International Journal of Strategic Research in Education, Technology and Humanities | IJSRETH
ISSN Print: 2465-731X | ISSN Online: 2467-818X
Volume 5, Number 1, August, 2018

Evaluation of Continuous Assessment Strategies for Effective Teaching and Learning of Economics in Nasarawa State University, Keffi- Nigeria

Usman, Vintseh Iliya Monday
Department of Arts and Social Science Education,
Faculty of Education, Nasarawa State University Keffi

Abstract

The study investigated the evaluation of continuous assessment strategies for effective teaching and Economics in Nasarawa State University, Keffi-Nigeria. The research determined whether continuous assessment strategies have significant influence on effective teaching and learning of Economics in the University. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. The study made used of cross-sectional survey research design with the sample size of two hundred and fifty (220). Twenty (20) lecturers and two hundred (200) students from economics department were obtained through proportional random sampling procedures. Two instruments were developed and validated by experts. Data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answered research questions and chi-square was used to test hypotheses at 0.05 level of significant. The study reveals that, the continuous assessment strategies Economics lecturers mostly often used centered on the assessment of students' cognitive domain. The study found out that the continuous assessment influence students' performance. The study recommended that, the economics lecturers should apply the three aspects of learning domain in all stages of students' continuous assessment.

Keywords: *Continuous assessment Strategies, Teaching and Learning in Economics.*

Corresponding Author: Usman, Vintseh Iliya Monday

http://internationalpolicybrief.org/journals/international-scientific-research-consortium-journals/intl-jrnl-of-strategic-research-in-edu-tech-humanities-vol5-no1-august-2018

Background to the Study

The aim of every educational programme is to assist learners to ascertain a framework of knowledge and concepts that lead to the totality development of the individual learners. It is only through the use of assessment procedures that one can establish the extent to which educational goals have been attained. Assessment is defined as the process of investigating the status or standard of a learner's achievement/attainment or the achievement of a group of learners, where group instruction prevail, with reference to expected outcomes which must have been specified as objectives Anikweze (2013).Assessment it is the practical application of measurement and just as all testing could be subsumed under assessment, so could all assessment be subsumed under measurement (Chauhan, 1979 in Anikweze 2010). It involves collecting data with a view to making value judgment 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, 2004) 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, National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) allotted 40% and 60% of the total score of the colleges of education students to continuous assessment and end of semester examination respectively.

Continuous assessment, according to Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (FMEST, 1985 in Kukwi and Amos 2014), is defined as a mechanism whereby the final grading of a student in cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of behaviour takes account in a systematic way in all his performances during a given period of schooling. Such an assessment involves the use of a great variety of modes of evaluation for the purposes of guiding and improving learning and performance of the student. This form of assessment is considered adequate for assessment of students' learning because it is comprehensive, cumulative, systematic, guidance and diagnostic oriented. In spite of this, lecturers face with challenges in the application of CA in Nigerian colleges of education.

Statement of the Problem

Over the years, teachers are over-burdened with workload and as a result, they fail to employ various continuous assessment strategies that can provide a comprehensive picture of students learning. Since the process of continuous assessment is formative, systematic and comprehensive, it has increased the workload of teachers. Difficult to employ continuous assessment strategies, lecturers' attitudes toward continuous assessment approaches and lack of basic skill in constructing items and administering continuous assessment are issues that do not permit the use of continuous assessment strategies to assess students learning. As a result, various lecturers depend on different strategies in their quest to assess students' learning in economics. This portrays that both lecturers and students are unaware of the value of assessment strategies in the teaching and learning process. Moreover, the issue of the kinds of continuous assessment strategies that are mostly employed by economics teachers to assess and improve economics students' learning of economics is not much researched in the Nigerian context. It is therefore against this foregone scenario that a study of this nature should be undertaken to find out the application of continuous assessment strategies for effective teaching and learning of economics in secondary schools in Nasarawa state University, Keffi-Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research is to find out the evaluation of continuous assessment strategies for effective teaching and learning of Economics in Nasarawa State University, Keffi**.** Specifically this study sought to:

1. Find out aspects continuous assessment strategies mostly used by teachers to assess students' performance in Economics.
2. Find out how gender of teachers influence the application of continuous assessment

Research Questions

The study sought answers to the following research questions:

1. What continuous assessment strategies are mostly used by lecturers to assess students' performance in Economics?
2. To what extent does gender of lecturers influence the application of continuous assessment?

