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Continuous Assessment As A Means Of Improving Students' Academic Performance In Classroom Instruction In Some Selected Secondary Schools In Katsina State

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ABSTRACT
In education, the assessment of learning is generally built around demonstration of competence in certain domains (Cognitive, Affective and Psychomotor domains). The domains and the goals as well as the objectives that address them are codified in curriculum frameworks and courses outlines. The means used to determine whether learners have achieved the goals or objectives set for them or not. That is to say, the indicators employed, range from the results of simple observation to group administered standardized test: which from short homework or assignment to the performance and analysis of a complex laboratory experiment. Test scores, performance measures and articles are indicators of learning. Determining which indicators are best suited to specific purpose is the attainment of educational assessment. One of the innovative ideas in the National Policy on Education is liberalization of evolution by basing them to be part of continuous assessment (C.A) for the progress of the individual. Continuous assessment (C.A) can be seen as the systematic way of evaluation, which makes use of a variety of techniques to build up a complete the valid and reliable assessment of a pupil's/student's ability over a long period of time. In other words, it is a continuous and systematic way of evaluating and keeping the student's record of performances cumulatively in virtually everything he does in his learning process, throughout a specific period of study. Good measurement results an accurate data, which is the foundation of the sound decision making, because there is little doubt among educational practitioners about the special value of assessment as a basic condition for effective learning. The major problems of assessment of learners have been in the approaches or methods used by an evaluator. Continuous assessment as a mechanism whereby the final grading of student in the Cognitive, Affective and Psychomotor domains of behaviour takes account, in a systematic way, of all his/her performances during a given period of schooling. Such an assessment involves the use of a great variety of modes of evaluation for the purpose of guiding as well as improving the learning and performance of the student.
Keywords: Cognitive Domain, Affective Domain, Psychomotor Domain, Behaviour, Assessment, Performance

INTRODUCTION

One of the distinctive features of the National Policy on Education is its emphasis on continuous assessment. Evaluation of the Students' Progress is an essential part of the teaching and learning process. If education is to be effective, frequent assessments have to be made in order to measure the extent to which assessments have occurred.

The National Policy on Education (NPE) Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN) (1981, 1999 and 2000) have introduced some noble ideas aimed at channeling education to the development of the Nigeria's economic, political, sociological and human resources. One of the innovative ideas in the National

Policy on Education is the liberalization of evolution by basing them to be part of Continuous Assessment (C.A) for the progress of the individual (FRN 1981:9).

Continuous Assessment (C.A) can be seen as the systematic way of evaluation, where varieties of techniques can be used for the purpose to build up a complete and reliable assessment of a pupil's/student's ability over a long period of time. In other words, it is a continuous and systematic way of evaluating and keeping the student's record of performances cumulatively in virtually everything he does in his learning process, throughout a specific period of study, that is to say; an educational assessment provides the necessary feedback we require in order to maximize the outcomes of educational efforts. In which the assessment of students' learning provides objective evidences necessary in the decision-making process in education.

The development of assessment in Nigeria closely followed the trend of educational development in general. Education being a complex process involves the evolution and selection of the appropriate life experiences in forms of ideas, skills, values and virtues which are to be fostered among a group of people. The transmission of such life experiences is usually conducted through a formal or informal programme of schooling. The effectiveness of such educational programs is conventionally determined through appropriate process of assessment. With regard to this, assessment occurs when a person, in some kind of interaction, direct or indirect with another is conscious of obtaining and interpreting information about a knowledge, understanding or abilities and attitudes or affective disposition of the other person. Assessment is basically concerned about information seeking process, information gathering devices or instruments, information collecting methods and information processing and interpreting procedures. Assessment is therefore, covers every aspects of human life, which calls for objects process for decision-making. Educational institution or schools represent such aspect of an individual's life.

Assessment within the school system or educational assessment is an omnibus term which includes all the processes and products which describe the nature and extent of children's learning, which its degree of correspondence with the aims and objectives of teaching, and its relationship with the environments which are designed to facilitate learning.

