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Abstract

This study investigated school-based assessment as a determinant of students' achievement in WAEC and NECO SSCE in geography. The ex-post facto research design was employed for this study. The population of this study consisted of all the senior secondary school certificate geography candidates in the public schools in Ilorin metropolis while the target population comprised all candidates who sat for both the WAEC and NECO geography SSCE in 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 academic sessions. Ten public Senior Secondary Schools were randomly sampled. A total of five thousand-eight hundred and eighty-four (5, 884) candidates results that sat for the WAEC and NECO Geography SSCE for the academic session 2011/2012 and 2012/2013 in Ilorin metropolis were considered. Profoma and questionnaire were used to collect data. Analysis of data was carried out using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistic to test the two hypotheses postulated for this study at alpha level of 0.05. The findings revealed that there were low positive and moderate relationship in both hypotheses tested between School-Based Assessment and the students' performance in WAEC and NECO Geography SSCE respectively. Based on these findings, it was recommended that, teachers and

officers in the examination bodies indicted in manipulating school-based assessment scores should be regarded as saboteur and be made to face the same charges as those that engaged in examination malpractice.

Key Words: School –Based Assessment, Determinant, Students' Achievement, WAEC and NECO

Introduction

The education systems of most nations in the world including Nigeria are currently undergoing significant transformation. The development of any nation depends largely on the quality of her citizens, which in turn depends to a large extent on the percentage of population with a level of education adequate enough for any meaningful development and human capital resources. Therefore, Nigeria, like other countries of the world, acknowledges that "education is a vital tool for achieving national development" (National Policy on Education, 2004). To ascertain that education responds adequately to our national needs and aspirations, individual learners need to be assessed periodically and at the end of any educational programme. As a result of these reforms new, effective and practical ways of measuring, evaluating and reporting students' progress towards the various targets and learning goals are being introduced periodically (NPE, 2004).

The computation of the Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE) has two components-micro and the macro assessments (School-Based Assessment and SSCE assessment). The first component is the School-Based Assessment which is a form of formative evaluation conducted by individual schools for evaluating the progress of their students and also used for certification of SSCE programme. School-Based Assessment is an innovative but objective way of assessing the course of instruction as well the total learning outcomes in the learners (National Teachers' Institute. 2007).

One such form of School-Based Assessment is Continuous Assessment (CA) in which students are expected to be assessed in cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains. School-Based-Assessment is in three forms (pre-instruction, during and end of assessment) (National Teachers' Institute 2007). The results of these assessments are summed up from Senior School One (SS1) to Senior School Three (SS3). The cumulative scores obtained are usually computed and converted to 30% of the total obtainable scores for certification. The first reason for introducing School-Based assessment is to improve the validity of students' assessment and therefore, facilitate effective learning outcomes. The second reason is to improve the reliability of assessments, since it must be based on multiple observations. Hence, the ultimate purpose of School-Based Assessment is to facilitate or promote learning, which is also referred as "assessment for learning" (National Teachers' Institute 2007)

The ways School-Based Assessment are being conducted in Nigerian schools have often been criticized. Most schools still operate the traditional assessment practice such as One- Shot Examination. There are a lot of disagreeable outcomes following the mismanagement of test instruments and scores. Emphasis is still placed on obtaining high marks without regard for understanding or ability to apply the concepts learnt in solving real-life problems. Afemikhe (2005) observed that it is doubtful whether School-Based Assessment is not helping to inflate the grades obtained in JSSCE and SSCE. Adejumo and Afolabi (1990) also observed that School-Based Assessment scores that are sent to State Ministry of Education and Human Capital Development, WAEC, NECO and National Business Technical Examinations Board (NABTEB) are often arbitrary and usually inflated by teachers in school. Frary, Cross and Weber (1993) also stated that there is irrationality in the grading of School-Based Assessment by teachers in various subjects.

