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ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING: A SUGGESTION FOR APPROPRIATE BALANCE AT THE GENERAL CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION EXAMINATION BOARD

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ABSTRACT

External assessment is conventionally seen as impartial, having no part to play in teaching and learning and is used to find out the extent to which students have learnt certain content. This notion is fast changing because external assessment has a strong influence on teaching and learning and therefore has the potentials to be used to promote teaching and learning. There is need for our external examination body (GCE Board) to transform its examinations into instruments for promoting quality teaching and learning. This transformation can come about only when officials of the Board and their test developers are aware of the influence their examinations exert on classroom activities. The aim of this paper is to suggest an appropriate balance between assessment for learning and assessment of learning or what the GCE board can do to help improve on the teaching-learning process and hence improve on the acquisition of competences during the teaching learning process. This paper has shown the retrospective force of examination on learning and that assessment has a similar backwash effect on learning. This is because, some of the competences are not taught because they are usually not tested by the examination body. The paper has also suggested good practices in terms of measuring students learning outcome and policy directions to assist educationists in carrying out quality assessment.

KEYWORDS: Assessment, Learning, and Examination.

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INTRODUCTION

There has been an outcry from many observers that the standard of education is falling. This is occasioned by the fact that many graduates from secondary school do not exhibit the expected knowledge, skills and upright behaviors that reflect the values of their acquired certificates. In physics, for example, which is fundamentally an experimental subject, it is embarrassing to observe

that a significant number of lower sixth physics students who have a pass in ordinary level physics show low mastery in the use of basic measuring instruments to measure fundamental physics quantities like: length, temperature, mass, current and time to name but just a few.

This substandard performance by these successful ordinary level physics students is a consequence, to some extent, of the teaching method used in class which is mainly rote learning (chew and pour) with a focus solely on cognitive domain. The outcome of this current method leaves much to be desired as observed in the physics end of course examination results which fluctuate between average and slightly below average over the years.

Furthermore, the high stakes end of course single examination tested for four hours in a 3-year course cannot test all the required abilities of the students for such a short time. Thus, the content validity of the examination cannot be of high value. Moreover, this single and final examination causes tremendous anxiety and nervousness in some students who dread it with fear and sometimes resort to various forms of malpractice. On the other hand, many teachers are also prompted to apply the examination-oriented method of teaching, paying little or no attention on psychomotor skills and behaviors of students as these skills and moral values are not tested. This results in a mismatch of the value of the acquired certificates with the inadequate abilities of the students to solve life challenges. Therefore, in order to improve on the aforementioned inadequacies of physics students, a holistic education teaching method which addresses the cognitive, psychomotor and affective domains is urgently needed. Such a teaching method should involve the participation of students in order to inculcate in them basic scientific skills like: measurements, recording of information, processing information and arriving at credible conclusions, be creative, innovative and be of good behavior.

The introduction of a continuous and effective use of the school-based assessments (SBA), concept in our teaching method will be of help as it will lead to high content validity, high reliability, improved moral behaviors of students and more acquisition of life skills. It will serve as a booster to improving performance of students in examinations and solving some of life's challenges: this paradigm shift will be effective, if it embeds a certain weighting of the average marks earned by students in school to their final grading marks at the end of course examination.

The Nature of Physics

Physics is believed to be a very difficult subject within the realm of science and usually attracts fewer students. One of the ways to demystify this misconception is to use an effective teaching method. Secondly, as the era of alternative to practical's and school-based assessment emerges, it is our humble wish that the teaching of Physics should nationally embrace this new paradigm, which prescribes that, Physics lessons should be students - centered, competence - based, activity-oriented and connect with students' life experiences.

The fallacy rooted in ignorance that materials needed for Physics projects and hands-on practical activities are expensive imported materials, will be disproved by the use of school based assessment

workbooks. This researcher is of the opinion that almost all the materials needed are found in our villages and towns. It is important to note that Physics belongs to Cameroon as much as any other country in the world. For instance, the laws of gravity, Newton and flotation respect no national boundaries, so, our continuous dependence on imported materials teaches the students that Physics is a foreign subject. Physics is the birthright of humanity and the time has come to embrace what we already own.