Furthermore, educational assessment is the totality of processes involved in making a valid judgment about what behavioural characteristics and changes a learner has acquired, through the process of teaching and learning, being it as an integral to educational process. It is a crucial process in determining the worth of learners, teachers, curricula offerings and the institution of affiliation. Indeed, the integrity of the entire educational system depends, to a large extent, on the quality of its assessment practices.

Definition of Continuous Assessment

Ojerinde and Falayajo (1984) defined continuous assessment as a mechanism where the final grading of student in the Cognitive, Affective and Psychomotor domains of behaviour takes account, in a systematic way, of all his/her performances during a given period of schooling. Such an assessment involves the use of a great variety of modes of evaluation for the purpose of guiding as well as improving the learning and performance of the student.

Continuous Assessment (C.A) can be seen as the systematic way of evaluation, where varieties of techniques can be used for the purpose to build up a complete and reliable assessment of a pupil's/student's ability over a long period of time. In other words, it is a continuous and systematic way of evaluating and keeping the student's record of performances cumulatively in virtually everything he does in his learning process, throughout a specific period of study, that is to say; an educational assessment provides the necessary feedback we require in order to maximize the outcomes of educational efforts. In which the assessment of students' learning provides objective evidences necessary in the decision-making process in education.

Denga, (1987) defined Continuous Assessment (C.A) as a method of determining the final grade of learners for a given period of time through the series of assessment, comprising of test and non-test measures. Dakun, (2000) Continuous Assessment (C.A) as a system of giving a student a final mark/grade based on the work done during a course of study rather than only one examination.

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everything he does in his learning process, throughout a specific period of study, that is to say; an educational assessment provides the necessary feedback we require in order to maximize the outcomes of educational efforts. In which the assessment of students' learning provides objective evidences necessary in the decision-making process in education.

In the whole act of teaching and learning process, assessment is very vibrant, where both classroom instruction and instructional materials were assessed for better attainment of the specific or behavioural objectives, as well as the general objectives.

Conclusively, Continuous Assessment (C.A) refers to the periodic assessments of the learner's abilities, through the use of the desired Assessment Instruments. This contains or covers all the three (3) domains (Cognitive, Affective and Psychomotor Domains). While on the other hands, classroom instruction is the process of the attainment of the goals and objectives of the teaching and learning situation in the classroom, which comprises the combination of the instructional methods and the instructional materials.

Why Continuous Assessment was introduced in schools

Continuous Assessment (C.A) was introduced in schools following the adaptation of the 6-3-3-4 system of Education in Nigeria. The intention was to make assessment of learners more reliable, valid, objective and comprehensive. As we have now emphasized on the totality of learning, it become necessary to evolve and use an assessment system that will consist all aspects of learning.

In the olden days, Continuous Assessment (C.A) was introduced using the old system of assessment was only one shot, in which the examination was done only at the end of the term's work. On this, most of the students were not examined based on what they have been taught until the end of the year. With regard to this one shot system of assessment, the students' were only assessed through the use of tests. Whereas, class assignments, quizzes, home works and projects were hardly used in assessing the learners.

In this olden system, only Cognitive Domain was assessed, that is to say only intellectual ability was examined. Whereas, Affective Domain which includes: interests, attitudes, feelings and emotions of the learners were ignored in this type of assessment. In addition, this does not consider a Psychomotor Domain except in very few instances.

The old system does not have a proper plan of assessment. The assessment in schools was done haphazard in the sense that each school was determined essentially on what to assess and when to assess, which has create a lot of differences in the standards of the assessment. At that time the students was regarded the final examination to be a "do-or-die" affair. In addition, the students were stressed at the end since they were expected to sit only one single examination in all of what they have learnt throughout the term or the year. Or even all the years in the school in the case of school certificate (WASC or GCE).

Furthermore, this old system does not take care of the effects of such things may happen such as; sickness, or any other mishaps that will prevent the students from writing the final examination, which this is to the disadvantage of the learners on this will lead them to repeat the whole or entire year of study as a result of failing to write a single or more examinations.

