



# **COMPETENCE EVALUATION BY PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS: A PANACEA FOR STUDENTS IMPROVED PERFORMANCE IN CALABAR ZONE, NIGERIA**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The study examined teachers' competence in evaluating students' learning outputs. It was a descriptive survey design whose area of coverage was 2021/2022 school year in public secondary schools across Calabar Education Zone of Cross River State, Nigeria. Four out of seven Local Government Areas, 20 out of 100 secondary schools and 496 out of 1,502 teachers (evaluators) formed the sample of the study. Each teacher had one student to examine on; punctuality, obedience, self-control and honesty (Affective Domains); the evaluation methods considered were formative and summative evaluation. The sampling methods adopted were purposive, simple random and systematic sampling methods. Two sets of questionnaire were used for data collection in addition to students' result sheets (first term junior secondary school two (JSS 2) and teaching staff disposition (teachers' register). The two sets of questionnaire were Teachers' Competence Evaluation Questionnaire (TCEQ) and Teachers' Score on Students' Affective Domain Questionnaire (TSSADQ). The questionnaire instruments were validated by experts in different areas of research affected. The results obtained from the test-retest pilot study were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation to obtain the internal consistency of the measures whose coefficient was 0.76. Data collected were analyzed using contingency chi-square technique to test the formulated null hypotheses. It was found that evaluation methods influence students' learning outputs and that the quality of teacher competence evaluation also influence students' affective domain. It was recommended that teachers should intermittently evaluate students learning in the course of instruction and not forgetting the final evaluation. Also, teachers should improve their evaluation strategies by making learning a life-long affair.

**KEYWORDS:** Competence, Evaluation, Formative, and Summative evaluation, Affective Domain

## **INTRODUCTION**

The importance of evaluation in the teaching and learning process cannot be over-emphasized. Evaluation of a learner plays a vital role in the decision that will be made about the progress, promotion, potentials as well as the degree to which the learner is benefiting from learning.

It is quite crucial that evaluation should be thorough and should take into account all the domains of behaviours of the learners (Asuru & Ogidi; 2014; Okpala & Onucha; 2001; Prescott, 2022). Evaluation provides essential information on students' program and for helping students to structure their learning. This can be possible where teachers utilize quality evaluation methods

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in their classrooms interactions (Asuru & Ogidi, 2011).

Education is an indispensable asset through which a nation can effectively realize its goals and objectives in national development. This fundamental role of education in national development is affirmed in the National Policy on Education of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (NPE, 2018) in such assertion that “education is an instrument for national development” (p. 6). Similarly, the teachers’ role in any education system is a critical one as they constitute a resource for effective implementation and realization of educational policy as contained in the school curriculum. It therefore behooves the teachers to be competent in performing their primary role of helping students to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills for their life-long endeavours and nation building.

Teaching is the most important singular activity in the school. It is on effective teaching that all other activities must rely if learning by the students must take place (NERDC, 2016; 2018). A major component of the Basic Education Programme is to ensure quality of the teaching and learning process, and that one way to achieve this is through systematic capacity building for teachers. It is a general view expressed in many quarters that teachers must be empowered to teach with confidence and competence. Put in another way, teachers must be assisted to identify “Best Practice in Teaching and Learning” and to apply them in their everyday teaching (NERDC, 2018). Some of the selected Best Practices that are appropriate at the secondary education curricula in the classroom are that; teachers should be able to:

- Identify and use appropriate teaching methods.
- Plan to teach using a note of lesson.
- Plan, conduct and evaluate activity-based teaching.

In a school setting, evaluation is the systematic process of collecting, analyzing and interpreting information to determine the degree to which students are achieving learning objectives. According to Gronlund in Ukpokor (2014), evaluation is the systematic process of judging the worth, desirability or effectiveness of something according to laid-down rules and purposes. The information so obtained could be quantitative or qualitative for use in judging the worth of something and taking decisions or making value judgement on the information (Gronlund in Joshua, 2005, Asuru & Ogidi, 2014).

