teaching as well as secures examination materials adequately
6. Well-meaning educational researchers should replicate this research with a larger sample size of students under stringent research design while covering larger area of study in order to authenticate the findings obtained from this present research.

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