Last but not the least, the teachers does not participate in the final certification (examination) of the learners, since this was essentially determined by an external examination bodies. In short, this the main reasons that made the Federal Ministry of Education introduced Continuous Assessment (C.A) so as to sanitized the situation, as we were using it now right from Primary schools level to the Tertiary Institutions of Higher learning.

Advantages of introducing Continuous Assessment (C.A) to schools

The introduction of Continuous Assessment (C.A) has air marked great advantages which include among followings:

1. All the three (3) domains {Cognitive, Affective and Psychomotor Domains} were considered during the examination.
2. The assessment is made part of the teaching. In which the Continuous Assessment (C.A) is considered as the feedback from school's assessment on which it is used to improve the classroom instruction.
3. Under the Continuous Assessment (C.A) learner's deficiencies were easily identified and also remedied immediately.

4. Through the use of Continuous Assessment (C.A) the assessment is coordinated and is systematically carried out as it was not done haphazardly during the old system of assessment.
5. With the use of Continuous Assessment (C.A) the assessments were used for guidance purposes.
6. Through the use of Continuous Assessment (C.A) there is a common assessment plan on which learners does not lose anything from their assessments as for the case of transfer from one school to another.
7. Through the use of Continuous Assessment (C.A) teachers were actively involved in the final certification of the students. In fact, the internal assessment and the external assessment were combined together in the final certification of the students.

Characteristics of Continuous Assessment

There are certain features that characterize the use of Continuous Assessment (C.A) on which the assessment should be carried out at some predetermined regular interval. There should be a proper plan of an assessment in the use of the application on the variety of instruments during the conduct of the assessment through the use of Continuous Assessment (C.A), which will results to the following characteristics as we can see below:

1. It must be systematic in nature, where it must follow a certain procedures in doing it.
2. It must to be a guidance oriented, where it will guide some counselors with the reliable information about the students.
3. It must be either formative or summative or sometimes both.
4. It must have an immediate feedback.
5. It must be comprehensive in nature, where it must cover all the three (3) domains {Cognitive, Affective and Psychomotor Domains} during the assessment.

Qualities of Continuous Assessment

There are certain qualities in the use of Continuous Assessment (C.A) on which the assessment should be carried out as we can see below:

1. The Continuous Assessment (C.A) should be Valid and Reliable.
2. The Continuous Assessment (C.A) should be periodic (Continuous Process).
3. The Continuous Assessment (C.A) must contain all the three (3) domains {Cognitive, Affective and Psychomotor Domains} during the assessment.

Structure of Continuous Assessment

There is a standard structure in the use of Continuous Assessment (C.A) which consists of tests, assignments and examinations. Here behaviours were assessed including Cognitive, Affective and Psychomotor domains, through the use of various instruments like tests, examinations, assignments, quiz, oral questioning, home works and projects. Others include interviews, questionnaires and observations, checklists, rating scales, anecdotal records and performance tests. These instruments are broadly classified and handled under tests, assignments and examinations, as applicable in most of our schools on which the assessment should be carried out .This is the typical examples of the structures of Continuous Assessment (C.A) in Katsina State as we can see below:

1. Junior Secondary Schools:

Tests and Assignments - 60%
End of Term Examination -40%
Total -100%

2. Senior Secondary Schools:

Tests and Assignments -30%
End of Term Examination -70%
Total -100%

The School-based assessment as noted above, were conducted for the purpose of placement, monitoring learning, progress, diagnosing learning problems, reporting students' progress, institutional evaluation and accountability, promotion of the students, as well as providing feedback and incentives for the students.

With the above stated structure, it may not necessarily be the same with that of other states, as some variations may occur in some areas or fields of study. However, it should be served as a hypothetical example.

Continuous Assessment instruments

The Continuous Assessment (C.A) involves the collection of so many data for the students. These data were not only on the Cognitive domain, but must also cover the areas of Affective and Psychomotor domains.

In this Continuous Assessment (C.A), it was quite different with that of the olden system of assessment where the teachers only use tests as their means of assessment and neglect other instruments which were valuable in making the assessment in schools. That is to say, only cognitive domain was assessed, where the nature of the Continuous Assessment (C.A) in using the instruments must be applicable to all the three (3) domains (Cognitive, Affective and Psychomotor Domains) during the assessment.