Physics is an integral part of everyone's life. The knowledge and skills acquired from physics provide practical assistance in helping people make informed decisions and choices concerning life that best suit them. Physics generates fundamental knowledge needed for future technological advances that will continue to drive the economic engines of the world. Essentially, physics is taught using both lecture and practical methods. Unfortunately, because the practical component is not assessed at the ordinary level, most teachers use only the lecture method.

Meaning of Assessment

Assessment is the process of identifying, gathering and interpreting information about students learning. The main purpose of assessment is to provide information on students' achievement and progress and set the direction for ongoing teaching and learning. Nitko cited in Onuka and Adesina (2007) defined assessment as a process of obtaining information that is used for making decisions about pupils, curricular, s and educational policy. ***Assessment is a powerful process that can either optimize or inhibit learning***, depending on how it is applied. All the activities teachers use to help students learn and judge their progress is known as assessment. Assessment can also be viewed as a process of measuring the behavior of learners and using the results of this measurement to take decision. This process includes; defining the problem, gathering information, about the learner, interpreting the information and then taking decisions or making valid judgment. This definition shows that, assessment goes beyond just indicating the percentage of candidates who have passed or failed an examination or the number of those who have made distinction as erroneously held by many. From this perspective, assessment can be viewed as means of generating and analyzing data for the purpose of informing policy makers and the public about the level of progress made by a learner in a specific area of learning. In this vein, educational assessment can define as the process of providing qualitative and quantitative information that can be used to take decisions on placement, employment, and on progression to higher levels of the educational ladder.

There are different types of assessment such as formative and summative assessments. Formative and summative assessment is usually referred to as assessment for learning and assessment of learning respectively. Assessment for learning is generally formative in nature and is used by teachers to consider approaches to teaching and the next steps to take for individual learners and the class (Earl, 2003). It is also referred to as educative assessment or school based assessment. Assessment of learning occurs at the end of a class, a course, a semester or an academic year. It is summative in nature and intended to measure learning outcomes and reports these outcomes to students, parents and administrators. Assessment should therefore be tailored to motivate students to learn and improve upon learning. That is, learning the skills to learn and not necessarily to distinguish between the good and poor performers. Assessment should motivate students to learn

rather than compelled them to learn. Unfortunately, in most developing countries such as Cameroon where paper qualifications are virtually over-emphasized in almost all aspects of life, all school activities tend to be directed towards examinations. Examination syllabuses have the tendency of being narrower in scope that is in both content and objectives than the teaching syllabuses. National goals of education are hardly achieved in full. The immediate danger of such tendencies may be seen in the unquestionable neglect of innate abilities and experiences which could be very frustrating to those learners who see their strength in such attributes. Baku (2002) insists that a good assessment scheme should be development oriented, fair to all and should aim more to promote or motivate holistic and constructive development of the learners. It should promote education for self-reliance. A good assessment scheme should be comprehensive enough to enable the students demonstrate what they know, understand and can do. Our present assessment process especially the standardized or external assessment by the general certificate of education examination (GCE) board has the function of providing valid evidence of learning achievement for certification. This is based generally on the assumption that there are universal equal opportunities for learning in all schools in contrast to the know realities of the situation.

In this situation, one cannot fail to share the sentiments of Maxwell (2004) who say:

Background to the history of assessment

The original aim of modern assessment which continues to play a significant role in the lives of those assessed can be traced to imperial china when various tests of practical and academic skills were introduced to combat nepotism in relation to state employment. Similar reasoning underpinned the introduction of examinations in Europe, particularly in Britain, in the nineteenth century. As economic development led to social mobility, assessment was increasingly seen as a fair and more effective way of selecting students for entry into higher education and into the civil service (Mathews,1985:1).

The 1980's witnessed a radical departure from the conventional one-shot examination-oriented assessment to assessment used to increase student's independence and capacity for self-determination as well as increase teachers' sense of judgment in issues involving students. The innovations have culminated in the introduction of assessment records of students that take account of students intellectual, physical, and personality development records (Baku,2007).

Theories underpinning SBA

This article is based on True score theory by Novick (1966) and constructivist theories which have its roots from famous theorists like Vygotsky (1928), John Dewey (1929), Jean Piaget (1952), and Brunner (1966).

