

A HANDBOOK
ON
EVALUATION RESEARCH

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Pen Services, Ibadan, Oyo State.

DEDICATION

Dedicated to all those who are hungry for genuine education and will conduct evaluation research.

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FOREWARD

This collection of quality research papers and conceptual essays on educational evaluation is a useful companion to researchers, students at the tertiary level, system and school administrators, as well as the practising teacher.

For the researcher, the studies in this volume cover a wide spectrum of quantitative/empirical approaches to evaluation research in Education. Students in higher institutions will find in the book information and knowledge on evaluation theories and principles, in addition to the deepened insight they will have on evaluation research methods. Education sector managers (both at the systems and the school levels) will find in the book a useful guide to practice, especially in the area of continuous assessment. For practising teachers, the general principles of educational evaluation have been brought straight to their doorsteps.

This is, therefore, a book with a multi-client appeal. I commend it to its variety of potential users as a key to a better understanding of the principles of educational evaluation and a source of enrichment for the practical application of the principles in schools and classrooms.

Prof. Pai Obanya
(International Education Strategist)



PREFACE

This nine chapter 87 page book contains a selection of research reports on educational evaluation. The various contributions have in one way or another focused on how to improve the quality of education at all levels of the education system of Nigeria. So much has been said about the quality of education which is provided in educational institutions in the various levels of the educational system of the country. Education is, no doubt, of great importance in the development of any country. It is, therefore, desirable that measures should be taken to improve the quality of education in Nigeria. The studies which have been reported in this book are a valuable contribution to finding solutions to the decline in the quality of education in the country.

The editors of this book commend the various contributors and express their appreciation of the high quality of their contributions and their commitment to finding solutions to the problems of improving the quality of education in the country which have been addressed in this book. We also thank the contributors for their patience.

I sincerely commend Dr. Eugenia A. Okwilagwe with whom I have edited this book. I express my appreciation of her effort to ensure the publication of this book; but for her, this book would probably not have seen the light of day. Sometimes when it seemed that my interest in the publication of this book was waning, she pushed hard to revive it. She showed great commitment to the publication of this book.

It is hoped that in the not distant future there will be a regular publication of a journal of research studies in educational evaluation for which there would seem to be an urgent need.

Professor Joseph O. Obemeata

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The Roles of Guidance Counsellors in Continuous Assessment Implementation in Selected Secondary Schools

E. Adenike Emeke

Introduction

Assessment of a learner plays a very important role in the decision that will be made about the educational advancement of that learner (Emeke, 1996). It is therefore very pertinent that the assessment should be thorough and should take into account all the domains of behaviour of the learner (Bajah, 1984, Yoloye, 1984, Emeke, 1999). Continuous Assessment with its four major characteristics of being systematic, cumulative, comprehensive and guidance oriented has been found to be an assessment type that takes cognizance of the cognitive, affective and psychomotor behaviour domains of learners. It is in reaping the positive values of Continuous Assessment that Nigeria adopted the use of the assessment method for all tiers of its educational system. This assessment procedure as packaged by Nigeria's National Policy on Education should make prominent use of Guidance Counsellors for the effective implementation of the procedure. As stated out in the Implementation Policy, each secondary school should have at least a Guidance Counsellor who will be the coordinator of the School Continuous Assessment Implementation Committee, and who would carry out other scheduled duties such as overseeing the keeping of various Continuous Assessment records, guiding teachers in the use of appropriate assessment tools, filling the affective and psychomotor portions of the student cumulative record folder, organising vocational and career talks for students, administering standardized achievement tests to students to supplement teacher-made achievement tests; and attending to students' personal problems.