Here we can say that, the classroom instruction or rather to say classroom activities should be assessed by the use of different measuring instruments as we can see in the table below.

The table below represents the above mentioned measuring instruments and where they can be applied as follows:

Instruments	Domains		
	Cognitive	Affective	Psychomotor
Tests	✓		
Class Assignments	✓		
Home works	✓		
Quizzes	✓		
Interviews	✓	✓	
Questionnaires		✓	
Projects	✓	✓	✓
Checklists		✓	✓
Observations		✓	✓
Anecdotal Records		✓	
Socio-metric Techniques		✓	
Experiments	✓		✓

Tests are in form of written examinations applied within or at the end of the term/year. Class assignments or home works is given at the end of the lesson or a group of lessons. Quizzes are given to assess the readiness of the learners. That is why they are given on impromptu (Unannounced).

Furthermore, tests, class assignments, home works, quizzes, interviews and projects are applicable to the **Cognitive Domain.** Interviews, checklists, observations, questionnaires, socio-metric techniques, anecdotal records, and projects are applied in the **Affective Domain.** Interviews and questionnaires are used to obtain opinions of individuals on various issues of life. On the other hand, anecdotal records are the records of important incidental bahaviours.

Projects, checklists and observations are applied to the **Psychomotor Domain.** Checklists are particularly useful if behavior can be broken down into specific tasks, then it will be possible to check which are present and which tasks are absent. Observation is very useful especially as it gives a reliable set of information provided by the observer which is not biased. In addition, observation generally requires a schedule which specifies in details on the guidelines to follow in rating of what is being observed.

Sometimes, some learners exhibits certain important activities but not so common behaviours for example; returning lost items, accepting responsibility for an actions that was committed when nobody was there, extreme quietness in the class, unruly behaviours in the class, exhibiting high level of leadership roles.

Records of these types of behaviour can be kept and later be used for assessment purposes. These records are known as anecdotal records. They are therefore records of incidental behaviours.

Socio-metric techniques are the systems of measuring as well as assessing the nature of social relationships and choice patterns that exist among the learners. Learners can be asked to choose three or more persons, where each of them would want to work with. The nature of their choices can be analyzed to reveal the pattern of social relationship that are of interest to the teachers. It may be possible to discover such persons as the most popular learners (Star). Interest groups that tend to choose only themselves (Cliques), pairs of persons that choose each other (Mutual choices). And those groups that are not chosen by anybody, even though they have chosen others (Isolates), and groups that do not choose each other (Cleavages). These features can be used for educational purposes especially in choosing leaders, grouping for assignments and also control of unruly behaviour.

With the above explanations, in the whole art of teaching and learning process, assessment is very vibrant where both the classroom instruction and instructional materials were assessed for better attainment of the specific or bahavioural objectives.

SAMPLE NUMBER 1

Sample of Continuous Assessment Dossier for Junior Secondary School

Continuous Assessment Report for Basic Education

TERMINAL REPORT (JSS) 1ST TERM

Name of Student …….School……..House…….

Class……Sex…….Year……Term…….. No. in Class……...

Position……No. of Times School Open…… No. of Times Present……..

Next Term Begins…… Next Term Ends…….

Subjects	1st Summary 20	2nd Summary 20	3rd Summary 20	Term's Exam 40	Total Score 100	Position	Remarks	Sign
English								
Mathematics								
Hausa/Yoruba/Igbo								
Arabic/French								
CRS/IRS								
Subjects	1st Summary 20	2nd Summary 20	3rd Summary 20	Term's Exam 40	Total Score 100	Position	Remarks	Sign
Civic Education								
Home Economics								
CCA								
PHE								
Social Studies								
Agricultural Science								
Business Studies								
Computer Studies								
Basic Science								
Basic Technology								