Evaluation is an essential component of teaching. Without evaluation teaching is incomplete. Some countries have professional requirements for students’ evaluation. For example, in England the Teacher Development Agency (TDA) requires that those awarded Qualified Teacher Status can:

- Make effective use of a range of evaluation and recording strategies.
- Evaluate the learning needs of those they teach in order to set challenging learning objectives.
- Provide timely, accurate and constructive feedback on learners’ attainment, progress and areas for development.
- “Support and guide learners to reflect on their learning, identify their emerging learning needs” (Pollard, 2010 p. 391).

When teachers evaluate students’ attainment of knowledge and skills for the purpose of making decision about their teaching, or learning progress of the students, they are engaging in formative evaluation, which is also called Evaluation for Learning. When they use the evaluation to determine grades or scores at the end of a unit, a term or a year and to decide whether the students are ready to proceed to the next level of their education, they are engaging in Summative Evaluation also called Evaluation of Learning (Pollard, 2010). Learning is of different categories, so is evaluation (Gronlund in Joshua, 2005). Where the evaluation results come from achievement test, aptitude test, ability or intelligence test etc, these areas are considered as cognitive domain, that is, the development of the brain. The next category of learning is the psychomotor domain which considers the development of the limbs and the third category of learning is the Affective domain, which is the development of the heart. They include punctuality; an activity of doing things at the arranged or correct time, example class attendance, obedience, the willingness to do something you are directed to do. Example obeying school rules and regulations, self-control, the ability of one to remain calm and not to show excitement or emotions; and honesty; the quality of being truthful, not telling lies, not cheating and so on.

It is apt at this point to state that where the process of collecting and analyzing the information from students are faulty or incomplete, then the decisions emanating from the information would definitely be faulty, inaccurate and of little or no value to the end users such as students, schools, parents,

governments and other stakeholders. The obvious concern expressed in the preceding explanations leads to the necessity of having competence evaluation in the school. Competence is the ability of an individual or a group to do a job properly and effectively. The term competence first appeared in an article written by R. W. White in 1959 as a concept for performance motivation (Nwaco, 2015) competence is seen by some authors as a combination of practical and theoretical knowledge, cognitive skill, behaviour, and value used to improve performance or as the quality of being adequate or very qualified. It could be viewed as a group of related abilities, commitment, knowledge and skills that enable an individual or an organization act effectively and efficiently in a situation or in a job (Dreyfus, 2013). Lumen (2018) defines competence as a measurable pattern of knowledge, skills, abilities, behaviours and other characteristics that an individual needs to perform activities. It is the ability to do things successfully or efficiently.

One of the influential and commonly discussed models in the literature of teacher preparation which is considered in this paper is competence-based model, otherwise called performance-based model. This model, competence-based, is founded on the behaviourist theory and so depends on the identification of specific behavioural and psychological routines as the target of training interventions. Its focus is on skill training (Omojuwa, 2007; Univent; Slavanger, 2020).

Competence evaluation is the process of looking into the current skill levels of employees and the potential competences they could acquire or enhance. If it is done for a group and against a specific standard, it reveals the skills gap that need to be filled, if the organization wants to reach its strategic goals (Skiller, 2022). Competence based evaluations are an extremely powerful method used by researchers to evaluate strengths and weaknesses on per-employee and team level. Competence based evaluation in education typically begins with a self-evaluation where students and or teachers reflect on their abilities and goals. Wing Institute (2021), has four groupings of competencies that can help teachers to master what they need to maximize their performance. They are (1) classroom management (2) instructional delivery (3) formative evaluation, and (4) personal competencies.

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

One feature of global reforms in education which brought about the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), now Sustainable Development Goal, the Goals of Education for All (EFA) as well as the back-to-bases movements as contained in the New Basic Education Curriculum, has been an emphasis on students' evaluation. The failure of many students to master even the most basic cognitive and non-cognitive skills needed for productive employment, social development and other inter-personal activities, has prompted states and even the federal governments to demand proof that students are meeting minimum standards necessary for the award of certificate. As a result of this many states and even the federal governments now employ statewide evaluation of students at one or more stages in the educational process, with high emphasis on continuous evaluation. This brings to the fore, the question as to whether teachers' competence evaluation relates with students' learning outputs?

