**The impact of students Assessment on the quality of education**

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**Abstract**

This study was on the impact of students assessment on the quality of education. Three objectives were raised which included: To find out the problem effecting exaction of continuous assessment in primary schools, to find out are reason of establishing continuous assessment in primary schools, to find out the instrument used continuous assessment to bring out quality education and to work out the way continuous assessment can be moderated and unified in all primary schools. A total of 77 responses were received and validated from the enrolled participants where all respondents were drawn from selected primary schools in Odeda Local Government Area. Hypothesis was tested using Chi-Square statistical tool (SPSS).

**Chapter one**

**Introduction**

* 1. **Background of the study**

 According to Osunde, (2003) continuous assessment is a class room strategy implemented by teacher to ascertain the knowledge, skill, and understanding attained by pupils.

            The introduction of continuous assessment in our schools is seen by many as  government positive reaction to the age long criticisms against  our system of education and an indication of the desire to improve the Nation’s process of assessing the product of  our educational system.

            According to Ughamadu, (2004) continuous assessment is relatively not a new terminology in Nigeria education, the teacher assess the performance of the pupils in relationship to their achievement in the subject taught.

           The concept of continuous assessment was ushered into the Nigerian education system by the Nigerian education system by the introduction of the Obanya and Onocha (2010).

   The 6-3-3-4 system of Education. This system of replaced the 6-5-2-3 system assess was usually conducted by schools and external institution for certification and placement into the next level of education.

            The national policy on education has directed that pupils be evaluated and certificated parthy  through the means of continuous assessment. Instrument devised for measuring the abilities and competence of pupils should measure.

            The measure should reflect true performance of pupils. This study intended to evaluate the competence of teacher in construction, administration and securing of item devised for continuous assessment.

            Continuous assessment, according to (Okpala and Onocha, 2001). Is also a special type of assessment which a teacher conducted in the school. Complete records give assignment and tests, grade these assignment and tests at some regular interval observed the behavior of pupils and take decisions the old system of assessment was one shot assessment the sense that examination was done only at the end of the term’s work, in some cases, pupils were net examined on what they have been used to one shot system of assessment only made use of tests, class assignments, quizzes, take home question and project were hardly used in assessing learners. This also used to be the situation   even with examining bodies like (N.T.I) Nigeria Teacher Institution and (WAEC). West Africa Examination Certificate, In the old system, Only the cognitive domain was assessed that is only the intellectual ability was examined. The affecting domain, interests, altitude. Feeling, emotions, of the learners were ignored in the assessment. The old system did not also consider fully the psychomotor domain except in very few instances.

           Continuous assessment is a system of assessment that takes in to account the total experience of pupils throughout suggests the continuous assessment is total and aggregated over a period of schooling. Continuous assessment as a method of ascertaining what a pupils gains from schooling in term of knowledge and character development, taking into account all his/her performance in tests, assignment and other educational activities during the entire period of an educational activities during a given period of term, year, or during the entire period of an educational level.

           Finally, It is common knowledge that school enrolment has increased greatly. As a result of the development the attitude of many teacher is affected by the heavy work associated with continuous assessment, some are as to burdensome, some feel it, as an unnecessary creation of more time, some teacher short circuit tests, some conduct just a single test and simply multiply the scores some post phone giving tests, some cancel classes under the excuse that they are going to mark pupils tests, some deliberately give difficult assignment that will keep the pupils busy endlessly so that the teachers can have some time to himself

**1.2  Statement of the Problem**

With the adoption of continuous assessment evaluation procedure in Nigeria schools, its impact in quality of education in primary school is very important. Thus, the problems which this project is interested in finding answers to are centered on the following.

i.                    What are the problem affecting continuous assessment conduct?

ii.                  What effect does continuous assessment has in the quality of education?

iii.                What is continuous assessment instrument used to aid quality education in primary schools?

iv.                Why is continuous assessment introduced?

v.                  How can continuous assessment be moderated aid unified across primary schools for quality education?

**1.3  Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study there for is summarized of follows:

1.      To find out the problem effecting exaction of continuous assessment in primary schools.

2.      To find out are reason of establishing continuous assessment in primary schools.

3.      To find out the instrument used continuous assessment to bring out quality education.

4.      To work out the way continuous assessment can be moderated and unified in all primary schools.

**Research hypotheses**

The following research hypotheses were formulated

**H0:** there is no problem effecting exaction of continuous assessment in primary schools.

**H1:** there is problem effecting exaction of continuous assessment in primary schools.

**H0:** there is no instrument used continuous assessment to bring out quality education.

**H2:** there is an instrument used continuous assessment to bring out quality education.

**1.5  Significance of the Study**

The result of this study is to provide basis for effective guidance (by Primary school Teacher) to modify or reinforce pupils. Attitude towards assessment practices. It is also believed that the finding of this study shall guide government on how to unify continuous assessment conduct in primary schools. Also, the finding is to provide further research in impact of continuous assessment on the quality of education in primary schools.

**1.6  Scope of the Study**

          The scope of this study is limited to primary schools in Odeda Local Government Area and it has to established it own conceptual frame work for investigation.

**1.7  Definition of the Terms**

**1.          Continuous Assessment:** according to EKWONYE (2005) and (2008) is simply means the system strategies / Techniques of giving a pupils a final mark/grade based on the work done during a course of study rather on one examination.

**2.          Impact**: The effect or influence of event, situation etc. has on some or some thing.

**3.          Quality**: is the standard of something when it is compare to other things.

**4.          Education**: is a process of teaching, training and learning, especially in schools or colleges to improve knowledge and develop skill, usually start from grade to grave.

