



Assessment Practices of Economics Teachers of Senior Secondary Schools in Maiduguri Metropolis, Borno State, Nigeria

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Abstract. The study examined assessment practices of Economics teachers of senior secondary schools in Maiduguri Metropolis, Borno State, Nigeria. The objectives of the study were to: (1) determine how Economics teachers plan assessment, (2) find out methods and procedures followed by Economics teachers to conduct assessments, (3) assess how Economics teachers give assessment feedback to students on their performance: and (4) assess how Economics teachers utilize assessment feedbacks. The study used descriptive research design. The population for the study was all the twenty (20) Economics teachers from eight (8) senior secondary schools where Economics is taught in Maiduguri metropolis. Census sampling technique was used in the sampling of respondents because of their small size. The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire tagged “Economics Teachers’ Assessment Practices Questionnaire” (ETAPQ)” developed by the researchers. The questionnaire had a Cronbach alpha reliability index of 0.78 and consisted of twenty-eight (28) items. The items on the questionnaire were responded on a 5-point scale ranging from always to never. The researchers administered the questionnaire to the respondents at the schools and were retrieved the same day. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) to answer all the research questions. The findings of the study revealed that Economics teachers plan assessment by ensuring that assessment tasks align to learning outcomes, consider the six levels of cognitive outcomes in the Bloom’s Taxonomy and align classroom assessment tasks with what has been taught. The findings of the study also revealed that Economics teachers conduct written assessments in the class, provide assessment tasks that allow students to

achieve at a high level and engage students in group projects, provide face-to-face feedbacks to whole class, on-the-moment feedback as students are still engaged in the tasks as well as feedback in written or print form which included comments on students ‘assessed work. The result of the study also indicated that teachers utilize assessment feedback to evaluate teaching strategies, determine appropriateness of instructional materials, identify students’ difficult learning areas, but Economics teachers do not sample assessment from the entire theme of Economics curriculum, they do not give feedback at the end of each assessment and they do not utilize assessment feedback to determine students’ promotion to next level. Based on the findings of the study it was recommended that Borno state Ministry of Education should ensure that Economics teachers in senior secondary schools go for further training and take more courses in assessment to improve their assessment skills.

Keywords: Assessment Practices, Economics, Teachers, Senior Secondary School

1. Introduction

Educational assessment is the systematic process of gathering and discussing information from multiple and diverse sources in order to develop a deep understanding of what students know, understand and can do with their knowledge as a result of their educational experiences (Zhou, 2023). In educational systems worldwide, assessment of learning is a classic way of measuring students’ progress and are integral to accountability of schools and the educational system. Assessment is inseparably linked with

teaching and learning. The contribution of assessment to an educational system is so significant that it forms the basis for almost all fundamental decision making. Throughout an educational system, decisions have to be made about students, curricula and programmes and educational policies.

Assessment is an integral part of instruction as it determines whether or not the goals of education are being met. Considering the content of curriculum in designing any assessment is vital as it helps in identifying and meeting the educational goal (Chappius & Stiggius, 2002). Assessment influences decisions about grades, placement, advancement, instructional needs and curriculum. Well planned and designed assessment methods provide teachers with valuable feedbacks about students learning, what students learned, how well they learned it and where they struggled. Assessment makes students more active and responsible for their education. It serves to improve their learning. Assessments support deep learning, develop critical thinking and promote students' interaction and continuity of the learning experiences.

While classroom assessments play a central role in the evaluation of student learning, they provide relevant measures of many important learning outcomes and indirect evidence concerning others. They make expected learning outcomes explicit to students and parents and show what types of performance are valued. The validity of the information they provide, however, depends on the care that goes into the planning and preparation of tests and assessments (Miller, Linn & Gronlund, 2009).

The vast array of assessment procedures used in the school can be classified and described in many different ways. Assessment procedures are frequently selected on the basis of their objectivity, accuracy or convenience. Thus, assessment procedures can contribute to improvements in the teaching-learning process itself and contribute directly to improved student teaching as well as inform planning and decision making (Miller et.al. 2009).