Research Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between continuous assessment strategies mostly used by lecturers and students performance in Economics
2. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of the application of continuous assessment by male and female lecturers.

Methodology

The researcher adopted a cross sectional survey design to carry out the study. According to Anikweze (2015) a cross-sectional survey involves the collection of data within a short span of time from a random sample of the target population. The target population compresses 340 students with 38 Economics lecturers. The sample comprised 220 lecturers (115males and 5 females) and 200 students (120 males and 80 females) randomly selected by stratified random sampling technique from the faculty of social sciences in Nasarawa State **University Keffi**. Continuous assessment application questionnaire (CAAQ) was used in eliciting responses about the application of CA in Nasarawa state University, Keffi. The instrument contained 12 CA tools for lecturers and 5 structured items for students views on CA and was structured on a 5-points Likert type scale of strongly agree (5), agree (4), undecided (3)disagree (2) strongly disagree (1). The instrument was validated by two measurement and evaluation experts in Nasarawa State University, Keffi. Cronbach alpha technique was employed to determine the reliability of the instrument which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.84 confirming that the instrument was reliable. The questionnaire was administered to 50 lecturers and 200 students in Nasarawa state University, Keffi by the researcher with the help of some research assistants who were adequately instructed on what to do. Each respondent was issued a copy of the questionnaire and was granted a maximum of 30 minutes to complete and return it to the researchers. Descriptive statistics means and standard deviations were used to answer research questions and t-test was used to test hypotheses at 0.05 level of significant. The total value of the four rating scale for continuous assessment application is 10. The mean is 2.5. Mean scores of 2.5 and above formed basis for the acceptance of the results.

Results

Research Question 1: What aspects of continuous assessment strategies are mostly used by lecturers to assess students' performance in economics?

Table 1: Continuous Assessment Strategies Mostly Used By Teachers (N= 50)

s/n	Assessment tools	Mean	SD
1	Test	2.6	.84
2	Assignment	3.1	.68
3	Presentation	1.7	.93
4	Projects	2.5	.75
5	Excursions	2.6	.92
6	Class work	3.4	.73
7	Practical's	1.7	.54
8	Open discussions	1.5	.64
9	Socio-metrics	1.6	.77
10	Observations	1.3	,91
11	Interviews	1.6	.82
12	Questionnaire	1,4	.94

The above table 1 reveals that four out of twelve items meet up mean scores of 2.5 and above formed basis for the acceptance of the results on the application of continuous assessment (CA) strategies. These items which include 1,2,4,5 and 6 are considered to be applied by economics lecturers in Nasarawa State University Keffi. While the remaining items: 3, 7,8,9,10,11 and 12 did not meet the 2.5 acceptance mean of application of continuous assessment (CA) strategies. They are therefore considered as not being applied by economics teachers in Nasarawa state University Keffi.

Research Question 2: To what extent does extent does gender of lecturers influence the application of continuous assessment in colleges of education

Table 2: Teachers Influence on the Application of Continuous Assessment

Gender	No	Mean	Std Dev
Male Lecturers	15	9.3	3.1
Female Lecturers	5	8.1	2.2

Table 2 reveals that, the means and standard deviation for male and female teachers is (M= 9.3, SD=31 and (M=8.1, SD=2.2) respectively. By mere observation, there is a difference between the two mean and standard deviation. In order to determine if the difference is statistically significant or not, the hypothesis two was tested using t-test statistics.

Research Question 3: What is the impact of continuous assessment strategies in students' learning of economics?