The second component is the SSCE assessment conducted by the West African Examinations Council and the National Examinations Council that are external examinations to the school system (Federal Ministry of Education, 1985). This is so because the examination bodies are not responsible for the teaching and learning of these students. It is a form of summative evaluation. However, the National Policy on Education (2004) recognizes three examination bodies (i.e. WAEC, NECO and NABTEB) in Nigeria that conduct parallel or equivalent SSCE and each of this body is responsible for test development, administration, marking, award of grades and certification of all candidates. However, in this study, two examination bodies (i.e. WAEC and NECO) are being considered. They conduct parallel or equivalent SSCE based on the national curriculum and each of them is responsible for test construction, administration, marking of scripts, award of grades and certification of candidates. The scores obtained from the examinations they conduct are converted to 70% of the total obtainable marks for certification as directed by the National Policy on Education and the SSCE national curriculum.

Field observations by the researchers showed that more than 75% of the students who enrolled and sat for SSCE sat for Geography as one of the elective subjects. The researchers also observed that more students pass Geography in NECO than WAEC. Afemikhe (2005) also observed that the performance of students varied between WAEC and NECO because of the time available for the student's preparation for the examination. Ejinkeonye (2004) and Ojerinde & Faleye (2005) stated that the WAEC uses small proportion while NECO uses large proportion of School-Based Assessment scores in the computation of the final results of School SSCE. It is for this reason that the researchers decided to investigate if School-Based Assessment can be used as a determinant of students' achievement in WAEC and NECO SSCE Geography.

Purpose of the Study

Specifically this study attempted to examine:

1. Relationship between students' performance in School-Based Assessment and their performance in the WAEC SSCE Geography
2. Relationship between students' performance in School-Based Assessment and their performance in the NECO SSCE Geography.

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were postulated:

1. There is no significant relationship between students' performance in School-Based Assessment and their performance in the WAEC SSCE Geography.
2. There is no significant relationship between students' performance in School-Based Assessment and their performance in the NECO SSCE Geography.

Research Methodology

This study adopted expo-facto research design. This is because the School-Based Assessment, WAEC and NECO Geography results that were in existence in the schools were used. The population for this study consisted of all Senior School Certificate Geography candidates in the public Secondary Schools in Ilorin metropolis. The target population is made up of candidates who sat for both the WAEC and NECO Geography SSCE in the academic sessions 2011/2012 to 2012/2013. Four schools out of 54 schools in Ilorin metropolis were randomly selected because of the volume of data. All the candidates' results in the four randomly selected schools were purposively sampled because they both sat for WAEC and NECO Geography SSCE for the academic sessions 2011/2012 to 2012/2013. Therefore, a total of 5,884 results were used for computation in this study.

The researchers developed a profoma for the collection of School-Based Assessment scores, the WAEC and NECO Geography SSCE results for the academic sessions 2011/2012 to 2012/2013. In addition, a questionnaire "Magnitude of School-Based Assessment in the Computation of WAEC/NECO Examination" was also designed to confirm the percentage of School-Based Assessment scores being used in the computations of the final SSCE results by both the WAEC and NECO. The questionnaire consisted of only four items. The questionnaire was validated by experts in the Department of Social Sciences Education, University of Ilorin to have content validity. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) statistic was used to test the hypotheses formulated at alpha level of 0.05.

Results

The data collected were collated and analyzed. The results were presented in the tables below for easy interpretation.

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between students' performance in School-Based Assessment and their performance in the WAEC Geography SSCE

In order to test this hypothesis one, Geography School-Based Assessment scores sent to WAEC for the academic sessions 2011/2012 to 2012/2013 needed for SSCE final computation were obtained from sampled schools. The WAEC Geography results for the same academic sessions were also collected. The set of data collected were transformed to the same unit (continuous data) and subjected to PPMC statistical analysis using of SPSS 21.0.