The True score theory states that any score of a respondent on an item or a test can be expressed as; $X = T \pm E$, where x is the observed score (one that is given to the taste based on his or her responses to the test items), T is the true score (actual or true performance of the individual, all thing being equal) and E is the error score (that error that occurs as a result of our being human and reliable to marking mistakes).The above equation implies that an individual observed score in a test contains

some errors which may be working to his or her advantage or disadvantage. When it works to his advantage the test score is inflated by that error score (signifying a (+) in the formula), this is usually the case when a candidate involves him/her self in examination malpractice. If it works to his or her disadvantage the test score is depleted by the error score (signifying (-) in the formula). This may be due to rubrics or other effects. Measurement experts are always interested in looking for ways by which the error component of test scores can be reduced to the barest minimum (Novick, 1966 cited in Joshua (2005)). It therefore goes without saying that through the use of multiple instruments in assessment this error score can be reduced. This can only be possible through the introduction of school based assessment as a component part of the final assessment.

The theories of constructivism, argue that students construct their own knowledge and understandings through active and social participation in a learning process that is tailored to meet their needs, interests and abilities. New learning is presented at an appropriate cognitive level within what Vygotsky (1928) terms the “zone of proximal development” (ZPD) of the student, and scaffold (supported) by teacher instruction. Students bring their particular attitudes towards learning and previous experiences to bear in the learning process, developing a variety of goals and motivations in response to different classroom practices (Brown, et al, 2009).

Each of the above theories has its specific recommendations and they do not say exactly the same thing, but there are guiding principles that are common to all the constructivist theories. These guiding principles state that:

- **Learners construct their own knowledge:** This means that students do not passively receive or copy input from the teacher, but instead actively mediate it by trying to make sense of it and to relate it to what they already know (or think they know) about the topic. Thus, students develop new knowledge through the process of active construction.
- **New knowledge depends on current understanding:** Constructivists emphasize the fact that new learning is interpreted in the immediate context of current understanding. That is, it is not learned as isolated information which is later connected to a new knowledge.
- **Learning is facilitated by social interaction:** Social interaction provides opportunity for students to articulate their own ideas, compare them to others and change them if necessary.
- **Meaningful learning occurs within authentic learning tasks:** Authentic tasks in this sense are the simulations of real- world problems situations. These provide students with practice in thinking in realistic life-like situations. This is best done in classroom teaching by posing problems that are embedded in realistic situations. Such authentic situations also create students’ motivation to learn and as their motivation increases, so does further learning occurs (Okenyi, 2007).

Assessment for Learning and Assessment of Learning

External assessment is traditionally seen as impartial having no part to play in teaching and learning and is used to find out the extent to which students have learnt. This notion is fast changing. External assessment has a particularly strong influence on teaching and learning and therefore has the potential to be used to promote teaching and learning. There is therefore need for our

examination to be transformed into instruments for promoting quality teaching and learning. This transformation can only come about when officials of external examination (GCE Board Officials) and their test developers are aware of the influence their examinations exert on classroom activities.

A plethora of researches have been carried out on the influence of external assessment on classroom activities. For example, in 1992, World Bank carried out a study on 14- sub-Saharan African countries and found that examination undoubtedly exerts enormous pressure on activities in the schools. Teachers tend to gear teaching to the tests to be taken and to ignore material not featured in such tests, even if it is mandated in official curriculum (Kallaghan & Greaney, 1992). The study concluded that this situation has led to a virtual 'strangulation' of teaching and learning by external assessment regimes.

In another study of science teachers at grade 8 and 12 in British Columbia in Canada Widen et al (1997) observed a gradual decline in the variety of instructional activities in classrooms the nearer the class was to the external examination. Comments of the teachers involved in the study suggested that the high stakes examination at grade 12 was the major cause of the differences observed in teaching. The researchers concluded that the examination discouraged teachers from using strategies which promoted enquiry and active students learning and also affected communication between teachers and students in the classroom.

It is thus clear from the forgoing that external assessment of any kind is at the centre of the interaction between the teacher and the students. That is, external assessment has a 'back wash' effect on teaching and learning as teachers concentrate but on past papers and topics that come in the examination frequently. Most teachers hurriedly cover the syllabus to allow more time exclusively for revision which is basically meant for drilling, training and practicing how to answer examination questions based on selected topics. The impact of this practice leads to 'scratching the surface' of the syllabus and therefore the concepts are not adequately covered. Hence, students that graduate are half- baked with scanty knowledge of the topics in the syllabus.