**Chapter Two**

**Review of Related literature**

**Assessment for the Improvement of Learning and Teaching and Inherent Challenges**

Assessment of students’ learning aims at improving and enhancing learning and teaching. This is especially the case when assessment checks or diagnoses the students’ scholarly achievements in order to provide informational feedback both on the students’ strengths and weaknesses as well as on the teacher’s insight, effectiveness and efficiency. In this specific case, assessment is part and parcel of teaching-andlearning as it allows for confirmation of whether or not, or to what extent, the targeted level of learning is attained as to select the appropriate action from the two possible options, i.e. either move forward in the curriculum or proceed to remedial measures before going ahead. In other terms, assessment is a kind of didactical check. Reinforcing this idea, Broadfoot (1996a, p.21) writes that “it is an integral part of teaching-learning process providing feedback for both teachers and students which can guide decisions concerning future learning goals.” Finally, this feedback serves to constitute grounds on the basis of which improvement is to be brought about for students and for the teacher, respectively in learning and in teaching. Especially regarding students, their motivation towards learning is thereby increased, and they show therefore a more enhanced mastery of the taught material. In actual fact, “if students do not know how they are doing, they tend to stop working, unless their internal motivation is very high. Motivation and feedback are therefore intertwined” (Brown & Knight: 1994, p.33). This assessment of students’ learning that implements the function of diagnosis – that Williams & Ryan (2000, p.52) duly call educational ‘diagnostic assessment’ for it allows “to focus on specific symptoms which may require specific treatments” – is specifically called formative assessment. Its two main characteristics are that it is criterion-referenced on the one hand as well as ongoing or continuous on the other hand. The criteria or standards to which formative assessment refers are the target performances expressed in terms of specified – often operationalised – learning objectives of a curriculum or a programme of study as they appear in a lesson plan, which are either achieved/passed or not achieved/failed by the individual learner. In this last case, learning objectives are to be reviewed through a more appropriate and effective didactical strategy if the teacher deems that they should be mastered by the learners prior to forging ahead in the curriculum. This is the reason why Broadfoot (1996a) says that formative assessment plays a central role in the curriculum. As for saying that formative assessment is ongoing or continuous, it means that it is done throughout the didactical process / the process of teaching-and-learning, or, in more operational terms, at the following two moments. First, formative assessment is done at the very beginning of the process in order to collect information that constitutes the starting situation in relationship with the learner’s knowledge or, as Perrenoud (1991: p.85) puts it, from the outset of any teaching approach ‘as a means of adjustment to be used for want of anything better [sic]’. At this stage, one may say that formative assessment is a kind of learner’s prerequisites gauging for any given subsequent training. Therefore, this initial formative assessment also called ‘assessment of prior knowledge’ must always be planned in advance. Second, formative assessment is done at any other opportune moments during the unfolding of the process. For instance, De Landsheere (1979) suggests that it is opportune for this kind of students’ learning assessment to be done at the end of every learning task or at the end of the learning of every specific objective. The same author (Idem) further adds that in this kind of assessment, students’ errors should be considered as steps in problem solving and, of course, as steps in learning rather than reprehensible weaknesses or forms of pathological behaviour. For “we learn to understand a problem by trying to solve it, and by failing. And when we have failed a hundred times, we may even become experts with respect to this particular problem. That is, if anybody proposes a solution, we may see at once whether there is any prospect of success for this proposal, or whether the proposal will fail because of those difficulties which we know only too well from our own past failures” (Popper: 1979, p.181). For it being likely to be implemented at any time of the didactical process, formative assessment is qualified as interactive on the one hand in reference to classroom interactions, and as iterative on the other hand in reference to the ‘way’/distance [from the Latin word ‘iter, itineris’ that means ‘way’] to be covered through the process of teaching-and-learning viewed in terms of duration. It is in virtue of the ‘intersubjective interchange’ (Bruner: 1997, pp.56-60) of such regular working or ‘interactive situations’ (Perrenoud: 1991, p.83) that formative assessment serves as an energiser to teaching-and-learning. Learning and teaching are improved and enhanced when they are geared towards assimilation, application and transfer of knowledge. Within the framework of a strategic teaching (Tardif: 1997), assessment of students’ learning – and mostly formative assessment rather than summative – constitutes the first particularly important and indispensable stage of assimilating, applying and transferring knowledge. In actual fact, assessment is a stage of diagnosis for the learner and for the teacher that allows the former to explicitly be aware of his/her mastery level of the new knowledge, to determine a level of assurance towards this knowledge and, in brief, to develop awareness about whether or not and to what extent he/she masters it (Idem). On the other hand, learning aims at the acquisition or the production and the stabilisation of knowledge after a certain period of time and this knowledge includes facts, mental dispositions and competencies that are planned by educators through learning objectives and it can be stabilised only once it is mastered at a high level. Indeed, high-level mastering of knowledge is motivated by experimental results which show that factual knowledge [taxonomic low level] is forgotten at the rate of 80 per cent after 15 months while performances bearing on application of laws or principles, interpretation of new situations, discovery of principles, reinvention [taxonomic high level] do not deteriorate but rather even become better (De Landsheere quoted by Creutz: 1978, p.23). In order to achieve high-level mastering of knowledge made of facts, mental dispositions and competencies that are planned by educators through learning objectives of assimilation, application and transfer, exercises should be multiplied and distributed across time (Creutz: 1978). Actually those exercises are continuous assessment exercises aimed at an eventual remediation, which need to bear on the whole range of taxonomic levels of learning objectives as put forth by Bloom for the cognitive domain. More specifically, Creutz (1978, pp.104-106) suggests that those exercises take the form of regular quizzes or assignments whose efficiency is subject to the following four ‘psycho-pedagogical conditions’. Firstly, continuous assessment exercises must be tools for training students in order to improve their performances in relation to the targeted knowledge. Secondly, continuous assessment exercises must bear on elements that are well known to students without ambiguity. Thirdly, continuous assessment exercises must not be long and their correction – or, best, their self-correction – as well as the subsequent feedback must not be delayed. Fourthly, continuous assessment exercises must be succeeded by the major part of the students so that they may not generate anxiety.