Table 1: Result of the Pearson 'r' Analysis Comparing the Students' School-Based Assessment Scores with WAEC Geography SSCE Results

Variables	N	Mean	Std.	df	Cal. r-value	Crit.r-value	Sig.
School-Based Assessment	5,844	64.98	7.68	5,842	0.315	0.87	0.000
WAEC Geography Results	5,844	61.61	10.68				

$P < 0.05$

The output revealed on table one that the calculated r-value is 0.315 with the calculated level of significant .000 computed at critical level of significance .05. Since the calculated significant (.000) is less than the critical significant (.05), hypothesis one is therefore rejected. This implies that there is a positive but low relationship between students' performance in School-Based Assessment and their performance in WAEC Geography SSCE for the academic sessions 2011/2012 to 2012/2013.

This low relationship could be attributed to the field observation made by the researchers, that scores in School-Based Assessment in all school subjects including Geography are usually adjusted upwards before they are sent to the WAEC and the NECO offices. It is for this reason that the researchers believed that the WAEC reduces the percentage of School-Based Assessment scores being used in the computation of SSCE results.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between students' performance in School-Based Assessment and their performance in the NECO Geography SSCE

In order to test this hypothesis two, Geography School-Based Assessment scores sent to NECO for the academic sessions 2011/2012 to 2012/2013 needed for SSCE final computation were obtained from sampled schools. The NECO Geography results for the same academic sessions were also collected. The set of data collected were transformed to the same unit (continuous data) and subjected to PPMC statistical analysis using of SPSS 21.0.

Table 2: Result of the Pearson 'r' Analyses Comparing the Students' School-Based Assessment Scores with NECO Geography SSCE Results

Variables	N	Mean	Std.	df	Cal.r-Value	Crit.r-Value	Sig.
School-Based Assessment	5,844	64.98	7.68	5.842	0.577	0.087	0.000
NECO Geography Results	5,844	37.97	12.43				

P < 0.05

Table two shows that the calculated r-value is 0.577 and with the calculated significant .000 computed at critical level of significance .05. Since the calculated significant (.000) is less than the critical significant (.05), hypothesis two is therefore rejected. This implies that there is a positive but moderate relationship between students' performance in School-Based Assessment and their performance in NECO Geography SSCE.

This moderate correlation could be as a result of a series of remedial lessons that were given students before the commencement of the NECO Examinations. During this period; several past questions were treated with the students. This acted as a revisional preparatory activity to NECO Examinations. This made Geography students to adjust and strengthen their possible areas of weakness in geographical concepts that have been spotted difficult in the previous examinations.

Discussion of Findings

Based on the data collected, the findings of the study in table 1 showed that there is a significant relationship between students' performance in School-

Based Assessment and their performance in the WAEC Geography SSCE. Support for this finding could be derived from a series of research activities that have been carried out by scholars. For instances, Adejumo and Afolabi (1990) believed that Continuous Assessment (Schools-Based Assessment) scores are often arbitrary and usually inflated by Nigerian Schools. Fray Cross and Webber (1993)

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between students' performance in School-Based Assessment and their performance in the NECO Geography SSCE

In order to test this hypothesis two, Geography School-Based Assessment scores sent to NECO for the academic sessions 2011/2012 to 2012/2013 needed for SSCE final computation were obtained from sampled schools. The NECO Geography results for the same academic sessions were also collected. The set of data collected were transformed to the same unit (continuous data) and subjected to PPMC statistical analysis using of SPSS 21.0.

Table 2: Result of the Pearson 'r' Analyses Comparing the Students' School-Based Assessment Scores with NECO Geography SSCE Results

Variables	N	Mean	Std.	df	Cal.r-Value	Crit.r-Value	Sig.
School-Based Assessment	5,844	64.98	7.68	5.842	0.577	0.087	0.000
NECO Geography Results	5,844	37.97	12.43				

P < 0.05

Table two shows that the calculated r-value is 0.577 and with the calculated significant .000 computed at critical level of significance .05. Since the calculated significant (.000) is less than the critical significant (.05), hypothesis two is therefore rejected. This implies that there is a positive but moderate relationship between students' performance in School-Based Assessment and their performance in NECO Geography SSCE.