AFFECTIVE DOMAIN	5	4	3	2	1	**BEHAVIOUR**	5	4	3	2	1	**PSYCHOMOTOR DOMAIN**	5	4	3	2	1
Attendance						Perseverance						Hand Writing					
Punctuality						Self-Concept						Games					
Reliability						Respect						Fluency					
Neatness						Self-Control						Sports					
Politeness						Friendliness						Handling Tools/Equipment					
Honesty						Attitude to School Work						Drawing					
Relationship						Obedience						Craft and Creativity					
Responsibility						Industry						Musical Skills					
Attentiveness						National Consciousness/ Patriotism						Speed and Accuracy					
Initiative												Life Safety Skills					
Organizational Ability						**Total Score Obtained**						**Total Score Obtained**					

Guidance Counselor's Remarks……..
House Master's Remarks……
Form Master's Remarks…….
Principal's Remarks……
Principal's Name……Signature, Date & Stamp……...

SAMPLE NUMBER 2

Sample of Continuous Assessment Dossier for Senior Secondary School

Continuous Assessment Dossier for Senior Secondary Schools
TERMINAL ACADEMIC REPORT (1ST TERM)

Next Term Begins…….
School……..……Admission No…..…….
Name of Student……..…….Class……Academic Year…….
Age……Average Class Age…...No in Class……No of Attendance……
No of Times School Opened……...Class Highest Final Score…..…….
Class Lowest Final Score……..Average Score…….Position……..PASS/FAIL

Subjects	Test/Examination Score = 100%					Total Score	Class Aver.	Highest in Class	Lowest in Class	position	Remarks by Subject Teachers
	1st 10	2nd 10	3rd 10	Total C.A	70 Exam						
English Language											
Mathematics											
Biology/Economics											
Chemistry/Hausa											
Physics/Marketing											
Food & Nutrition/Home Management											
Accounting/History											
Agric. Science/Animal Husbandry											
Geography/Government											
IRK/CRK											
French/Arabic											
Commerce/Literature in Eng.											
Technical Drawing/Fine Arts											
Computer Science/Data Processing											
Civic Education											
Wood Work/Metal Work											
Further Mathematics											

SKILLS	5	4	3	2	1	BEHAVIOUR	5	4	3	2	1	BEHAVIOUR	5	4	3	2	1
Handwriting						Punctuality						Spirit of Cooperation					
Fluency						Attendance at class						Sense of Responsibility					
Games						Reliability						Attentiveness					
Sports						Neatness						Initiative					
Gymnastics						Politeness						Organizational Ability					
Handling of Tools Lab. and Workshop						Honesty						Perseverance					
Drawing & Painting						Relationship with staff						Physical Development					
Crafts						Relationship with students											
Musical Skills						Self-Control											

House Master's Remarks……
Form Master's Remarks…….
Principal's Remarks……
Principal's Name……Signature, Date & Stamp……...

Implementation of Continuous Assessment (C.A) at school level

According to Okoye (2000), this requires the teachers during the term to keep records of the scores of students obtained through class tests, projects executed, weekly exercises and take home assignments. The weight to be assigned to the scores from each of the evaluation techniques varies from one operator to the other. Scores from this examination were then added to the scores from the Continuous Assessment (C.A) to obtain the students' scores in particular subjects for the term. Here some of these evaluation techniques should involve practical tasks where possible. The teachers were accumulating scores through the process of various techniques and keep the records of whatever they have observed. With the use of Continuous Assessment (C.A) at the end of the term the teachers were expected to give a report of the child in Cognitive, Affective and Psychomotor domains altogether.

For the effective implementation of Continuous Assessment (C.A), it is expected to set up a committee in every school that should coordinate and monitor what the teachers should do in the process of assessing the students. The committee should consist of the Principal, the Vice Principal, the school Guidance Counselor, the head of each section and any member of staff that have the training and knowledge of test, measurement and evaluation or similar fields.

At this level, Continuous Assessment (C.A) should be concerned more about the use of standardized assessment instruments. In addition, there should be a proper classification on the objectives of Continuous Assessment (C.A), the organizational plan for Continuous Assessment (C.A) and the data that should be obtained. There is a Continuous Assessment (C.A) working committee at the Federal Ministry of Education that is usually conducting the National Assessment for the monitoring the learning achievements of the students at each State of the Federation.