**Assessment for Certification and Students’ Motivation and Inherent Challenges**

Assessment of students’ learning may as well aim at predicting and certifying their ability for further achievements. This means that students’ learning is evaluated in order to provide him/her with a testimonial of specific aptitude to cope with, for instance, the studies at a higher level of education in a specific field of study or, the exercise of a determined work. Generally, this is expressed through an accreditation document such as a report, transcript, certificate, diploma or the like. Talking about this social sanction, Vandevelde (1982) writes that the school institution is not only charged with the mission of contributing to the individual’s development and training but also with that of control, which it fulfils through the award of diplomas and certificates that give people access to functions, professions or other studies. In case the amount of available places/positions to be occupied is smaller than the number of candidates, then the latter have to undergo a selection process and compete in order to be retained among the best. This ‘very common’ assessment’s purpose of ‘selection of candidates for various kinds of educational opportunity or career’ is more extensively developed by Rowntree (1987, pp.16-20). He firstly confirms that, beyond a basic minimum available for everyone, “selection [and rejection] is necessary because no country believes it can afford to give every citizen all he [/she] might desire in the way of education”. He goes on observing that this ‘competition for extra resources’ is more emphasised “in many developing countries [where] places are in short supply even for secondary education and [where] most children will fail to be selected”, one of the implicit assumptions in selection tests for advanced education being that “only the brightest, most promising and patently talented should be funded to continue” in the expectation that they will be enabled to carry out complex tasks in society such as for example doctors, lawyers or engineers with the minimum investment of resources. Secondly, he points out that “assessment results are also used in selection for job and career opportunities” especially as a ‘screening device’ likely to be ‘administratively convenient in cutting down the number of applicants’. In this specific case where prediction and/or certification lead to the selection of the assessed candidates, one may say that the last purpose is broader than the first two – diagnosis and feedback – and encompasses both of them. This kind of students’ learning assessment that is either prognostic/predictive, aiming at predicting the student’s aptitude that enables him/her to be promoted to a higher level of study with limited places or to be offered a determined job on the work market – this last provision corresponds to what is commonly referred to as ‘transfer of skills’ –, or that is certification-driven thereby entailing a social sanction in the form of a diploma, a certificate, a transcript or a report and that, in most cases as observed in the previous paragraph, allows selection of candidates, is called summative assessment. Its typical characteristics are that it is norm-referenced on the one hand as well as final on the other hand. The norms onto which this summative assessment refers are constituted by peer performances in the same assessment tasks. Instead of comparing the learner’s performance to the learning objective that he/she was expected to achieve – criterion/standard –, this type of assessment compares his/her generally figure-termed performance to a designated group norm, usually the average or the mean, in reference to which a hierarchical ranking/classification is then simply established in a rather selective perspective. Moreover, such a summative assessment is carried out at the end of a period of teaching-andlearning instead of being done during it. Therefore, it is synthetic rather than analytical, and results obtained from it are in the form of a balance sheet. Almost always, typical summative assessment such as examination is never followed by any didactic feedback aimed at improving learning. At other times, even marks obtained in such an assessment have to wait until the last minute to be disclosed to their owners. And when students express any related claim, they may be given a spurious reason such as ‘marks and comments are confidential to the Board of Examiners’ (Brown with Bull & Pendlebury: 1997, p.12). So, for predictive, certification-related and selective purposes, the type of students’ learning assessment that is most suitable is summative assessment. Therefore in these cases, summative assessment, i.e. final and norm-referenced, should be deliberately planned and properly carried out at the end of substantive periods of learning and teaching, though it should also be followed by an informational and didactic feedback to students without a long delay so as to make a contribution to learning at least, let alone teaching. Indeed, as Broadfoot (1996b, p.44) puts it, “although there must be a form of ‘summative’ assessment when there are decisions to be made about alternative routes in the educational system, these decisions may be increasingly in the form of qualitative differentiation between different educational courses rather than a simple pass/fail selection system, and be based on informal discussion between teacher […] and pupil”. In this passage, the author used the term ‘pupil’ since she was referring to primary education. However, the idea also applies to secondary and even to higher education. Therefore, the word ‘pupil’ can well be replaced by ‘student’. Moreover, though they may not appear to be significant in societal terms, the teacher’s inevitable continuous assessment as well as learners’ inevitable continuous self- and peer-assessment influence very much the individual learner (Idem), and arguably constitute ‘one of the most potent forces influencing education’ (Crooks: 1988, p.476). In actual fact, research has conclusively established that formative assessment does improve learning (Black & Wiliam: 1998a, p.61) since “students take their cues from what is assessed rather than from what lecturers assert is important” (Brown with Bull & Pendlebury: Op. cit., p.7). Therefore, assessment of students’ learning should be formative for most of the time, i.e. it should be criterion-referenced and ongoing/continuous, so as to clearly contribute to the improvement and enhancement of learning and teaching. Nevertheless, according