MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVE ASSESSMENTS AS CORRELATES OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS' ACQUISITION OF LIFE-LONG SKILLS IN AKWA IBOM STATE

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Abstract

This study investigated multiple perspective assessments as correlates of undergraduate students' acquisition of life-long skills in Akwa Ibom State. Three null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Correlational design was employed in carrying out the study. A sample size of 470 from a population of 7839 undergraduate students were selected from the faculties of education in University of Uyo and Akwa Ibom State University both in Akwa Ibom State. Taro Yemane formula was used to determine the sample size and the students were selected using simple random sampling technique. Data for the study were generated using a questionnaire titled "Multiple Perspective Assessments and Students' Acquisition of Lifelong Skills Questionnaire (MPASALLQ)" with 30 items. The instrument was validated by three lecturers who are experts in educational evaluation. A reliability coefficient of .87 was got when the instrument was trial-tested on 30 students from the sampled schools who did not take part in the main study. Data generated from the questionnaire were analysed using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) with Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21. The findings of the study revealed that self-assessment, peer-assessment and teacher-assessment significantly relate to students' acquisition of life skills. The study therefore recommended that lecturers should use self, peer and teacher assessments during assessment to ensure acquisition of life-long skills by students.

Keywords: Multiple assessment, Self, Peers, Teacher, Acquisition of life skills.

Introduction

Assessment is an important educational skill for ascertaining, at the end of a period of instructions, whether a learner has succeeded and the degree of success based on the measuring tools used. It is useful for determining the extent to which educational goals have been achieved (Leppma & Jones, 2013).

Assessment in education is a technique of making learning observable. The results of students' assessments often have far-reaching consequences for their education or careers. Since assessments have such impacts on people's careers, it is of the utmost importance that teachers are sure that their measurements are reliable and valid representations of students' actual abilities. If the learner is always involved in the teaching-learning process, he should also be involved in the assessment process but this is not always the case. The goal for this paper is to help teachers to apply multiple assessment methods, especially during formative assessments because if the quality of assessment is improved, it will create a huge impact on the education and careers of students.

Policy makers and educators are increasingly worried about the performance of students at all educational levels in Nigeria. The main assessment process used to assess students in Nigeria is formative or summative assessment designed, administered and graded by the same teacher. This form of assessment has not been able to unfold how much and how effective the teaching-learning process is (Willie, Sunday & Uko, 2018; Mbak. 2016). It rather shows how much the student was able to understand the lesson based on the teacher's rating and not on the student and peer's ratings. Not all the aspects of the lesson or subject can be evaluated at any one time, thus teacher's assessment alone may not give a true assessment of the learner (Willie *et al.,* 2018). A teacher is expected to have knowledge of the rationale, aspect, workability, timeliness and productivity of any assessment before choosing the type of assessment and the type of instrument(s) to use. This would help the teacher to select the most suitable tools and methods to achieve the desired goal(s).

In recent years, the use of formative assessment to assess the learners during the process of learning has been advocated. Formative assessment could be seen as assessment for learning, while summative assessment could be seen as assessment of learning. Assessment during the process of learning enables the teacher to know and ascertain how far the learner has understood the lesson at hand and at what level before progressing to the next level or topic. Assessment for learning allows the teacher to identify the next step to take in the process of teaching. It serves as a measuring tool for both the teacher and the students. For the teacher, it tells the level of goal achievement, while for the students, it showcases the level of achievement of the desired goals. Researchers believe that every assessment towards the realisation of educational goals could be made workable through the use of multiple perspective assessments.

Tertiary institutions are mainly established to develop people with high-level skills for national development. For any nation to develop economically and technologically, skill acquisition by tertiary institution students cannot be neglected. The utmost importance of assessment, especially in the tertiary institutions is learners' acquisition of the needed skills for self-actualisation and self-employment after graduation. Life skills are seen as a requirement for the graduates' ability to function effectively and meaningfully in society and to fulfil social roles. The WHO (1999) and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (2012:18) highlighted six major cross-cultural areas of life skills to include; decision-making and problem solving; thinking and thinking; communication and skills; self-awareness and empathy; assertiveness and equanimity; resilience and coping with emotions and stress.

Prinz (2009) maintained that life skills curricula designed for schools should emphasize communications and practical skills needed for successful independent living as well as for developmental-disabilities and special-education. This, as stated by the author is because effective acquisition of life skills provides graduates with ability for self-reliance and responsibility for self and society. It is only when graduate

To ensure proper inculcation of skills that will make graduates gain knowledge and understand the economy and the way market forces work, the educational system needs to employ multiple assessment perspectives to boost the assessment of students. Multiple perspectives assessment is an assessment strategy in which the teacher, students and peers offer combined inputs to determine the level of knowledge developed by a learner. Multiple assessment skills denote the use of more than one assessment skill to evaluate the learner. It incorporates many of these elements into a more holistic evaluative process. Multiple perspective assessment involves three perspectives: the student's own (self-assessed), the student's peers (peer-assessed) and the teacher's (teacher-assessed)

In multiple assessment, the weight or load each assessment category carries can and should vary, depending on the assignment and its purpose. Some students may weigh themselves more heavily, others the peer, while in some cases, the teacher may outweigh the self and peer assessments. What matters is for the assessment to include all three in some degree. Although teacher assessment is standard educational practice, the root of multiple perspective assessment involves students in both peer assessment and self-assessment. These two areas are often unexplored or underutilized by many university teachers. There are advantages and disadvantages to each, to be sure, just like teacher-based assessments, but many of the advantages outweigh the disadvantages.