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buttressed Adejumo and Afolabi (1990) by stressing that there is irrationality in the grading of Continuous Assessment (Schools-Based Assessment) in schools. Afemikhe (2005) also confirmed this claim by stressing that it is doubtful whether the inclusion of Continuous Assessment (Schools-Based Assessment) in Nigeria educational system has not helped to inflate the grades obtained in SSCE. Support for this finding is also obtained from Anikweze (2005) who stated that the way in which Continuous Assessments (Schools-Based Assessments) are conducted in Nigerian schools has often been criticized due to certain unsavory outcomes following the mismanagement of test aims and objectives, testing situation, and even the interpretation of results.

In the same vein, Ojerinde and Faleye (2005) also stated that in recent times, the WAEC has been using a small proportion of Continuous Assessment (Schools-Based Assessment) scores in the computation of the final results of the students at the SSCE level. Ijinkoye (2004) went further to state that less than 30% of the teacher's assessment scores are being used in the computation of the WAEC/SSCE results.

In addition, the findings of the study in table 2 revealed that there is significant relationship between students' performance in School-Based Assessment and their performance in the NECO Geography SSCE. The moderate relationship that was found could be seen from the emphasis placed on School-Based Assessment by the NECO as stipulated and directed in the national curriculum and the national policy on education. This made the students' performance in the NECO Geography SSCE to be a little better than WAEC Geography SSCE. Support for this view comes from Ijinkoye (2004) who stated that sometimes more than 30% of School-Based Assessment scores are being used in the computation of NECO Senior School Certificate Examinations. Ojerinde and Faleye (2005) also pointed out that a high premium is placed on School-Based Assessment, which therefore increased the number of credits and passes obtained by the students at the NECO Senior School Certificate Examination. Similarly, the finding supports the view of Owolabi (2000) and Olasupo (2003) that remedial lessons are forms of assessment, which help students to identify their areas of strength and weakness which provides on-going feedback to the students for academic improvement. Okpala and Omacha (1990) and Afemikhe (2005) also affirmed that remedial classes help students to receive improved instructions and therefore increased their academic performance.

Conclusions

Arising from the discussion of the findings, it appears that School-Based Assessment conducted by teachers in Nigerian schools has been abused and misused. It appeared that School-Based Assessment in our schools could not be

solely relied upon to determine or predict students' future academic performance in SSCE. However, no matter the magnitude of the problems being faced in the operation and implementation of School-Based Assessment, it is clear that we cannot back out of the national educational policy.

It was also discovered that the WAEC and NECO do not have uniform weighting scores for School-Based Assessment in the computation of students' SSCE results. The study also found that remedial lessons before internal and external examinations are necessary ingredients in teaching and learning processes since they help to discover areas of strengths and weakness and enhances students' performance.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the results of this study:

1. It is clear that much work has to be carried out in order to ensure that School-Based Assessment scores add value to the overall assessment at SSCE level,
2. School administrators and teachers must incorporate a high degree of fairness and objectivity in their evaluation activities to make School-Based Assessment reliable in the 9-3-4 Nigeria educational system.
3. Teachers and officers indicted in manipulating School-Based Assessment scores should be regarded as saboteurs and made to face the same sanctions/penalties as those engaged in examination malpractice. This will act as a deterrent to others who may want to do similar barbaric and unprogressive activities,
4. There is need to have a uniform weighting scores for the School-Based Assessment being used in the computation of the final results by the two examination bodies (WAEC and NECO),
5. The proportion of weighting scores used by NECO and WAEC for the School-Based Assessment should be the same and followed strictly,
6. Government should stop employing people without teaching qualifications to teach and assess students in our schools because they lack assessment skills,
7. Proper monitoring and supervision of teachers during School-Based Assessment may eradicate or reduce the manipulation of School- Based Assessment scores.

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