The successful implementation of the Continuous Assessment (C.A) in Nigeria had requires concerted efforts by all stakeholders. Hence, there is need for adequate planning, provision of the necessary materials, capacity building for the teachers, adequate motivation and regular monitoring and evaluation in order to achieve the desired objectives of operating the Continuous Assessment (C.A) in the Country.

Objectives of the Committee of the Continuous Assessment (C.A)

Ugodulunwa (2008) has stated the following objectives of the Continuous Assessment (C.A) Committee:

1. To report the learners' performance to the interested persons.
2. Identify the achievement levels of various groups of the students.
3. To diagnose the learning deficiencies for the purpose of improving the classroom instruction
4. To access the special aptitudes tests and interest of the students for counseling purposes.

She has also stated some functions of the School Level Committee for Continuous Assessment (C.A) which includes the following:

1. Assigning duties to the teachers on the Continuous Assessment (C.A).
2. Ensuring the availability of the necessary materials to be used in conducting the Continuous Assessment (C.A).
3. Provide the guidance to the teachers in the conduct of the Continuous Assessment (C.A).
4. To develop the Time-Table for the assessment of the students during the conduct of the Continuous Assessment (C.A).
5. To be the general overseer of the keeping records of the Continuous Assessment (C.A).

Problem Statement

Educational assessment provides the necessary feedback required in order to minimize the outcomes of the educational efforts. The assessment of learners in the schools provides the objective evidences necessary in the decision making process in education. A good measurement is resulting to the accurate data which gives a good foundation of sound decision making. There is a little doubt among educational practitioners about the special value of assessments as a basic condition for effective learning. There are some problems affecting the implementation of Continuous Assessment (C.A) in assessing the learners Academic Performance in our schools as can be listed below:

1. Lack of the availability of assessment instruments in the conduct of Continuous Assessment (C.A) in our schools.
2. Lack of basic skills and proper training by the teachers on how to conduct Continuous Assessment (C.A) in our schools.

3. Lack of proper records keeping of the Continuous Assessment (C.A) in our schools.
4. Lack of uniformity in the conduct of the Continuous Assessment (C.A) in our schools.
5. Lack of proper supervision of the Continuous Assessment (C.A) in our schools.
6. Up to this time, some teachers were only using tests and assignments in assessing students' academic performance, which are more of **Cognitive Domain** and neglect the other two (2) domains (**Affective Domain and Psychomotor Domain**) in our schools.
7. Lack of objectivity of assessment in the conduct of the Continuous Assessment (C.A) between the teachers in our schools.
8. Difficulty in coping with the large groups in the conduct of the Continuous Assessment (C.A) in our schools.
9. Lack of proper knowledge in the construction of Continuous Assessment (C.A) questions for the teachers in our schools.
10. Some students do not value Continuous Assessment (C.A) in our schools.

Since we have listed some of the problems associated with the conduct of the Continuous Assessment (C.A) in our schools, let mention some of the proper solutions to the problems:

1. Available assessment instruments should be adequately supplied in our schools for the proper conduct of the Continuous Assessment (C.A) in our schools.
2. The basic skills and proper training should be adhered to the teachers for the proper conduct of the Continuous Assessment (C.A) in our schools.
3. Proper records keeping should be done by the teachers in our schools.
4. There is need for uniformity in the conduct of the Continuous Assessment (C.A) in our schools.
5. Proper supervision of the Continuous Assessment (C.A) should be done in our schools.
6. Teachers should use all the three (3) domains (Cognitive, Affective and Psychomotor Domains) during the conduct of the Continuous Assessment (C.A) in our schools.
7. There must be an objectivity of assessment in the conduct of the Continuous Assessment (C.A) between the teachers in our schools.
8. Proper knowledge in the construction of Continuous Assessment (C.A) questions for the teachers should be adhered in our schools.
9. The teachers should divide the students into smaller groups during the conduct of the Continuous Assessment (C.A) in our schools.
10. The students should be enlightened on the importance as well as the usage of the Continuous Assessment (C.A) in our schools.