Secondary School Education and Guidance Counselling

A major part of the focus of this paper which addresses continuous assessment at secondary school level, addresses assessment at a

developmental stage of the life of an individual when guidance and counselling if made available can be most profitable to the individual. The secondary schools are filled with youths and adolescents of the 11-16 years age bracket - individuals who are known to be at their peak of the ideative stage, who pursue issues including academic issues with vigour and candor, who explore the career options they would want to pursue in the future, and who if faced with negative situations find it difficult stabilizing if not given moral support. These individuals therefore need the services of guidance counsellors and/or psychologists as advocated by Makinde and Geshinde (1975), Fredrickson and Popken (1972), Emeke (1999) Eysenk (1994), McKenna, McNamaria and Terry (1997).

At the secondary school level, and indeed at almost all educational levels, outcome at assessment is a product of input of such academic related factors as study habit, attitude to home work and assignment, writing of notes and organisation of written work, consultation with teachers, and discussion with peers among others.

Study habit according to Akinboye (1983) and quoted by Yoloye (1999) refers to "the purposeful behaviour patterns geared towards learning, perceiving, questioning, reading and reviewing in an attempt to master an assignment." The study habit adopted by an individual which can be poor and ineffective, or effective and well planned, will definitely affect a student's performance in a subject when assignment in that subject is carried out. In a situation, where a student's study habit is poor and ineffective, the intervention of a guidance counsellor in piloting the student to achieve a good study habit can be fruitful before assessment is carried out. Closely tied to study habit is the issue of concentration. Concentrating when studying is very important. If the individual is unable to concentrate during learning and studying, then the individual will not be able to assimilate, recall and excel in the subject when assessment is carried out. The guidance counsellor available in secondary schools as part of the Continuous Assessment component of the 6-3-3-4 system of education should be at hand to help steer aright the concentration habit of students by helping the student realise that the first stage in concentration is attention and dispersal of distractions. An uninterrupted attention produces concentration in study.

Writing of notes and organizing of written work are often problematic to students, and yet these are issues that can quietly and indirectly affect a student's outcome or performance when assessment is carried out.

According to Fabel (1999) written work is an important aspect of education which helps in the expression of thoughts. However, how well a student is able to achieve this will depend on his/her ability to make sure that the ideas are expressed in concise and correct language. The achievement of the above can be enhanced by the presence of a guidance counsellor in the school system.

Students' consultation with their teachers in and out of classroom situations no doubt enhances learning and invariably performance at assessment. During consultations, the students' interest, difficult areas and special needs in the subjects are often discussed. There is openness and mutual effort to solve the learner's study problems, and in some cases, suggestion of further activities for the student could be made by the teacher. For students who have not imbibed the value of consultation with teachers, the encouragement given by the guidance counsellor to such students either during individual or group counselling can bring about a turn-around for the beneficial use of the procedure by the students. Through the activities and further remedial, the student will be able to learn and enhance the chances to perform better in any assessment that may come up thereafter. All the above points underscore the importance of the guidance counsellor in the secondary schools as agents of enhancing performance if they engage in their roles effectively.

In the procedure of Continuous Assessment, guidance counsellors are meant to play prominent roles. But are guidance counsellors effectively fulfilling the objective of having them in the Continuous Assessment procedure. It is in the bid to find answers to this and other issues that this study evaluated the roles of guidance counsellors in the implementation of Continuous Assessment in some selected secondary schools in Oyo State.

Research Question

Are the guidance counsellors in Oyo State Secondary Schools effectively carrying out their expected roles in the implementation of Continuous Assessment?

Sample

Twenty secondary schools were randomly selected for the study but because four of the secondary schools did not have guidance counsellors, sixteen counsellors were used eventually. Sixteen guidance counsellors made up of 9 in urban secondary schools and 7 in rural secondary schools

spanning over 8 Local government Areas (LGAs) in Oyo State were used for the study. The LGAs and the secondary schools were randomly selected, but with these over, the guidance counsellors became captive samples since only one guidance counsellor was available in each school. There were 10 (62.5%) females and 6 males (20.5%), with only 2 of the females in rural schools. They were all professionally trained guidance counsellors and their mean-age was 36 years.