The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between teachers' competence evaluation and students' outputs in school. Specifically, the study:

- i) Examine the influence of teachers' competence in evaluating students' grades of pass,
- ii) Determine the influence of teachers' competence in evaluating students' affective domains performance scores.

To guide the direction of study two research questions were posed:

- i. What influence has teachers' methods of evaluation on students' performance grades?
- ii. What influence has teachers' evaluation quality on students' affective domain scores?

Null hypotheses:

- i. Teachers' methods of evaluation has no significant influence on students' performance grades.
- ii. Teachers' evaluation quality has no significant influence on students' affective domain scores.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study is a descriptive survey research. It was designed to investigate whether teachers' competence in evaluation influence students' output performance. The design was appropriate for the study because it describes the state of affairs as it exists at present. The target population was the teachers in public secondary school within Calabar Education Zone during the

2021/2022 school session. The zone consists of seven (7) Local Government Areas (LGAs) with 99 post-primary schools under the state government and one (1) under the federal government. The sample was 496 teachers out of 1,502 teachers from 20 schools and four (4) LGAs.

The four LGAs were purposively selected to cover two urban and two rural areas. Simple random sampling technique was adopted to select the schools, specifically, the hat and draw method of random sampling was used. The researchers write all the names of the schools on pieces of papers and folded them. The papers were mixed and put in a hat and a neutral person was asked to pick 20 schools, one at a time. Systematic sampling method was used to choose the teachers. In each school visited, 33 percent of the teachers was picked from the staff register (teaching staff disposition) as listed, and one teacher after every five was picked. The systematic sampling method was also used to select 496 Junior Secondary School two (JSS 2) students. This class was selected because the study emphasis was on Upper Basic 9 section. Each teacher in the sample was assigned one JSS 2 student for observation of his/her affective characteristics.

First term 2021/2022 result sheets containing the Continuous Assessment (CA) and Terminal Scores of each student were used. To obtain teachers' data or their level of competence evaluation (high, moderate and low) of students, Teacher Competence Evaluation Questionnaire (TCEQ) was given to the Heads of Departments (HODs) to score and grade the teachers. It was the feelings of the researchers that if teachers were given the questionnaire to fill by

themselves, not many would score themselves low, which implies that a false data might be collected. The second set of teachers' questionnaire called Teachers' Score for Students Affective Domain (TSSADQ) was used to examine teacher level of competence evaluation and its influence on students' Affective Domain (punctuality, obedience, self-control and honesty).

The two sets of questionnaire were constructed by the researchers and given to three independent assessors (experts) to scrutinize in view of the purpose, research questions and hypotheses of the study. To ascertain the content validity of the instruments, professional guidance counsellors, psychologists and psychometricians were consulted. Their comments and suggestions were used to bring the instruments to the final stage before administration. The reliability of the instruments was ascertained by testing the internal consistency using test-retest method through a pilot survey. The results of the two sets of scores were correlated using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation and the coefficient of reliability obtained was 0.76.

From the students' result sheet, the Formative Evaluation (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> assessments) and the Summative Evaluation (Terminal exams score) were obtained and the two forming separate scores of 100 percent each and different grades assigned. As stated earlier, every teacher has one student to study/examine under: punctuality, obedience, self-control and honesty) and score them, an exercise that tested for one month. The data collected were analyzed using chi-square technique.

## **RESULTS**

Null hypothesis (Ho<sub>1</sub>)

Teachers' methods of competence evaluation has no significant influence on students' performance grades.

**Table 1:** Chi-square analysis of the influence of teachers' competence evaluation methods on students' performance grades

Evaluation methods	Performance Grades										Total
	A		B		C		D		F		
Formative evaluation	o	(e)	o	(e)	O	(e)	o	(e)	O	(e)	
	62	(51.45)	86	(83.02)	91	(94.72)	39	(40.93)	12	(19.88)	290
Summative evaluation	26	(36.55)	56	(58.97)	71	(67.28)	31	(29.07)	22	(14.12)	206
<b>Total</b>	<b>88</b>		<b>142</b>		<b>162</b>		<b>70</b>		<b>34</b>		<b>496</b>

Calculated  $X^2 = 2.16 + 0.11 + 0.15 + 0.09 + 3.12 + 3.04 + 0.15 + 0.21 + 0.13 + 4.40 = 13.56$

df = 5; @P < 0.05 for a non-directional  $H_1$ ,  $X^2 = 11.07$

O = Observed value, e = expected value in bracket

The result shows that the null hypothesis is rejected leading to the conclusion that teacher's methods of evaluation significantly influence students' performance (grades). The calculated value of  $X^2$ , is greater than the table value which leads to be rejection of the null hypothesis.