Importance of Continuous Assessment (CA)

Continuous Assessment (C.A) plays a vital role in the educational process, serving various purposes that contribute to the overall development and success of the students. Some of the key reasons why Continuous Assessment (C.A) is important include:

1. **Motivation and Encouragement**

Regular assessments encourage the students to stay motivated and engaged throughout the learning process. The assessments will provide the students with a sense of accomplishment, as they progress; fostering a positive attitude towards learning and encouraging the students to strive for further success.

2. **Feedback and Improvement**

Continuous Assessment (C.A) provides timely feedback to both the students and the teachers, enabling them to identify areas that need improvement. With this feedback, students will make necessary adjustment in their learning strategies, while the educators can adapt their teaching methods to cater for the special needs of the students.

3. **Enhanced Learning**

Regular assessments can help the students to stay engaged with the materials in promoting a deeper understanding of the subject matter.

4. **Holistic Evaluation:**

Continuous Assessment (C.A) allows for a comprehensive evaluation of a students' performance over a period of time, considering their progress, strengths and areas for development. This approach

provides more complete and accurate representation of students' capabilities compared to a single high-stakes examination.

5. **Identifying Learning Gaps:**

Through Continuous Assessment (C.A), educators can identify learning gaps early on and implement targeted interventions to address them. This proactive approach helps the students from falling behind and enables them to stay on track with their academic development.

6. **Facilitating Personalized Learning:**

Continuous Assessment (C.A) facilitates personalized learning by enabling educators to tailor their teaching strategies to the specific needs and learning styles of individual students. This personalized approach can foster a more effective and inclusive learning environment that accommodates diverse students' abilities and performances.

7. **Encouraging Responsibility and Accountability:**

Regular assessments cultivate a sense of responsibility and accountability in students, as they understand their progress is being monitored continuously. This can instill a strong work ethics and a sense of ownership in their academic journey, preparing them for the challenges they may encounter in their future endeavors.

Generally, Continuous Assessment (C.A) is essential for promoting a dynamic and effective learning environment that supports the holistic development of students and encourages a lifelong commitment to learning and growth.

METHODOLOGY

The Research Design used for this study is Descriptive Survey. Survey according to Akuezuilo and Agu (2003) is a means or a method of obtaining information from various groups or persons mainly through questionnaire or personal interview. With Descriptive Survey Research Design, the researcher will be able to collect information through a questionnaire from a group of people (the Students and Teachers) in some selected secondary schools in the three (3) Senatorial Zones we have in Katsina State, which will be analyzed and the result would be generalized to the entire Population. An oral interview was conducted to the Zonal Directors of the Zonal Quality Assurance Units about the topic of the research. And also a questionnaire was distributed to the members of staff teaching at various secondary schools in the three Zonal Offices.

DISCUSSIONS/RESULTS

The discussion of the findings was divided into two (2):

The findings from the three (3) Zonal Directors of the Zonal Quality Assurance Units:

1. Some teachers were not conducting the Continuous Assessment (C.A) in our schools to the students at all. The teachers were just manipulating the marks for the Continuous Assessment (C.A) in our schools at the end of the term after conducting terminal examination.
2. The few teachers who were conducting the Continuous Assessment (C.A) in our schools to the students were only administering tests and assignments which are concern with the Cognitive Domain only and neglecting the other two (2) domains (Affective and Psychomotor domains).
3. From the side of the Government there is no any proper supervision on how the Continuous Assessment (C.A) was being conducted and also how the records of the Continuous Assessment (C.A) is being kept in our schools.
4. From the side of the students, they do not consider it as of great importance, because some teachers only gave them marks for the Continuous Assessment (C.A) in our schools up head without conducting it in the classroom. And Zonal Office was always challenging them for that attitude.
5. Most of the staff in the secondary schools does not have proper knowledge about the conduct of Continuous Assessment (C.A) in our schools.