Instrument

A 33-item questionnaire developed by the researcher and titled Counsellors' Questionnaire on Continuous Assessment Practice (QOCAP) was responded to by the 16 guidance counsellors. Using the Kuder-Richardson reliability method, a reliability index of 0.80 was obtained for the instrument. The instrument had six sections addressing: facilities available to counsellors, duties performed by counsellors, problem areas covered by the counsellors, initiator of counselling sessions, workload of counsellors, and suggestion for improvement of Continuous Assessment practice.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using frequency counts and percentages

Results and Discussion

Tables 1-5 give answer to the single research question raised, covering five of the six sections of the instrument used.

Table 1
Facilities Available to the Counsellor

Item	Statement	Yes	%
1.	I have an office to myself	4	25.00
2.	I share office with a teacher	5	31.25
3	I use the staff-room with other teachers	7	43.75
4.	I have essential facilities like cabinets, file jackets standardized tests etc.	8	50.00

Table 1 shows that only 50% of counsellors reported that they had essential facilities to work with. Many of them also did not have offices to themselves, and either shared office with one or more other teachers.

It cannot be reasonably disputed that the availability of essential facilities to any worker can improve his productivity. It is therefore, discouraging that all the counsellors reported that they did not have essential facilities to work with. The implementation of Continuous Assessment requires the opening of files on each student, contents of which the counsellor can keep as part of the cumulative record on the student. Since the counsellor is expected to deal with personal and deep emotional problems of students which must be kept with the utmost of confidentiality. If the records must not fly around or be available to everybody, then the counsellor must have locked up file cabinets or chest or drawers. Standardized tests with which the counsellor can tap such variables as the vocational interests of students, their academic aptitude and their social relationship must be made available to the counsellor. This result indicate that the purchase of materials, equipment and facilities for the enrichment of the effective implementation of all aspects of Continuous Assessment must be taken as priority by Oyo State government and school authorities.

Table 2

Duties Performed by the Counsellor

Item	Statement	Yes	%	No	%	Total
6	Coordinating the Continuous Assessment Committee	15	93.75	01	6.25	16
7.	Doing the calculations involved in Continuous Assessment	13	81.25	03	18.75	16
8.	Overseeing the keeping of various Continuous Assessment records	12	75.00	04	25.00	16
9.	Seeing to the storage and Security of test items for the school	11	68.75	05	31.25	16
10.	Guiding teachers in the use of appropriate assessment tools	14	87.50	02	12.50	16
11.	Filling the affective and psychomotor portions of the student's Cumulative Card! Book	6	37.50	10	62.50	16
12.	Liaising with the Principal and Class Teachers on placement of students into Arts, Commercial or Science streams	16	100.00	-	-	16
13.	Organizing vocational and career talks for students	15	93.75	01	6.25	16
14.	Organizing talks/seminar for teachers on the implementation of Continuous Assessment	7	43.75	09	56.25	16
15.	Developing and giving to teachers assessment tools foreffective and psychomotor areas	3	18.75	13	81.25	16
16.	Administering standardized achievement tests to students to supplement teacher made achievements tests	5	31.25	11	68.75	16

The results indicated that a high percentage of counsellors performed the duties expected of them in Continuous Assessment as revealed by Table 2.

The performance of these duties by counsellors will very likely promote the effective implementation of Continuous Assessment in schools. The curriculum content involved in the training of a counsellor emphasizes a great deal, the value of using and keeping achievement, affective and psychomotor assessment records, which happen to be the same category of assessment tools and records involved in Continuous Assessment. The use of a variety of assessment tools and records make Continuous Assessment comprehensive, and the adequate keeping of the records for future use and assessment of the learner can contribute to making Continuous Assessment cumulative, since any discussion made at any point on the students takes into account all previous discussions about him/her. With as high a percentage as 87.50% of the counsellors in this study claiming that they guide the teachers in their schools in the use of the various assessment tools on which learners are assessed and guided, then it could be reasonably assumed that the assessment and the guidance would be reliable.