One of the fundamental principles of assessment is that students at any level need feedback. Students should know how close they are to their school learning outcomes or goals as a result of their educational activities. Assessment should include the provision of feedback. For formative assessments to contribute to students' learning they must receive high-quality feedback on their efforts (Tontus, 2020).

Feedback from carefully developed test and other types of assessment can be utilized to improve instruction, such information can aid in judging: the appropriateness and attainability of the instructional goals, the usefulness of the instructional materials and the effectiveness of the instructional methods. Furthermore, literature confirms that classroom assessment results inform teachers on whether pupils have understood the learning material or not and enables teachers to have a clear guideline on how they should plan for their next lessons (Mainde, Mtonga, Magasu & Mpolomoka, 2023).

An effective classroom assessment begins with an assessment plan that specifically describes the instructional objectives and content to be measured and the relative emphasis to be given to each intended learning outcomes. Mahendra, Dewi and Wahyuni (2021) determined formative assessment planning during online learning in Indonesia. The findings showed that all teachers successfully integrated formative assessment planning into their lesson plan. There were formative techniques that appeared in the lesson plan, such as questioning technique, formative task, daily test, online discussion, and self-assessment.

Babatimehinet et. al. (2025) determined teachers' knowledge of key issues such as classroom assessment, teaching process and assessment procedure in school-based assessment among secondary school teachers in Ondo state, Nigeria. The result indicated highest mean score in the classroom assessment ($M = 7.81$, $SD = 0.941$), indicating relatively better implementation in this area. Teaching processes had a lower mean score ($M = 5.70$, $SD = 1.774$), while assessment procedures recorded the lowest mean score ($M = 4.20$, $SD = 1.612$), reflecting weaker implementation.

Sheikh and Manap, (2024) conducted a study on classroom assessment practices in secondary school education in Kuala Selangor, Malaysia. The findings revealed that teachers mostly use teacher-centered strategies while other teachers use the methods of the project, try to succeed, peer, practical, group, collaborative, class and individual. Additionally, most teachers use quiz techniques, question-answers, training, open-ended questions and closed questions. The result further revealed some teachers use the reward trend and fostering a sense of responsibility among students.

Vlachou, (2018) investigated classroom assessment practices in middle school science lessons among Greek science teachers. The findings of this study revealed that participants focused more on the

summative uses of assessment, without effectively using the assessment evidence to complete the learning loop and thus meet the formative assessment requirements. Teachers appeared to use some formative assessment principles which are valuable in promoting student learning, but their approaches were more teacher-directed while students appeared not to have any role in the assessment process.

Ezeugo (2019) determined test feedback strategies adopted by primary school teachers in Anambra State, Nigeria. Findings of the study revealed that teachers majorly gave feedback in writing or print form which included handwritten comments on students' assessed work, written numeric scores, grades, averages or positions, etc. they also gave face-to-face feedbacks to whole classes, individual students and small groups of students.

Gan, An and Liu (2021) studied 308 university students' perceived teacher feedback practices and their feedback experiences in an English Studies course in two Universities in China. Results of the study revealed teacher facilitative feedback was found to be most frequently used in both the two universities, suggesting that teachers involved in the Integrated English course were highly inclined to provide scaffoldings to facilitate students solving problems or performing tasks independently in the daily classroom. The dominance of facilitative feedback practices in this English Studies course, the study concluded could be related to the recent adoption of tasked-based language teaching initiated in the China's reform of the tertiary English Studies curriculum in line with a constructivist perspective of learning as opposed to traditional grammar-translation approach.

On utilization of assessment feedbacks, Justine, Mpolomoka, Mushibwe, Muyoba, Kombe and Gondwe (2023) examined classroom assessment practices of secondary school teachers in Zambia and found that 34% of the teachers use assessment results to diagnose the effectiveness and drawbacks of teaching methods, 42% use the feedback from assessment to point out the difficult learning portions, identifying what students think and how they think and what they understand and 24% to make decisions regarding students grade retention and promotion. The summary of the findings is that the majority of the secondary school teachers use classroom assessment results to point out the difficult learning portions; identify what students think, and how they think; and what they understand concerning a particular learning material.