It can be concluded from the above studies that any assessment whose purpose is not to help students learn but only to assess their level of learning cannot be useful to teaching and learning. For our assessment to perform this role there has to be a paradigm shift on the part of the external assessor, teachers and other stakeholders on the role of external assessment in the classroom.

In most developing countries like Cameroon, where paper qualifications are virtually over-emphasized in almost all aspects of life, all school learning activities tend to be directed towards examinations, since examination syllabuses have the tendency of being narrower in scope (objective and content) than the teaching syllabuses, national goals of education are hardly achieved in full. The immediate danger of such tendencies may be seen in the unquestionable neglect of innate abilities and experiences which could be very frustrating to those learners who see their strength in such attributes (Joshua, 2007). This means that, many candidates possess substantial attainments which go unrecorded and unrecognized.

Assessment cannot be delayed until the end of the learners' educational cycle to determine if the objectives have been achieved. That would be too late. Assessment needs to be integrated into the teaching learning process so that the learner can be helped to achieve his/her full potentials. In this context, the assessment is mirroring the learning process and providing feedback to ensure the eventual achievement of national objectives. In addition, some of the skills in the national syllabus can only be examined through direct interaction with candidates over long period of time. It is only in this way that the assessment can be said to be a true representation or reflection of candidates' performance.

Some very important non-examinable aspect of their development such as; leadership qualities, punctuality, honesty, self-control, respect for others, responsibility, fairness, authenticity, self-discipline, preparedness, approachable, team spirit, integrity, humility, compassion, royalty, attitude to studies can only be accessed through school-based assessment. According to Crooks (1998), Gibbs (1992) cited in Chalmers and Fuller (1996), the most powerful single influence on the quality of students learning is probably the assessment system used.

The assessment that takes place at the end of a period of teaching/ schooling and the results or information produced is used outside the classroom is called assessment for learning. It is usually conducted through external examination by an external assessor. This assessment acts as a mirror of the extent to which education has achieved its goals and objectives. This appears to be more in tune with the concept of assessment of learning or in other words summative assessment through achievement testing. During this process because of the narrow syllabus and time constraint many skills learned during the teaching learning process are not assessed by the assessor. In most schools some of these skills are not taught because the teachers use the past achievement test papers as their guide. Assessment has exerted a lot of influence and pressure on the education system to the extent that what is usually not assessed is not taught in our schools and colleges. In an effort to cope with the demands of assessment teachers have sacrificed their pedagogical skills at the altar of assessment. Assessment is an integral and inseparable part of any sound educational system. This is because assessment data form the basis upon which vital decisions about teaching and learning are made. For these decisions to be accurate there is need for assessment of learning to be complementary with assessment for learning.

Assessment for learning takes place during the teaching learning process and the results are used to improve upon the teaching learning process in the classroom. This type of assessment that aids learning is called formative assessment. This type of assessment is usually done through school-based assessment (SBA) using many testing tools while the assessment that establishes levels of learning achievement is called assessment of learning or summative assessment and it is usually done through achievement test as mentioned easier.

Educational assessment is supposed to be a process by which one attempts to measure the level of change in behavior, that is, the quality and quantity of learning using various assessment techniques such as assignment, projects, practical, continuous assessment (formative assessment), objective

test, essay test, and final examination. This can only be achieved if the assessment of learning and assessment for learning are considered by the external assessor. That is, the GCE Board. The results of assessment for learning or formative assessment can only be obtained through school-based assessment (SBA). This researcher is suggesting that a certain percentage of the candidates' final score should come from schools or obtained indirectly through alternative to practical.

School Based Assessment (SBA)

One of the objectives of this article is to reveal some salient facts about school based assessment. Essentially, this section is divided into five sections: Meaning of school based assessment, characteristics of school based assessment, objectives of school based assessment, format of school based assessment, effects of school based assessment on national development and problems of school based assessment.

The dynamic nature of society brings with it, social changes, challenges and concerns which must be tackled. One of the ways of handling these is through reforms in the education sector (Okobia, 2011). Education is often recognized as the prerequisites for quality manpower development and creation of wealth. According to Ajayi (2011), functional education remains the veritable instrument and strength of positive change for sustainable national development because education is the bedrock of societal development. The level of development of any society can't be isolated from the quality of its education. He went further to points out that every society strive to invest huge resources in education in order to enhance socio-political, economic and technological advancement that will put it on a pedestal to compete favorably in the global arena.