Table 3: Students' Views concerning the impact of Continuous Assessment (N=200)

s/n	Item	Mean	SD
1	CA helps me to understand difficult areas of economics	2.8	.91
2	CA makes students concentrate their efforts to learn difficult areas of economics	2.1	.75
3	Students who perform well in CA also perform better in the final examinations	2.5	.56
4	CA arouses students' attention during teaching-learning process	3.3	.91
5	makes students to master the content of economics	2.6	.73

Table 3 reveals views of students concerning the impact of continuous assessment strategies in students' learning of economics. The economics students agreed that continuous assessment helps students to understand difficult areas of economics (M= 2.8, SD= .91). This is because when students are given tasks either in the form of test or assignments, they are mandated to revisit the issues learnt during the teaching-learning interaction. This provides an opportunity for them to concentrate and learn the topics that might initially seem difficult to them. Consequently, this will help to improve upon students' learning of economics. This supports Kukwi and Amos (2014) assertion that continuous assessment can improve students' achievement in learning of economics. Although the respondents did not support the idea that students who perform well in continuous assessment also perform better in final examinations (M=2.2, SD= .56), they economics students strongly agreed that continuous assessment arouses students' attention during the teaching-learning process (M= 3.3, SD= ..91) and also makes them to master the content of economics (M=2.6, SD= .73). Studies have revealed that continuous assessment helps students to revise more effectively and to also gain confidence. Thus, continuous assessment tends to make students ready for their final examinations.

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference between mean of continuous assessment strategies mostly used by teachers and students performance in economics

Table 4: T-Test Analysis Of Significant Difference Between The Mean Of Continuous Assessment By Teachers And Students In Nasarawa State University, Keffi

Variables	N	Mean	Std Dev	Df	Level of sign	$t_{calculated}$	$t_{tabulated}$	Decision
Lecturers	20	13.5	7.1	218	0.05	2.56	1.96	Rejected
Students	200	12.1	3.2					

From the table 4 above, reveals the t-calculated is 2.56 while the t-tabulated is 1.96 at two-tail 0.05 level of significance and df 218. Since the t-calculated is greater than the t-tabulated, the null hypothesis is not accepted. This implies that there is no significant relationship between mean of continuous assessment strategies mostly used by lecturers and students performance in economics in Nasarawa State University Keffi. In other words, lecturers should apply CA in all domains to improve students' performance in Nasarawa state University Keffi.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of the application of continuous assessment in colleges of education by male and female lecturers

Table 5: t-test Analysis of Significant Difference Between Mean Ratings of the Application of Continuous Assessment in University, Keffi by Male and Female Lecturers

Variables	N	Mean	Std Dev	df	Level of sign	$t_{-calculated}$	$t_{tabulated}$	Decision
Male Lectures'	20	6.5	11.1	218	0.05	1.96	2.021	Accepted
Female lecturers	200	5.1	10.2					

From the table 5 above, reveals that the t-calculated 1.69 while the t- tabulated is 2.021 at two-tail 0.05 level of significance and df 218. Since the t-calculated is less than the t-tabulated, the null hypothesis is upheld. This implies that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of the application of continuous assessment in secondary schools by male and female lecturers. In other words, male and female lecturers in Nasarawa state University, Keffi apply similarly continuous assessment.

Summary of Major Findings

Based on the results of the analysis, the following major findings emerged from the study.

1. The application of continuous assessment strategies economics teachers mostly often used centered on the assessment of students' cognitive domain in Nasarawa state University, Keffi.
2. The application of continuous assessment influence students' performance in Nasarawa state University, Keffi.

Discussion

The result reveals that four out of twelve items meet up mean scores of 2.5 and above formed basis for the acceptance of the results on the application of continuous assessment (CA) strategies considered to be applied by economics lecturers in Nasarawa state University, Keffi and the remaining others items did not meet the acceptance mean of application of continuous assessment (CA) strategies. They are therefore considered as not being applied by economics lecturers in Nasarawa state University, Keffi- . This is because most of the lecturers use instruments without making reference to their validity and reliability of its. This is in agreement with Ugodulunwa and Mastapha (2005) and Opoola (2006)'s submissions that many practicing teachers at all levels of 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.