In a study on Utilization of Cognitive Diagnostic Assessment (CDA) as a feedback tool by secondary school teachers in Maiduguri Metropolis, Borno State conducted by Abani, Jidda, and Gazali, (2021) the result revealed a high level of utilization of assessment feedback as a diagnostic tool among teachers; however, the results indicated a significant gender difference in utilization of cognitive diagnostic assessment among teachers in favour of females. In another study Mpasela and Chikopela, (2022) found that teachers utilize assessment feedback to make informed decisions about pupils' learning progress, inform teachers whether the pupils have understood what they have learnt or not and to guide how the teachers should plan for their next lessons.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

From general observation as practicing teachers in Maiduguri metropolis for about a decade, the researchers observed that many secondary school teachers are not regularly assessing students, the little assessments conducted are without proper assessment planning and assessment procedures not followed. Majority of the teachers do not assess learners as instructions progresses nor give feedback to learners on achieved learning. The dominant functions of assessment when used together with classroom instruction are informing appropriateness of instruction strategy used, guiding the students' next steps and checking progress and achievement. The types of assessment tasks students are given determine how students will approach the learning tasks. What and how students learn depends to a major extent on how and when they think they will be assessed. The general absence of some of these features of assessment in senior secondary schools' classrooms is what informed the researchers to conduct the study on assessment practices of Economics teachers of senior secondary schools in Maiduguri Metropolis, Borno state, Nigeria.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

- determine how Senior Secondary School Economics teachers in Maiduguri Metropolis plan assessments;
- find out the methods and procedures followed by Senior Secondary School Economics teachers of Maiduguri Metropolis to conduct assessments;
- assess how Senior Secondary School Economics teachers in Maiduguri Metropolis

give assessment feedbacks to students on their performance; and

- assess how Senior Secondary School Economics teachers in Maiduguri Metropolis utilize assessment feedbacks.

1.2 Research Questions

The following questions were formulated to facilitate the attainment of the study’s objectives:

- How do Senior Secondary School Economics teachers in Maiduguri Metropolis plan assessments?
- What are the methods and procedures followed by Senior Secondary School Economics teachers in Maiduguri Metropolis to conduct assessments?
- How do Senior Secondary School Economics teachers in Maiduguri Metropolis give assessment feedbacks to students on their performance?
- How do Senior Secondary School Economics teachers in Maiduguri Metropolis utilize assessment feedbacks?

2. Research Methodology

The design used was the descriptive research design. This was based on the claim of Cohen and Manion (2007) that the descriptive research design has the potential to generate useful and analysable data that represent a wider target population, generate numerical data for ease of comparison and provide descriptive, inferential and explanatory information. This design was used to obtain information concerning teachers’ assessment practices and to describe what exists with respect to variables or conditions in this situation. The researchers adopted the descriptive

research design because it had the advantage of producing a good amount of responses.

The population for the study was all the twenty (20) Economics teachers from eight (8) senior secondary schools where Economics is taught within Maiduguri metropolis. Census sampling technique was used in the sampling of respondents, thus all the teachers participated in the study because of their small size.

The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire tagged “Economics Teachers’ Assessment Practices Questionnaire” (ETAPQ)” The structured questionnaire was developed by the researchers. The questionnaire had a Cronbach alpha reliability index of 0.78 and consisted of twenty-eight (28) items. The items on the questionnaire were responded on a 5-point scale ranging from always to never. The researchers administered the questionnaire to the respondents at the schools and were retrieved the same day.

The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) to answer all the research questions. Descriptive statistics were used because the statements on the questionnaire described the extent to which Economics teachers conduct and utilize assessments feedbacks. Values assigned to the responses were as follows: always - 5 points, often - 4 points, sometimes -3 points, rarely -2 points and never - 1 point. Since the five-point rating scale was used for the responses, the criterion mean/decision rule was based on mean 3.00. The criterion mean was established by summing the scores on the five-point scale and dividing it by the number of the cases. The analyses were presented on the basis of the research questions.