On this conceptualization, it is predicated by the support of Education for All (EFA) by the United Nations (UNDP, 2008 in Anikweze, 2011) that achieving the EFA goals is critical for attaining all the eight millennium Development Goals (MDGS) partly due to the direct impact of education on child and reproductive health, as well as the fact that EFA has created a body of experience in multi-partners' collaboration toward vision2035 target for Cameroon. Being certain about the fact that education is the foundation on which national development and growth is hinged, education in Cameroon should be an instrument "for excellence" for effecting national development.

To realize these objectives, there is need for the learner's performance to be effectively assessed in the educational system. This is because assessment of students' learning outcome is cardinal to the realization of the objectives of education in any economy; it provides information about learning that can be used to, diagnose learners' strengths and needs; provide feedback on teaching and learning; provide a basis for instructional placement, inform and guide instruction; motivate and focus learner attention; provide a basis for learner evaluation and gauge effectiveness (Onuka, & Akinyemi, 2012). (Orubu, 2013) submits that the school is essentially a social system consisting of well-defined boundaries within which individuals inter-relate in the performance of activities for the purpose of attaining educational goal. In order to determine the effectiveness of those attainments, the learners must be assessed. Educational assessment is a process of documenting in measurable terms the level of; knowledge, skills, attitudes and beliefs that a learner acquires.

According to Orubu (2013), high quality assessments are considered those with a high level of reliability and validity. Reliability generally relates to the consistency with which the instrument achieves the same results with the same cohort of students while the valid assessment is one which measures what it is intended to measure. A well-planned assessment can help to answer this question; to what extent have objectives been achieved? Danner (2011) emphasizes that educators, administrators and parents are concerned with quality, types, purpose and uses of assessment in the classroom. Among the types of assessment are: traditional assessment, authentic assessment, national assessment, classroom assessment, external assessment and school based assessment. These types of assessment can be categorized into two main types namely; School Based Assessment (SBA) and Externally-Based Assessment (EBA) or External Examination (EE) Orubu (2013). School Based Assessment is the type conducted at the school level while EBA or EE is usually conducted by public examination bodies such as General Certificate of Education Examination Board (GCE Board), West African Examination Council (WAEC), National Examination Council of Nigeria (NECO), Junior Secondary Certificate Examination (JSCE) in Nigeria, London General Certificate of Examination Council (LGCEC), etc. This section focuses on school based assessment, characteristics of school based assessment, objectives of school based assessment, format of school based assessment and effects of school based assessment on national development.

School based assessment (SBA) is an assessment which is embedded in the teaching and learning process. It has a number of important characteristics which distinguish it from other forms of assessment. It allows the teacher to give immediate and constructive feedback to students. It provides information about learning that can be used to diagnose learners' strengths and weaknesses, provide feedback on teaching and learning, provide basis for instruction placement, motivate and focus learners' attention. The main reason while school based assessment should be introduced is because it will improve the validity of assessment among students (Peter & Wan, 2006). This is because not all subject or learning outcome can be assessed using written examination only. Practical works such as laboratories, workshops, research project and others that need more time to finish can only be accessed through school-based assessment. Other than that, school based assessment also increases the reliability of assessment where multiple type of assessment can be used rather than depends on only one examination as well as to provide more reliable evidences or picture of students' abilities. This assessment is planned, administered, scored, recorded and reported systematically according to the laid down procedures.

The main objective of school-based assessment is to assess students holistically through their intellectual, emotion, spiritual and physical aspects (Ahmad & Wartti, 2014). Therefore, SBA if introduced will make a huge impact in realizing and achieving our country's aspirations of becoming an emerging nation by 2035. SBA is going to be a transformation in our education system as it will scale down the emphasis on examination orientated teaching and learning (Rohaya et al., 2014). It requires teachers to monitor students' learning progress, evaluating students' performance, recording students' progress and providing feedback from time to time. Unlike, national or standardized examination which merely gains students 'result in academic, SBA

provides more information about students' performance and actual students' learning level to a greater degree. This will be an improvement in our assessment system because; both concepts of assessment for learning and assessment of learning will be highlighted in the final assessment process.