to the higher or lower level of complexity of learning objectives in consideration, summative assessment may be done within a relatively short period of teaching-andlearning, and formative assessment may also be carried out after a relatively long period of teaching-andlearning. Thus, formative assessment is not purely ongoing/continuous and summative assessment is not exclusively periodical but they both may – even should – complete each other as well (Vandevelde: 1982; Huteau: 1996; Black & Wiliam: 1998a). Brown with Bull and Pendlebury (1997) confirm this point when they write that the results of assessment may be used both for judgemental – i.e. summative – and for developmental – i.e. formative – purposes. Actually, “even the most judgemental of assessments, the award of a degree, has developmental implications. Similarly developmental assessment, such as a feedback on a group task, requires judgement” (Brown with Bull and Pendlebury: Idem, p.9). Therefore, formative assessment and summative assessment may easily be confused in practice and a good number of teachers fall into this common error of using an assessment task for one set of purposes and assuming that the results from it are also appropriate for the other set of purposes (Idem) because they don’t know that “the root of the differences between the two forms of assessment is essentially the contrast in purposes” (Williams & Ryan: 2000, p.51). This is the reason why Abernot (1993) contends that, technically, formative assessments are to be differentiated from summative assessments since the former are integrated to the learning process while the latter terminate a sequence of learning. In this respect, the same author further states that aggregating both functions seems to save time but hinders from improving each function for itself (Idem). It’s in this perspective that, for instance, Gibbs (1998, web page) distinguishes five main functions of assessment as being: “1) capturing student attention and effort; 2) generating appropriate learning activity; 3) providing feedback to the student; 4) allocating marks – to distinguish between students or to distinguish degree classifications –; [and] 5) accountability – to demonstrate to outsiders that standards are satisfactory –”. Referring to a statistical analysis of students’ marks in science at the University of Portsmouth as well as to the assessment systems in other disciplines and other institutions ‘which rely on a very small number of tasks or tests for [functions] 4 and 5, the same author (Idem, ibid.) concludes that ‘we need very little of 4 and 5’ because they don’t support learning, but “what supports learning is 1-3 and we need these functions to be performed all the time. We need to use course requirements, portfolios, self and peer assessment and a range of other devices which are strong on functions 1-3 but which do not need to address functions 4 and 5 at all [emphasis is mine].” So, this author also establishes a dichotomy between formative assessment [assessment that ensures functions 1-3] and summative assessment [assessment that ensures functions 4 and 5]. On the other hand, as earlier stated, assessment of students’ learning fulfils another major social function, that of motivation of individual students for learning. Talking of this motivation, Broadfoot (1996b, p.36) writes in these terms: “While the constrained effects of selection and certification examinations on the educational process itself may have been deplored, such examinations and the less significant tests and assessments associated with them are widely welcomed as an important source of motivation. Today, for many pupils, passing examinations is the only purpose of being in school. Any proposal to abandon competitive assessment meets with an outcry among politicians and even parents, who fear that standards will fall as a result.” The same idea is confirmed by Brown & Knight (1994, p.33) for higher education in the following terms: “Often the first question students ask is whether a course is to be assessed and they vote with their feet in unassessed components. In recent years students have become more strategic in their study patterns, rarely studying for the love of learning alone, but concentrating their energies on what will get them a better degree or a higher project mark. […] Studying can be a disheartening experience without assessment”. Though not denying the importance of intrinsic motivation, these authors (Idem) further conclude that summative assessment can have considerable power to encourage learning, partly through providing this extrinsic motivation that is so necessary. In addition, this motivational function is also confirmed by the interim results of an online survey on assessment in universities and colleges published by Deliberations on July 26th, 1996. This survey consisted of nine questions that were asked of nineteen recipients/respondents of whom twelve were from the United Kingdom and one each from Sweden, Italy, Finland, United States of America, Canada, Germany and Australia. Of this survey whose nine questions aimed at provoking debate on assessment in higher education, the first conclusion was that “assessment is the prime motivator for student effort: it’s what makes them work hard” (Deliberations: 1996, web page). Nevertheless, concerning this motivation of students towards learning, provision should be made for the following four observations: Firstly, the motivation generated by competitive examinations does not benefit all the students, especially those “whose assessments are rarely positive enough to motivate them to try harder, and for whom no very tempting bait can be offered in an educational system that recognizes in its assessment procedures only one kind of ability – the kind which, by definition, they do not have” (Broadfoot: 1996b, p.36). In actual fact, a good number of students are rather de-motivated for ‘fear of failure’, especially those whose self-esteem is progressively eroded by poor results leading them to acquire ‘learned helplessness’ and develop anxiety that inhibits them from trying hard with tests/examinations or any other academic task (Broadfoot: 1996a, p.28). This observation is corroborated by Gipps (1999) when she writes that classrooms in which assessment focuses on comparison and competition with others are likely to negatively affect children who compare unfavourably. On this point, the same author goes on writing that “children’s evaluations of their ability and feelings toward themselves are more negative when