3. Results

Research Question 1: How do Senior Secondary School Economics teachers in Maiduguri Metropolis Plan Assessments?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of How Senior Secondary School Economics Teachers Plan Assessments

S/No. Item Statement	N	Mean	SD
Ensure that assessment tasks align to learning outcomes	20	3.50	1.02
Consider learners identified needs in planning classroom assessment tasks	20	3.60	1.18
Consider the six levels of cognitive outcomes (Bloom’s Taxonomy) while developing learning outcomes	20	3.70	1.27
Align classroom assessment task with what has been taught	20	4.35	0.91

Design assessments that engage students in the process of learning rather than simply producing a final product	20	3.65	1.20
Ensure that assessment items are valid and reliable before implementing assessments	20	3.55	0.65
Sample assessment items from all themes in the Senior Secondary School Economics curriculum	20	2.85	1.06

The results of data analysis on how teachers plan assessment in Table I reveals higher mean scores than the criterion measure of 3.00 in all the items except item 7 which is below the

bench mark ($M=2.85$, $SD=1.01$) indicating that most teachers do not sample assessment items from all the themes in the content of the curriculum.

Research Question 2: What are the methods and procedures followed by Senior Secondary School Economics teachers in Maiduguri Metropolis in conducting assessments?

Table 2: Means and Standard Deviations of Methods and Procedures Senior Secondary School Economics Teachers Conduct Assessments

S/No.	Item Statement	N	Mean	SD
	Allow students to reveal their errors, then make corrections using assessment rubrics	20	4.10	0.83
	Encourage self assessments among students to encourage critical thinking	20	4.05	1.07
	Encourage peer assessments among students to for internalization of assessment criteria	20	3.65	1.06
	Conduct written assessments in the class	20	4.01	0.85
	Engage students in group projects	20	2.65	1.15
	Provide a rubric with straightforward evaluation criteria	20	2.85	1.15
	Provide assessment tasks that allow students to achieve at a high level	20	4.00	1.18
	Conduct assessments after treating each unit/topic	20	3.40	1.32

The results of data analysis on methods and procedures teachers conduct assessments in Table 2 indicates that the mean scores are higher than the criterion mean of 3.0. This shows that the required methods and procedures are followed by the Economics teachers in conducting assessments in schools, except item 12 which is below the mean bench mark ($M=2.65$, $SD= 1.15$) indicating teachers do not engage students in group projects.

Research Question 3: How do Senior Secondary School Economics teachers in Maiduguri Metropolis give assessment feedbacks to students?

Table 3: Means and Standard Deviations of How Senior Secondary School Economics Teachers Give Assessment Feedbacks to Students

S/No.	Item Statement	N	Mean	SD
	Provide face-to-face feedbacks to whole class	20	3.15	1.01
	Provide sufficient and detailed feedback using feedback and self assessment sheets	20	3.75	0.99
	Provide facilitative feedback to individual students	20	3.15	1.01
	Give feedback from assessment tasks to students promptly	20	4.10	0.89
	Give on-the-moment feedback (feedback as students are still engaged in the task)	20	3.5	0.97
	Give feedback in written or print form which included comments on students' assessed work	20	4.15	0.96
	Provide feedback to learners after each task is completed	20	2.20	0.51

The results of data analysis on how Economics teachers give assessment feedbacks to students in Table 3 reveals higher mean scores than the criterion measure of 3.0 in all the items except item 22 which is below the bench mark (M=2.20, SD=0.51) indicating that most teachers do not provide feedback to learners after each assessment task is completed.

Research Question 4: How do Senior Secondary School Economics teachers in Maiduguri Metropolis utilize assessment feedbacks?

Table 4: Means and Standard Deviations of How Senior Secondary School Economics Utilize Assessment Feedbacks

S/No.	Item Statement	N	Mean	SD
	Use assessment feedback to evaluate teaching strategies	20	4.3	0.71
	Use assessment feedbacks to modify instructional strategy	20	4.1	0.89
	Use assessment feedbacks to determine appropriateness of instructional materials	20	4.3	0.71
	Use feedback from assessment to identify difficult learning areas	20	4.2	0.89
	Use assessment feedback to make decisions' regarding students' promotion to next level	20	2.20	0.51
	Use assessment results to monitor students' progress	20	4.05	0.87

The results of data analysis on utilization of assessment feedback by teachers in Table 4 reveals higher mean scores than the criterion measure of 3.0 in all the items except item 27 which is below the bench mark (M=2.20, SD=0.51) indicating that most teachers do not utilize assessment feedback to make decisions regarding students' promotion to next level.