This transformation of assessment system is to stress on the application of knowledge as well as to develop students' critical and creative thinking skills. With this new format of assessment, more information about students' performance or development on a broader range will be gathered continuously and over a period of time. Through school-based assessment, students can be assessed based on their skills, abilities, talents, potentials in both curricular activities and co-curricular activities without comparing to others (Ahmad & Warti, 2014). By implementing school based assessment, students will not be judged just based on their result in examinations, but assessed through all kinds of activities in schools. In fact, this is the only assessment process that can effectively and efficiently measure students' cognitive, psychomotor and affective skills.

Objectives of School Based Assessment

The following are essentially the objectives of school based assessment:

- To continuously assess students in a pressure-free environment;
- To reduce reliance on one-off public examination;
- To improve reliability of assessment
- More than one assessment is given by a teacher who is familiar with multiple collection of tests for judgment;
- To reflect the standard and ability of students;
- To foster teaching and learning;
- To reinforce learners' autonomy and independent learning;
- To empower teachers to be part of the assessment mechanism.
- To allow the teachers to give immediate and constructive feedback to students, hence improving learning feedback is usually a grade at the end of the course.
- To improve validity through assessing factors that cannot be included in public exam settings. e.g., Practical and projects in physics
- To promote professional development: it builds teacher assessment skills, which can be transferred to other areas of the curriculum.

Characteristics of School Based Assessment

School-based assessment (SBA) is an assessment which is embedded in the teaching and learning process. It has a number of important characteristics which distinguish it from other forms of assessment:

- It involves the teacher from the beginning to the end: from planning the assessment programme, to identifying and/or developing appropriate assessment tasks right through to making the assessment judgments.
- It allows for the collection of a number of samples of student performance over a period of time.

- It can be adapted and modified by the teacher to match the teaching and learning goals of the particular class and students being assessed.
- It is carried out in ordinary classrooms.
- It is conducted by the students' own teacher.
- It involves students more actively in the assessment process, especially if self and/or peer assessment is used in conjunction with teacher assessment.
- It allows the teacher to give immediate and constructive feedback to students.
- It stimulates continuous evaluation and adjustment of the teaching and learning programme.
- It complements other forms of assessment such as external examinations (Tan,2016)
- Formats of SBAs

According to Tan (2016), SBA may be done using one or more of the following formats:

- Portfolio
- Journals
- Dramatic presentations
- Research assignments
- Multimedia presentations
- Community/classroom projects
- Laboratory activities including investigations
- Site visit/Field trip
- Orals
- Case Studies
- Observational check list on students' behavior
- Steps in Carrying out School Based Assessment
- Assessment package has processes to be considered when developing quality units of work.
- Identifying curriculum: selecting the essential learning's, school priorities and the context for learning.
- Sequencing learning: planning learning experiences and teaching strategies to respond to the needs and interests of learners.
- Developing assessment: planning a variety of assessments to collect comprehensive and meaningful evidence of learning.
- Making judgments: considering how judgments will be made about the quality of learning, using the evidence in student responses.
- Using feedback: considering how and when to provide feedback to students (Tan, 2016).

Selection of Assessment Methods and Development of Instruments

Various assessment methods should be selected and adequate instruments should also be developed. Assessment methods and adequate instruments enable collecting valid data about learning and about the achievements of every student. In making selection of methods and selection/development of instruments, the purpose of their use should be taken into consideration.

Conducting the School Based Assessment

The following principles should be followed in conducting School Based Assessment.

Assessment should start from the curriculum aims and should take into consideration the ways of teaching and learning. Students should be provided with an explanation why their achievements are checked and assessed and how they obtained results would be used. Monitoring students learning and the formative assessment should occupy the central place of instruction. Assessment should be conducted in conditions that are adequate to the assessment purpose and method used. In performing the assessment, all students should be subject to fair and consistent treatment. The process of estimating and scoring students' achievement should correspond to the assessment method and should be conducted upon set-up procedures and instructions. The process of judging and scoring should be conducted according to previously developed instructions.