The findings from members of staff at various secondary schools in three (3) Zonal Offices of the Zonal Quality Assurance Units:

1. Our students do not value Continuous Assessment (C.A) in our schools.
2. Lack of the available assessment instruments in the conduct of Continuous Assessment (C.A) in our schools.
3. Lack of basic skills and proper training by the teachers on how to conduct Continuous Assessment (C.A) in our schools.
4. Lack of uniformity in the conduct of the Continuous Assessment (C.A) in our schools.
5. Lack of proper supervision of the Continuous Assessment (C.A) in our schools from the Government.
6. Some teachers were only using tests and assignments in assessing students' academic performance, which are more of **Cognitive Domain** and neglect the other two (2) domains (**Affective Domain and Psychomotor Domain**) in our schools.
7. Lack of objectivity of assessment in the conduct of the Continuous Assessment (C.A) between the teachers in our schools.
8. Difficulty in coping with the large groups in the conduct of the Continuous Assessment (C.A) in our schools.
9. Lack of proper knowledge in the construction of Continuous Assessment (C.A) questions for the teachers in our schools.

OBSERVATIONS

During the conduct of this research, the researcher has observed the following:

1. Some teachers were only using tests and assignments in assessing students' academic performance, which are more of **Cognitive Domain** and neglect the other two (2) domains (**Affective Domain and Psychomotor Domain**) in our schools.
2. There is difficulty in coping with the large groups in the conduct of the Continuous Assessment (C.A) in our schools.
3. No proper supervision of the Continuous Assessment (C.A) in our schools from the Government.
4. No proper and adequate knowledge for the construction of Continuous Assessment (C.A) questions by the teachers in our schools.
5. No uniformity among teachers in the conduct of the Continuous Assessment (C.A) in our schools.
6. No objectivity of assessment among teachers in the conduct of the Continuous Assessment (C.A) between the teachers in our schools.
7. Teachers lack the competency for the developing and using the instruments of assessment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The researcher has recommended the following for the proper conduct of the Continuous Assessment (C.A) in our schools:

1. The teachers should use all the three (3) domains (**Cognitive, Affective and Psychomotor Domains**) in assessing the students' academic performance in our schools.
2. To cope up with the difficulty in using large groups of students during the conduct of the Continuous Assessment (C.A) in our schools, the teachers should divide the students into smaller groups.
3. Proper supervision in the conduct of the Continuous Assessment (C.A) should be observed in our schools from the Government.
4. Proper and adequate knowledge should be attained for the construction of Continuous Assessment (C.A) questions by the teachers in our schools.
5. Uniformity among teachers in the conduct of the Continuous Assessment (C.A) should be structured in our schools.
6. Objectivity of the assessment among teachers in the conduct of the Continuous Assessment (C.A) between the teachers should be attained in our schools.

7. A proper utilization of the Continuous Assessment (C.A) materials should be done in our Schools.
8. Adequate Continuous Assessment (C.A) materials should be supplied to our Schools.
9. The Ministry of Education should organize workshops and seminars for the teachers on how to conduct the Continuous Assessment (C.A), and use it as a means of improving students' academic performance in our Schools.

CONCLUSION

Conclusively, Continuous Assessment (C.A) refers to the periodic assessments of the learner's abilities, through the use of the desired Assessment Instruments. This contains or covers all the three (3) domains (**Cognitive, Affective and Psychomotor Domains**). While on the other hands, classroom instruction is the process of the attainment of the goals and objectives of the teaching and learning situation in the classroom, which comprises the combination of the instructional methods and the instructional materials.

Continuous Assessment (C.A) does not only measure the mental ability of learners in school. It measures also other aspects of human behaviour such as interests and attitudes. Some of the ways in which interests and attitudes can be assessed include the use of rating scales, interviews, observations and inventories.

In a nutshell, Continuous Assessment (C.A) is a classroom strategy implemented by the teachers so as to ascertain the knowledge, understanding as well as the skills attained by the students. While the teachers administer assessment in variety of ways over a period of time, so as to allow them observed multiple tasks and collect information about what students know, understand and to some extent what can be done in the future.

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