the classroom climate is focused on winning, outperforming one another, or surpassing some normative standard than when children focus on trying hard, improving their performance, or just participating” (Gipps: Op. cit., p.383). Secondly, the genuinely intensive activity of learning fostered by this kind of examination-driven motivation is flawed by being expended on the superficial rather than the profound (Durkheim: 1977; Broadfoot: 1996b). Put in other words, exam motivation encourages surface rather than deep learning which is seen as an important goal of higher education (Brown & Knight: 1994). Already in 1924, comparing the system of university teaching-and-learning in the eighteenth century with this exam-driven one that came into force in subsequent years, John Beresford commented as follows: “If that system could be notoriously abused by the lazy, stupid, or unscrupulous student, it at least had this merit, that it left the student who had a brain really worth cultivating to cultivate it himself. At present there is, perhaps, some danger of the frequent lecture system developing into a sort of frenzy, in which lecturer vies with lecturer in pouring information into the student with an eye always on the inevitable examination, and rivers of outpoured information are of less value than the smallest spring of knowledge which the student has sought, and found himself” (Woodforde: 1981, p.161). Thirdly, along with their spirit of competition and comparison, examinations entail the risk of cheating especially when the stakes involved are high in an attempt to avoid failure on the one hand, and to satisfy parents’ high expectations demanding good grades as well as school’s pressure valuing success on the other hand (Niels: 1995). In actual fact, “the pressure to succeed, particularly on high-stakes tests, can drive students to consider extreme measures” (Kleiner & Lord: 2002, p.2) since “for too many students and their parents, getting that diploma – that scholarship, that grant – is more important than acquiring knowledge” (Idem, ibid.). Furthermore, especially for higher education in the ‘developing world’, the stakes to succeed in tertiary education [to ensure a better life, i.e. to secure better job opportunities, a better livelihood, and a better social value] being higher as countries are economically destitute and insecure with rampant unemployment and hardship, the pressure to make this success possible is stronger and the process severely competitive entailing greater propensity to resort to cheating for many students (Teferra: 2001). In actual fact, “numerous developing countries currently face serious problems of academic misconduct in their educational institutions. Reports from countries such as Pakistan, Bangladesh, India, and Nigeria reveal that the situation has reached such a staggering proportion that it involves not only students, teachers, exam-paper setters, exam-board officials, examiners, tabulators, supervisors in exam centers, but also implicates parents, law officers, high-level politicians, and gangs. Recently, university students in India clashed with police demanding full permission to use unfair means in examinations [The News, 1999. DI Khan Varsity students demand right to cheat. Pakistan (9 May)]. Educational administrators strive to curb this problem by taking various measures. The challenge, however, gets formidable when either powerful people get involved in the act, or where cheating appears to be a pervasive phenomenon. In India, for example, a vice-chancellor was fired when he refused to budge to a pressure by a powerful politician whose spouse was found cheating (Personal communication). In Nigeria, one report blames a resignation of the vice-chancellor of a major national university on ‘admission and grades [that] were being sold openly’ [Ayittey, G.B.N., 1999. Africa in Chaos, New York, St Martins Griffin]” (Teferra, Op. cit. p.164). However, this phenomenon of cheating is also rife in Rwanda (see Imvaho Nshya No. 1427: 2002 and Imvaho Nshya No. 1445: 2002; on the other hand, in this respect, in its statistics the Rwanda National Examinations Council [RNEC] reports cases of students having cheated in national examinations for the 2001-2002 and 2002-2003 academic years as follows: Primary Education, 183 cases in 2001-2002 and 265 cases in 2002-2003; First Cycle/Ordinary Level/Lower Secondary Education, 45 cases in 2001-2002 and 72 cases in 2002-2003; Second Cycle/Advanced Level/Upper Secondary Education, 136 cases in 2000-2001 and 50 cases in 2001-2002) and certainly also in all other countries. It should therefore not be pinpointed and viewed as if it was a monstrosity inherent to students due to their innate dishonesty especially since cheating, bribery and other unfair practices characteristic of corruption are rampant among adults in the wider community. Cheating should rather be considered as ‘a general social ill’ (Teferra, Op. cit. p.170). Actually, as reported by Kleiner & Lord (Op. cit., p.3), “the US News poll found that one in four adults believes he has to lie and cheat to get ahead, and it seems this mentality is communicated to children. ‘Students see adults – parents, businessmen, lawyers – violating ethical standards and receiving a slap on the wrist, if anything, and quickly conclude that if that’s acceptable behavior in the larger society, what’s wrong with a little cheating in high school or college’ says Rutgers Professor McCabe. ‘Too often the messages from parents and teachers come off as: you need to do everything you can, at all costs, to get to the top. You never see any gratification for being a good person anymore’ says Andrey James, a senior at North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics in Durham. ‘Once you get to high school, it’s all about who has the grades and who’s going to get the most scholarships’.” For a similar observation in Rwanda pointing out easy cheating in the larger community, see Imvaho Nshya No. 1427 (2002). Finally, academic cheating is likely to occur all the more when examinations – which “serve, among others, to promote or dismiss students, to establish ranks or grades, to determine or follow up student achievements, and to confer diplomas” (Teferra: 2001, p.164) – come at the end of the process of teaching-and-learning, covering an overwhelmingly broad material that overload students while, on the other hand, concentrating on the ‘bottom line’ of low-order outcomes made up by facts with their quality of being quickly forgotten (Niels: 1995), for they are easier to examine.