School Based Assessment and National Development

The pride of any government is the attainment of higher value level of development in such a way that its citizens would desire natural attachment to governance. Development is essential and critical to growth and sustenance of any county. In order to successfully enhance meaningful development, effective strategies like assessment must be evolved. According to Lawal and Abe (2011) development is an idea that embodies all attempts to improve the conditions of human existence in all ramifications. It is reasonable to know exercise, but also involves both socio-economic and political issues and pervades all aspects of social life. National development according to Lawal and Abe (2011) is described as the overall development or a collective socio-economic, political as well as religions advancement of a country or nation. This is best achieved through education. In order to attain educational goals, there is need for the learners' to be assessed. This assessment must be valid and reliable for it to be effective.

According to Lawal and Abe (2011), school based assessment has the following Implication for National Development. Since education is the foundation in which national development growth is hinged, there is the need for the learners' performance to be assessed. This is because assessment of students learning outcomes is central to the realization of the objectives of education in any economy. School based assessment will provide information about learning that can be used to diagnose learners' strengths and weakness, provide feedback on teaching and learning, provide basis for instruction placement, motivate and focus learners' attention. All these will culminate in programme effectiveness thus enabling the attainment of educational goals for national development.

For the fact that, educators, administrators and parents who are stakeholders in education are concerned with quality, types and uses of assessment in the classroom, school based conducted at the school level has to be high quality in order to bring out capable youths that can hold the future of the country. Valid and reliable school based assessment should involve developing and organizing test data obtained from observation, examination into interpretable form or a number of factors that include a variety of techniques to determine achievement in the cognitive, psychomotor and affective domains which is a holistic evaluation of the individual that makes him useful to the

society. School based assessment is a systematic basis for making inference about the learning and development of students. It is the process of using information to increase students learning and development. The students are the future leaders of tomorrow; thus, their development will enhance the growth of the nation. Teachers are the drivers of education, therefore, through assessment, the teacher constructs a comprehensive picture of the long term and short term needs of the child which is the need of the society and plan future work accordingly Lawal & Abe (2011).

Students spend the best part of their young lives in school and it is through the teachers' assessment that their abilities can be better understood. Thus, to rely solely on one-shot examination as in common practice in the final decision making is to obscure the vision of the teacher. The role of school based assessment in the final grading of students in physics ordinary level certificate needs to be given urgent attention. School based assessment is a necessary move to equip school leavers with the skills necessary for survival and world of work. School based assessment provides professional development, it builds teachers assessment skills which can be transferred to other areas of the curriculum and teachers are the main actors in fostering education for national development. Furthermore, teachers and students are empowered because both of them are part of the assessment process, collaborating and sharing of expertise within and across.

Problem of School Based Assessment

It is carried out most of the time by unprofessional-teachers and this approach requires that teachers have significant professional development so as to be able to replicate the highest standard in testing. It usually generates a total score (a percentage) and/or a rank-order score such as position in class or position relative to a numbering sample (e.g., percentile). These scores do not lead to strong educational decision-making in the classroom. The percentage of correct score is always a poor indicator of what a student knows. Real ability depends on the difficulty of the task answered correctly; not the proportion of questions answered correctly (Lawal & Abe, 2011).

Conclusion

It cannot be over-emphasized that the mode of assessment dictates the nature of the educational experience and the quality of the relationship between teacher and students. It is not something separate, and is a tool by which education may be evaluated; it acts upon the educational system so as to shape it in accordance with the assessment demands. Thus, school based assessment is comprehensive systematic, continuous, diagnostic, interpretative and teacher directed procedure. It originates from the classroom situation requiring active participation and involvement of students with emphasis on learning rather than score and grade.

In many educational systems, such as those of Australia, Canada, the UK and Finland, SBA is extensively or exclusively used to provide information about student achievement. In Hong Kong, SBA has been a part of the public examinations system since 1978, when it was first introduced into the advanced level examination for Chemistry so that there could be an assessment of laboratory work. By 2006, school based assessment was implemented in 13 advanced level subjects and 13 Certificate of Education subjects, including English language. SBA has become a core component

of the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination (HKCEE). Finland which is considered to have the best educational assessment relies heavily on SBA.

It is my humble wish that the General Certificate of Education Examination Board should adopt SBA as part of its assessment especially in Ordinary Level Physics so that projects and practical can be assessed by the teacher progressively and systematically and the mean score considered as part of the final examination score. This will enable the Board's Ordinary Level Physics examination to be more valid and reliable. In addition, it will also enable the Board to test both the cognitive and psychomotor practical skills of the candidates.

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