4. Discussion

The result of data analysis on research question one which determined how teachers plan assessment revealed that teachers plan assessment by ensuring that assessment tasks align to learning outcomes, consider learners identified needs in planning assessment tasks, consider the six levels of cognitive outcomes in the Bloom's Taxonomy, align classroom assessment tasks

with what has been taught and ensure that assessment items are valid and reliable before implementing assessments. These findings by and large are consistent with the position of many educational measurement experts such as Miller, Linn and Gronlund (2009) who asserted that an effective classroom assessment begins with a plan that specifically describes the instructional objectives and content to be measured and the relative emphasis to be given to each intended learning outcomes. This is followed by the selection of the most appropriate item formats and the preparation of items and tasks that are relevant to the learning outcomes. The result on teachers not sampling assessment items from all themes in the senior secondary school Economics curriculum, in the view of the researchers could be attributed to the voluminous nature of the Economics curriculum which makes it impossible to sample assessment from all themes.

The findings of research question two which determined methods and procedures of conducting assessment by teachers revealed that teachers encourage self and peer assessments among students, conduct written assessments in the class, provide assessment tasks that allow students to achieve at a high level and engage students in group projects. These are in line with that of Sheikh and Manap (2024) who found that teachers in Kuala Selangor, Malaysia use teacher-centered strategies while other teachers use the methods of try to succeed, peer, practical, group, collaborative, class and individual methods of assessment. Furthermore, the study also found that teachers do not provide rubric with straight forward-evaluation criteria. This finding is similar to that of Vlachou, (2018) who found that Greek science teachers use formative assessment principles which are valuable in promoting student learning, but their approaches were more teacher-directed while students appeared not to have any role in the assessment process.

Regarding research question three which determined how senior secondary school Economics teachers give feedback to students on their performance indicated that teachers provide face-to-face feedbacks to whole class, facilitative feedback to individual students from assessment tasks promptly, on-the-moment feedback as students are still engaged in the tasks as well as feedback in written or print form which included comments on students' assessed work. These findings are in agreement with that of Ezeugo (2019) who found primary school teachers in Anambra State, Nigeria majorly gave feedback in writing or print form which included handwritten comments on students' assessed work, written numeric scores, grades,

averages or positions, etc. they also gave face-to-face feedbacks to whole classes, individual students and small groups of students. However, the result also revealed that most teachers do not provide feedback to learners after each assessment task is completed.

The findings on research question four indicated that teachers utilize assessment feedback to evaluate teaching strategies, determine appropriateness of instructional materials, identify students' difficult learning areas. Similar results were reported by Justine et. al. (2023) who found 34% of secondary school teachers in Zambia use assessment results to diagnose the effectiveness and drawbacks of teaching methods, 42% use the feedback from assessment to point out the difficult learning portions, identify what students think and how they think and what they understand. On utilizing assessment feedback to make decisions regarding students' promotion to next level the study found that Economics teachers in Maiduguri metropolis do not utilize assessment feedback for this. This finding is contrary to the finding of Justine et. al. (2023) who reported that 24% of secondary school teachers in Zambia use assessment results to make decisions regarding students' grade retention and promotion.

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings of study it is concluded that Economics teachers in senior secondary schools engage in a wide range of desirable assessment practices ranging from considering the content of the curriculum while planning assessments, considering the Bloom's categories of cognitive learning outcomes and selecting appropriate item formats while planning assessments. It is also concluded that required methods and procedures are followed by the Economics teachers in conducting assessments in schools, giving timely feedback to students on their performance and utilize assessment feedbacks for different purposes. However, most of the teachers do not assess students from all the content of the curriculum and do not engage students in group projects.

6. Recommendations

The following recommendations are put forward based on the findings of the study:

Borno state Ministry of Education should ensure that Economics teachers in senior secondary schools go for further training and take more courses in assessment to improve their skills and in content sampling. The ministry should also through the Senior Secondary

Education board ensure that Economics teachers use desirable classroom assessment practices especially in the area of engaging students in group projects.

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