**Assessment for the Exercise of Academic Power and Inherent Challenges**

As observed by Gipps (1999, p.355), ‘power and control’ can be used as analytical devices of educational assessment both at the level of the system or at the level of the classroom, and the articulation between them can be seen trough educational tests and examinations, which are a means of exerting power over individuals and groups (Gipps: Op. cit.; Benveniste: 2002) and one of the most powerful instruments for locating each individual’s place in society (Gipps: Op. cit.). Moreover, the education system is viewed as a major regulator of the social order that always works in the interests of particular ‘dominant groups’ determining which individuals will reach positions of power and privilege, thus ensuring social control (Idem). However, power in the relationship between students and teachers in the act of assessment is still overlooked although it is a key factor that must come into frame (Idem) especially as it has a strong effect on the practice of students’ learning assessment. In actual fact “there has been little work on teachers’ identities and on how these shape their understandings of pedagogy and their choices of pedagogic activities” as well as “on the institutional learning setting as an active constituent of learning, and not simply a background to learning” (Cullen et al.: 2002, p.44). Of paramount importance is the human being’s aspiration to social welfare (Spicker: 1988; Rees: 1991), which includes security/safety and absence of dangerous threats. According to Spicker (1988), insecurity, conflict or ‘social crisis’ arises when power is concentrated in relatively few hands of a ‘ruling elite’ or ‘dominant class’ that exerts this power ‘at the expense of others’. This author (Idem, p.99) defines the ‘ruling elite’ as a fairly small cadre of people that hold the power of making all the important decisions which affect other people’s lives. In adaptation to Schmitter’s social model (Idem), the traditional education system may be viewed as a ‘corporatist society’ in which teachers and educational institutions’ administrators as the ‘ruling elite’ on the one hand and students as the ruled on the other hand constitute two ‘corporations’ or “singular, compulsory, non-competitive, hierarchically ordered and functionally differentiated categories” (Idem, p.100). In higher education however, the relationship between these two categories is often conflicting as the latter are dangerously threatened by the former’s exercise of power to safeguard their interests through assessment as confirmed by Ramsden’s following two reports: Firstly, “the assessment of students is a serious and often tragic enterprise. […] It is as if they [some lecturers] measure their own worth as teachers in terms of the difficulty of the questions and the complexity of the procedures they can devise to test and grade their students and to deter cheating” (Ramsden: 1992, p.181). […]“They often focus on the divisive and competitive elements of grading, and instead of showing respect for learners as partners on a road to understanding, treat them as unworthy of trust; they may reveal an obsessive interest in security and cheating and exalt techniques for reducing the incidence of fraud” (Ramsden: 1992, p.185). Secondly, “assessment is all hedged around with a thick bureaucratic mystique designed to form an effective barrier against the inquisitive. The mystique often lightly clothes a profound ignorance about measurement and testing and their relation to teaching and learning” (Ramsden: 1992, p.181). […] “They [some lecturers] seem to maintain that some kind of absolute standard of validity in assessment is possible, as if every measure and its interpretation could be set free of its errors – in student assessment if not in any other field of human endeavour. Instead of seeing feedback on learning as a primary task of all teaching, they either ignore it altogether or place it in a rigidly separate category from making a judgement about a student’s achievement relative to other students” (Ramsden: 1992, p.185). In order to resolve this conflict that is rampant between these two ‘factions’, what is needed is a ‘dualist’ – not ‘pluralist’ since there are only two ‘corporations’ – or, better, a consensual model of power exercise that may translate into students’ participation or involvement in their learning and its monitoring/management as these are of great importance for their welfare and since learning is a cooperative venture between learners and teachers (Harris & Bell: 1994). And this ought to be done essentially by the means of students’ learning, which should comprise an important formative component that would be collaboratively managed by the teacher, the students’ selves and their peers through individual feedback and the ensuing meta-learning. Only then after having made sure that understanding has taken place would follow the summative component – testing/examination – for classificatory but not selective purpose so as to avoid the waste of ‘scarce resources allocated to higher education’ (Gipps: 1999, p.356) and already invested in those students. These didactical strategies of democratisation and collaboration, individualised/differentiated pedagogy, alleviated competition and belated selection are otherwise acknowledged by Perrenoud (1989, Heading 4: La fabrication de la fabrication) as being among the measures intended to curb academic failure of learners in general. Teachers therefore must be helped to understand that this process of power sharing between themselves and students – which Gipps (Op. cit.) calls ‘power with’ instead of ‘power over’ students while Broadfoot (1996a) calls it ‘partnership’ instead of ‘power’ – is not aimed at diminishing their role by passing responsibility for assessment to students, but that it is rather an additional responsibility the teacher must take on in order to develop the students’ ability to monitor and regulate their learning themselves (Gipps: Op. cit.). In order to help teachers to reconstruct their identities as they involve students as partners in both learning and assessment without giving up responsibility for students’ learning and progress, “we need to bring out into the open the nature of the power relationship in teaching and assessment and point out the possibility of reconstructing this relationship. […] All of these acts are […] both possible and necessary if assessment is to be more equitable and fulfil its promise to aid and support high-quality learning” (Idem, p.387).

**The affective impact**

It is a common occurrence that assessment impact the learner’s moods, their victorious moments as well as their haunted despair as the student makes an emotional investment in an assessment and expect some ‘return’ (Higgins et al., 2001). Despite its discernible emotional attachment, this aspect of assessment consequence has hardly been elaborated in literature, evidenced by just 19 relevant studies in the review on the impact of summative assessment on motivation for learning conducted by Harlen and Deakin Crick (2003). Though emotion is highly subjective, assessment is alleged to inherently induce stress and tension. Coutts et al. (2011)’s quantitative search (n=137) using the Intrinsic Motivation Inventory and the Brunel Mood Scale provided concrete evidence for the impact of assessment on mood and motivation in first-year students. Most significantly, they found a time coincidence between the major changes in mood and the greatest number of due assessment items per student in week seven. More specifically, the increasing amount of assessment was alleged to associate with an increase in negative moods such as tension, depression, anger, fatigue and confusion and a decrease in the positive mood of vigour and the intrinsic motivation variables of interest/enjoyment and perceived competence. Their claim is supported by the participants in Drew (2001)’s study who viewed the pressure of coursework, the fear of failure, confusion, being overwhelmed and even ‘bogged down’ with too closed deadlines as the downsides of assessment on learners’ emotion. They, however, viewed effective feedback as being critical to build their selfconfidence, helping them with self-evaluation and being a powerful motivator, a major vehicle for learning. Yet, the extent of affective impact on mature students depends heavily on their self-esteem (Young, 2000). ‘There is a tendency for students with low self-esteem to take any comment as an indictment of themselves; high self-esteem students see the comments as bearing on their work only’ (ibid., p. 414). Most noticeably, the reciprocal relation between test and anxiety so called ‘test anxiety’ has been the theme of discussion by many assessment researchers in different levels of the education system (Wine, 1971; McDonald, 2001; Norton et al., 2001). The review by McDonald (2001) yielded considerable evidence of the prevalence of the fear of tests and its detrimental effect on test performance of children in compulsory education. Pollard et al. (2000) argued that the anxiety that the pupils felt might be a consequence of being exposed to greater risk as performance was attributed with higher stakes by the teachers. Also on anxiety but in higher education, both Joughin (2007) and Huxham et al. (2010) reached the same conclusion that oral assessment might induce more anxiety than written assessment as the former is associated with a richer conception of the oral task, a deeper understanding and a need to explain to others. While Joughin (2007) attributed that anxiety to the relative lack of experience in oral assessment, many students thought that it is more useful than written assessment (Huxham et al., 2010) . On the bright side, if appropriately conducted, assessment is a sharp tool to empower the learners (Leach et al., 2001). By using a version of criterion referencing for the learners to select the evidence they will present in portfolios, allowing them to choose and/or negotiate the criteria, and giving them the opportunity to assess their own work and contribute to their grade in a negotiated process, the research group was able to design an assessment regime that balances between the obligation to the society-atlarge and the need to respect individual and cultural differences. In other words, their model strives to reach a balance between ‘external fairness’ and ‘internal fairness’ with the internal being a key ingredient in empowerment. Though the impact varied due to the learners’ varied perceptions of assessment and the power relation between them and the teachers, several plausible empowerment influences were observed such as their decision-making, their control over self-assessment, their judgement of issues, their challenge and resistance to hegemonic ideas, their establishment of criteria, and their affirmation of knowledge