Table 2 reveals that, the means and standard deviation for male and female lecturers is (M= 9.3, SD=31 and (M=8.1, SD=2.2) respectively. By mere observation, there is a significance difference between the two mean and standard deviation. Table 3 reveals views of students concerning the impact of continuous assessment strategies in learning of economics. The

economics students agreed that continuous assessment helps students to understand difficult areas of economics (M= 2.8, SD= .91). This is because when students are given tasks either in the form of test or assignments, they are mandated to revisit the issues learnt during the teaching-learning interaction. This provides an opportunity for them to concentrate and learn the topics that might initially seem difficult to them. Consequently, this will help to improve upon students' learning of economics. This supports Kukwi and Amos (2014) assertion that continuous assessment can improve students' achievement in learning of economics. Although the respondents did not support the idea that students who perform well in continuous assessment also perform better in final examinations (M=2.2, SD= .56), they economics students strongly agreed that continuous assessment arouses students' attention during the teaching-learning process (M= 3.3, SD= .91) and also makes them to master the content of economics (M=2.6, SD= .73). Studies have reveals that continuous assessment helps students to revise more effectively and to also gain confidence. Thus, continuous assessment tends to make students ready for their final examinations.

From the table 4 above, reveals the t-calculated is 2.56 while the t-tabulated is 1.96 at two-tail 0.05 level of significance and df 248. Since the t-calculated is greater than the t-tabulated, the null hypothesis is not accepted. This implies that there is a significant relationship between mean of continuous assessment strategies mostly used by lecturers and students performance in economics in Nasarawa state University, Keffi. In other words, lecturers should apply CA in all domains to improve students' performance in Nasarawa state University, Keffi-. From the table 5 above, reveals that the t-calculated 1.69 while the t- tabulated is 2.021 at two-tail 0.05 level of significance and df 48. Since the t-calculated is less than the t-tabulated, the null hypothesis is upheld. This implies that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of the application of continuous assessment in colleges of education by male and female lecturers. In other words, male and female lecturers in Nasarawa state University, Keffi is apply similarly continuous assessment.

Conclusion

The researcher concluded that if what is obtainable in Nasarawa state University, Keffi concerning application of continuous assessment is also obtainable in other secondary schools in Nigeria, then there is the danger that continuous assessment objectives: comprehensive, cumulative, systematic, guidance and diagnostic oriented which are part of millennium development goals (MDGs) will never be achieved or attained by the year 2020. This unattractive situation could be averted if the author's recommendations are put in place.

Recommendation

Based on the findings of this study, the following were recommended: The economics lecturers should apply the three aspects of learning domain in all stages of students' continuous assessment. Therefore students achieved better results since(CA) Continuous Assessment influence their academic performance in Nasarawa state University Keffi.

References

Ajuonuma, J. O. (2006). *Competences possessed by lecturers in the assessment of students in the Universal Basic Education (UBE) Programme*. A paper presented at the 2nd Annual National Conference of the Department of Educational Foundations, Enugu State Colleges of Education of Science and Technology.

Anikweze, C. M. (2010). *Measurement and evaluation for teacher education 2rd.edition*. Enugu: SNAAP Press (Nig) ltd.

Anikweze, C. M. (2013). *Measurement and evaluation for teacher education 3rd.edition*. Ibadan: Constellation (Nig) Publishers.

Anikweze, C.M. (2015). *Simplified approach to educational research 2nd edition. Kaduna;* GOFATS Ventures limited

Kukwi. I. J & Amos. I. (2014). *Essential for educational measurement and evaluation 1st edition*. Kaduna: Image Point Publisher

National Policy on education, the Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN, 2004)

Opoola, A.O. (2006). *Assessment and placement issues in curriculum and instruction*. A paper presented at the 19th Annual Conference of Curriculum Organization of Nigeria.

Ugodulunwa, C. A. & Mastapha A. Y. (2005). Strategies for quality assurance in educational assessment at the colleges of education Level. *Nigerian Journal of Curriculum Studies* 12 (3) 10-17.