Null hypothesis ( $H_2^1$ )

Teachers' competence evaluation quality has no significant influence on students' affective domain scores.

**Table 2:** Chi-square analysis of the influence of teachers' competence evaluation quality on students' affective domain

Competence evaluation quality	Affective Domain								Total
	Punctuality		Obedience		Self-control		Honesty		
High	o	(e)	o	(e)	O	(e)	O	(e)	
	86	(92.54)	80	(83.29)	76	(71.56)	64	(58.61)	306
Moderate	45	(30.24)	20	(27.22)	20	(23.39)	15	(19.15)	100
Low	19	(27.22)	35	(24.50)	20	(21.05)	16	(17.24)	90
<b>Total</b>	<b>166</b>		<b>135</b>		<b>111</b>		<b>90</b>		<b>496</b>

Calculated  $X^2 = 0.00 + 0.00 + 0.13 + 0.27 + 0.00 + 7.20 + 1.91 + 0.49 + 0.90 + 2.48 + 4.50 + 0.05 + 0.09 = 18.02$

df = 6, 0.05 sign-level; 2 tail test = Table  $X^2 = 12.59$

O = Observed value, e = expected where

From the result in Table 2, the calculated  $X^2 = (18.02)$  is greater than the critical  $X^2 (12.59)$ , the null hypothesis that stated that there is no significant influence of teacher quality of competence evaluation on students' affective domain is therefore rejected. The result reveals that teachers' quality of competence evaluation influence some characteristics of affective domain of students.

**DISCUSSION**

The major findings that emerge from the analyses of data are:

- i. Teachers' evaluation methods has a significant influence on students performance in school.
- ii. The quality of teachers' evaluation of students has a significant influence on the students' performance in their affective domain.

A close look at the report in Table 1 revealed that students made better results by being evaluated with formative evaluation than students who received immediate feedback and correction of inadequacies in their learning, ended up doing better than those who received their corrections only at the end of term. The finding conforms with NERDC (2018) and Pollard that formative provides corrective measures for learner's evaluation and the end they achieve good results. Pollard (2010); Prescott (2022), described formative evaluation as evaluation for learning, which occurs frequently throughout instruction while summative evaluation as a evaluation of learning which occurs after the instruction is complete. Although both methods are good, competence evaluators know when, how and for what purpose each should be applied.

The result in Table 2 revealed that students who were evaluated by teachers considered to be high competent evaluators received higher scores than the other two categories. Perhaps, the highly competent evaluators, might have adopted encouraging strategies that influence the students' psyche positively. The probability expressed here is in tandem with the England Teacher Development Agency (TDA) requirements for the award of Qualified Teacher Status: That teachers should be able to "make effective use of a range of evaluation and recording strategies" (Pollard, 2010 p. 391), to improve the learning of their students. The highly competent teachers are more informed and skillful than the less competent ones.

In conclusion, it is clear that evaluation methods influence students' learning and performance. Specifically, formative evaluation, that is, evaluation for learning provides teachers and learners with timely reflection on their teaching and learning activities respectively. It was also established in this study that the quality of teachers' competence evaluation influences students' learning outputs. The highly competent evaluators (teachers) provide better learning strategies than their lowly competent colleagues in improving learning in all the domains, (cognitive and non-cognitive). In all cases teaching and learning process is not complete without evaluation, and competent one at that.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Continuous evaluation in the course of instruction should be encouraged and enforced by monitoring teaching especially of the less competent ones.
- There should be adoption of improved evaluation strategies by all teachers. This could be enhanced by constant training and retraining of teachers.

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