**CHAPTER THREE**

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

**3.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, we described the research procedure for this study. A research methodology is a research process adopted or employed to systematically and scientifically present the results of a study to the research audience viz. a vis, the study beneficiaries.

**3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN**

Research designs are perceived to be an overall strategy adopted by the researcher whereby different components of the study are integrated in a logical manner to effectively address a research problem. In this study, the researcher employed the survey research design. This is due to the nature of the study whereby the opinion and views of people are sampled. According to Singleton & Straits, (2009), Survey research can use quantitative research strategies (e.g., using questionnaires with numerically rated items), qualitative research strategies (e.g., using open-ended questions), or both strategies (i.e., mixed methods). As it is often used to describe and explore human behaviour, surveys are therefore frequently used in social and psychological research.

**3.3 POPULATION OF THE STUDY**

According to Udoyen (2019), a study population is a group of elements or individuals as the case may be, who share similar characteristics. These similar features can include location, gender, age, sex or specific interest. The emphasis on study population is that it constitutes of individuals or elements that are homogeneous in description.

This study was carried to the impact of students assessment on the quality of education. Selected primary schools in Odeda Local Government Area form the population of the study.

**3.4 SAMPLE SIZE DETERMINATION**

A study sample is simply a systematic selected part of a population that infers its result on the population. In essence, it is that part of a whole that represents the whole and its members share characteristics in like similitude (Udoyen, 2019). In this study, the researcher adopted the convenient sampling method to determine the sample size.

**3.5 SAMPLE SIZE SELECTION TECHNIQUE AND PROCEDURE**

According to Nwana (2005), sampling techniques are procedures adopted to systematically select the chosen sample in a specified away under controls. This research work adopted the convenience sampling technique in selecting the respondents from the total population.

In this study, the researcher adopted the convenient sampling method to determine the sample size. Out of all the entire population of Selected primary schools in Odeda Local Government Area the researcher conveniently selected 80 participant out of the overall population as the sample size for this study. According to Torty(2021), a sample of convenience is the terminology used to describe a sample in which elements have been selected from the target population on the basis of their accessibility or convenience to the researcher.

**3.6 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT AND ADMINISTRATION**

The research instrument used in this study is the questionnaire. A survey containing series of questions were administered to the enrolled participants. The questionnaire was divided into two sections, the first section inquired about the responses demographic or personal data while the second sections were in line with the study objectives, aimed at providing answers to the research questions. Participants were required to respond by placing a tick at the appropriate column. The questionnaire was personally administered by the researcher.

**3.7 METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION**

Two methods of data collection which are primary source and secondary source were used to collect data. The primary sources was the use of questionnaires, while the secondary sources include textbooks, internet, journals, published and unpublished articles and government publications.

**3.8 METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS**

The hypothesis test was conducted using the Chi-Square statistical tool, SPSS v.23.

**3.9 VALIDITY OF THE STUDY**

Validity referred here is the degree or extent to which an instrument actually measures what is intended to measure. An instrument is valid to the extent that is tailored to achieve the research objectives. The researcher constructed the questionnaire for the study and submitted to the project supervisor who used his intellectual knowledge to critically, analytically and logically examine the instruments relevance of the contents and statements and then made the instrument valid for the study.

**3.10 RELIABILITY OF THE STUDY**

The reliability of the research instrument was determined. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used to determine the reliability of the instrument. A co-efficient value of 0.68 indicated that the research instrument was relatively reliable. According to (Taber, 2017) the range of a reasonable reliability is between 0.67 and 0.87.

**3.11 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION**

The study was approved by the Project Committee of the Department. Informed consent was obtained from all study participants before they were enrolled in the study. Permission was sought from the relevant authorities to carry out the study. Date to visit the place of study for questionnaire distribution was put in place in advance.

**CHAPTER FOUR**

**DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS**

**INTRODUCTION**

This chapter presents the analysis of data derived through the questionnaire and key informant interview administered on the respondents in the study area. The analysis and interpretation were derived from the findings of the study. The data analysis depicts the simple frequency and percentage of the respondents as well as interpretation of the information gathered. A total of eighty (80) questionnaires were administered to respondents of which only seventy-seven (77) were returned and validated. This was due to irregular, incomplete and inappropriate responses to some questionnaire. For this study a total of 77 was validated for the analysis.