It would however, appear from Table 2 that the counsellors need to improve upon their performance of other aspects of their duties such as:

- (i) Organizing talks and seminars for teachers on the implementation of Continuous Assessment - these talks and seminars will go a long way, to help teachers who have not had the opportunity of attending the government mounted seminars on Continuous Assessment gain knowledge of the details of what the implementation of Continuous Assessment entails since new teachers are always employed from time to time. It will also update the knowledge of the few who had attended the government mounted seminars.
- (ii) giving teachers assessment tools for the non-cognitive domains - this is important since one of the objectives of Continuous Assessment is to depart from the old method of focusing only on the cognitive domain, but rather take into account, the non-cognitive aspects of the learner since the learner is a composite individual whose learning can be affected by any aspect of his/her life.
- (iii) Administering standardized achievement tests - these tests if

administered will definitely supplement the teacher made tests and enhance the robustness of the assessment of the very important cognitive aspect of the learner.

Table 3

Work Load of Counsellor

Item	Statement	Yes	%
29	I work only as a Counsellor	5	31.25
30.	As a regular classroom teacher	-	
31.	As a counsellor and a teacher	9	56.25
32.	More as a teacher than as a counsellor	2	12.50
Total		16	100

This result reveals that a large percentage (68.75 % (56.25 +, 12.50) of the counsellors carry the load of the regular classroom teachers along with their expected work load as counsellors. Some of the counsellors in an interview held with them said that they carry as many as 18 teaching periods in a week.

The above scenario does not give any counsellor the freedom and ability to carry out a thorough work as counsellor. This probably explains the earlier result where most counsellors did not organize seminars and talks, did not give out standardized achievement tests or give teachers assessment tools for the cognitive domain. A counsellor going to carry out these duties need to be relatively free of teaching duty since those other duties are pretty time-consuming.

Table 4
Problem Areas Covered by Counsellors

Item	Statement	Yes	%	No	%	Total
17	Academic Problems only	4	25.00	12	75.00	16 (100%)
18	Personal Problems only	3	18.75	13	81.25	16 (100%)
19	Vocational Problems	4	25.00	12	75.00	16 (100%)
20	More of academic and vocational problems than personal problems	11	68.75	5	31.25	16 (100%)
21	More of personal problems than academic and vocational matters	6	37.50	10	62.50	16 (100%)

Table 4 indicates that 68.75% of the counsellors dealt with more of academic and vocation related problems, than they do with the personal problems of the learners. This trend may be accounted for by the earlier finding that counsellors had no offices to themselves (See Table 1). The discussion of personal problems is known to be facilitated by an atmosphere of privacy (Bakare, 1986; NCGE and the Department of Education and Science, 2004) which may not be present in the general staff room, or offices shared with other teachers. Personal (emotional) problems have been found to have negative effect on cognitive achievement (Emeke, 1992). Discussion of personal problems with a significant other, or with a counsellor is known to enhance academic achievement (Adeyoju

that even some (18.75 %) of parents sent their children compulsorily to see the counsellor, may be an indication that even parents realize the positive roles that counsellors can play in the educational pursuits of their children.

Conclusion and Recommendation

This study has highlighted that the presence of, guidance counsellors is an integral part of the feature of the Continuous Assessment component of Nigeria's 6-3-3-4 policy on education, for the secondary schools. The study revealed that most of the Oyo State secondary schools sampled had guidance counsellors, and that these counsellors are fulfilling to a very large extent the roles they are supposed to perform in the schools to which they are posted. The guidance counsellors who need to be found in all the secondary schools, could probably perform better than they were found to be doing if the government would:

- (i) provide them with all the essential facilities they need for the efficient performance of their duties,
- (ii) post enough teachers to the secondary schools, so that the principals would not be overly using the counsellors from the regular teaching assignment of the schools, and
- (iii) have enough buildings in schools so that counsellors could have private offices to themselves, again to enhance their duties as counsellors, and for the students to benefit profitably from the expertise of the counsellor.

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