**4.1 DATA PRESENTATION**

**Table 4.2: Demographic profile of the respondents**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Demographic information** | **Frequency** | **Percent** |
| **Gender**  Male |  |  |
| 42 | 54.5% |
| Female | 35 | 45.5% |
| **Age** |  |  |
| 20-25 | 15 | 19.5% |
| 25-30 | 19 | 24.7% |
| 31-35 | 23 | 29.9% |
| 36+ | 20 | 25.9% |
| **Marital Status** |  |  |
| Single | 10 | 12.9% |
| Married | 64 | 83.1% |
| Separated | 0 | 0% |
| Widowed | 3 | 3.9% |
| **Education Level** |  |  |
| WAEC | 00 | 0% |
| BS.c | 35 | 45.5% |
| MS.c | 42 | 55.5% |
| MBA | 00 | 0% |

**Source: Field Survey, 2021**

**4.2 TEST OF HYPOTHESIS**

**H0:** there is no problem effecting exaction of continuous assessment in primary schools.

**H1:** there is problem effecting exaction of continuous assessment in primary schools.

**H0:** there is no instrument used continuous assessment to bring out quality education.

**H2:** there is an instrument used continuous assessment to bring out quality education.

**Hypothesis One**

**Table 1:** there is no problem effecting exaction of continuous assessment in primary schools

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Options** | **Fo** | **Fe** | **Fo – Fe** | **(Fo - Fe)2** | **(Fo˗-Fe)2/Fe** |
| Yes | 38 | 25.6 | 12.4 | 153.8 | 6.0 |
| No | 10 | 25.6 | -15.6 | 243.4 | 9.5 |
| Undecided | 29 | 25.6 | 3.4 | 11.7 | 0.5 |
| **Total** | **77** | **77** |  |  | **16.0** |

**Source: Extract from Contingency Table**

Degree of freedom = (r-1) (c-1)

(3-1) (2-1)

(2) (1)

= 2

At 0.05 significant level and at a calculated degree of freedom, the critical table value is 5.991.

**Findings**

The calculated X2 = 16.0 and is greater than the table value of X2 at 0.05 significant level which is 5.991.

**Decision**

Since the X2 calculated value is greater than the critical table value that is 16.0 is greater than 5.991, the Null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis which states there is problem effecting exaction of continuous assessment in primary schools is accepted.

**Hypothesis Two**

**Table 2:** there is no instrument used continuous assessment to bring out quality education

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Options** | **Fo** | **Fe** | **Fo – Fe** | **(Fo - Fe)2** | **(Fo˗-Fe)2/Fe** |
| SA | 26 | 19.25 | 6.8 | 46.24 | 2.4 |
| A | 25 | 19.25 | 6.8 | 33.64 | 1.7 |
| SD | 11 | 19.25 | -8.3 | 68.9 | 3.6 |
| D | 15 | 19.25 | -4.3 | 18.5 | 0.9 |
| **Total** | **77** | **77** |  |  | **8.6** |

**Source: Extract from Contingency Table**

Degree of freedom = (r-1) (c-1)

(4-1) (3-1)

(3) (1)

= 3

At 0.05 significant level and at a calculated degree of freedom, the critical table value is 7.815.

**Findings**

The calculated X2 = 8.6 and is greater than the table value of X2 at 0.05 significant level which is 7.815.

**Decision**

Since the X2 calculated value is greater than the critical table value that is 8.6 is greater than 7.815, the Null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis which states that there is instrument used continuous assessment to bring out quality education is accepted.

**CHAPTER FIVE**

**SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

**5.1 Introduction**

It is important to ascertain that the objective of this study was to ascertain the impact of students assessment on the quality of education . In the preceding chapter, the relevant data collected for this study were presented, critically analyzed and appropriate interpretation given. In this chapter, certain recommendations made which in the opinion of the researcher will be of benefits in addressing the challenges of the impact of students assessment on the quality of education

**Summary**

This study was on the impact of students assessment on the quality of education. Three objectives were raised which included: To find out the problem effecting exaction of continuous assessment in primary schools, to find out are reason of establishing continuous assessment in primary schools, to find out the instrument used continuous assessment to bring out quality education and to work out the way continuous assessment can be moderated and unified in all primary schools. A total of 77 responses were received and validated from the enrolled participants where all respondents were drawn from selected primary schools in Odeda Local Government Area. Hypothesis was tested using Chi-Square statistical tool (SPSS).

**CONCLUSION**

According to Middlehurst (1997) education provides an interesting microcosm of the quality education and a clear illustration of the issues involved in determining what quality is and how it can be achieved, assured and improved (p.46). Moreover, according to McDonald, “the underlying principles of constructive curriculum alignment, globalization, and quality assurance need to be integrated into academic programmes.

**Recommendation**

Government should employ qualified teachers for better teaching of student and good assessment

Should facilities to schools for easy learning

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**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**PLEASE TICK [√] YOUR MOST PREFERRED CHOICE AND AVOID TICKING TWICE ON A QUESTION**

**SECTION A**

**PERSONAL INFORMATION**

**Gender**

Male [ ] Female [ ]

**Age**

25-35 [ ]

36-46[ ]

47 and above[ ]

**SECTION B**

**QUESTION 1**: there is impact of assessment on student academic performance?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **OPTIONS** | **PLEASE TICK** |
| Yes |  |
| No |  |
| Undecided |  |

**QUESTION 2**: assessment show student level of knowledge acquired.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **OPTIONS** | **PLEASE TICK** |
| Yes |  |
| No |  |
| Undecided |  |

**QUESTION 3:** assessment motivate students?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **OPTIONS** | **PLEASE TICK** |
| Yes |  |
| No |  |
| Undecided |  |

**QUESTION 4**: assessment cannot give students quality education?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **OPTIONS** | **PLEASE TICK** |
| Yes |  |
| No |  |
| Undecided |  |

**QUESTION 5:** assessment give student quality education

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **OPTIONS** | **PLEASE TICK** |
| Yes |  |
| No |  |
| Undecided |  |