The teacher-alone assessment process is not efficacious considering the fact that it is one-sided. Since the ultimate aim of education is students' acquisition of knowledge, it should be proper that they be assessed directly through teacher, self and peer not only a one-

sided assessment by the teacher. Also, if students' acquisition of skills is the goal of education in tertiary institutions, they should be assessed directly using multifaceted methods. It is the researchers' desire that a more balanced approach to student assessment should involve an assessment of the *act* of learning (formative) as well as the *results* of learning (summative) using multiple assessments. The researchers are not advocating for the abandonment of teacher's assessment in the name of enhancing acquisition of lifelong skills; rather it is an advocacy that students' academic performance be judged using the multifaceted techniques of "multiple perspective assessment".

In this process, peers are expected to evaluate fellow students based on stipulated guidelines; the students are also expected to give unbiased assessment of himself in accordance with the guidelines, while the teacher following the rubrics. The three assessments will then be studied after proper analysis to see whether effective and qualitative learning, which could result in acquisition of lifelong skills, have taken place. According to Briggs, Champion and Gosenpud (2009), using composite assessment promotes collaboration among learners. Composite assessment enhances students' confidence in themselves and ginger mutual trust among students.

Apart from providing a more holistic view, multiple assessment perspectives help students to reflect on their own work and those of their peers, evaluate it against set criteria, and provide feedback for themselves as they participate in the process. This helps them to improve their work. Nicol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006:12) believe that higher education should build on this as it has major implications for the way teachers conduct assessment and gives students a proactive, rather than reactive role, in their own assessment.-

> *"A key argument is that since students are already assessing their own work and generating their own feedback, higher education should build on this ability where students are seen as having a proactive rather than a reactive role in generating and using feedback, this has profound implications for the way in which teachers organize assessments and support learning."*

Self and peer assessment motivate students to be involved by becoming observers of both their own and their peers' work while at the same time learning from such observations (Amo & Jareño, 2011). Learners who are involved in assessment of their work are likely to develop self-confidence, which may result in the achievement of desired goals. However, educational assessors, including teachers, should consider using self-assessment or peer-assessment in a formative fashion rather than a summative one (Weimer, 2012).

Self-reflection, self-regulation, peer-to-peer feedback, and learning from multiple perspectives are essential skills that reflect higher education values. However, these

skills are often not explicitly taught or proactively implemented in some university courses (Weimer, 2012). Multiple perspective assessment helps foster these essential skills and provide a more holistic view. This approach is useful in project-based learning, term research papers, or in large classes where many students can anonymously assess others work and share it with a large group (Weimer, 2012).

Liu and Carless (2006) maintained that although self and peer assessments pursue different goals, they could be used together as a single assessment method towards the achievement of educational goals and objectives. The authors affirmed that self-assessment helps students to develop skills of critical awareness, enables them to become reflective and self-managing, and identify the next steps in learning. It offers feedback between students and also allows them to make comparisons with each other as well as promotes collaboration and effective communication students.

To become successful professionals, learners need to develop skills and engage in a variety of tasks that continuously improves them (Leppma & Jones, 2013). Most university graduates often face difficulties in establishing and upholding professional learning when newly employed because of the current assessment practice which requires learners to achieve standards with certification as the ultimate goal while ignoring the need for skill acquisition. Despite the fact that many professions encourage continuous self-improvement, the Nigerian educational system still encourage assessment models which do not promote lasting learning (Leppma & Jones, 2013).

Peer assessment and self-assessments are procedures in which students and their peers rate each other's assignments based on the teacher's yardstick. The practice is employed to save teachers' time and improve students' understanding of course materials as well as improve their metacognitive skills (Hattie & Timperley (2007). Amo and Jarerio (2011) studied self, peer and teacher assessments as active learning methods using 69 first and third year Spanish students pursuing a business administration programme. The assessment was carried out using the students' work presented in the class. Each sampled group had 4 or 5 students. Group presentations were held by the students. After each group's presentation, all of the students assessed themselves and their classmates, while the teacher assessed each group based on students' voice modulation, ability to capture the attention of the audience, appropriate language use, clear presentation of their papers and time management skill.

Findings of the study revealed that the teacher's rating of each group was twice higher than the ratings of the students and their peers. The result also showed a significant negative mean when comparing the teacher's with the first-year students' ratings. The third-year students' scores showed positive mean deviation when the teachers and peers' evaluation and the self-evaluation scores were compared. The result of the study also revealed that the third-year students rated themselves lower than the teacher's rating.

Amo and Jarerio's (2011) findings imply that the use of multiple perspective assessment could bring out the true score as well as differences in students' performance.

Obot (2016) carried out a composite assessment of teachers' effectiveness in secondary schools in Akwa Ibom North-West Senatorial District, Nigeria using eight (8) principals, 137 teachers and 2967 students. These give a total of 3112 in all the 86 public secondary schools in the study area. Teaching effectiveness questionnaire was used for data collection. The teachers were assessed by the principals, students and by themselves. Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were used for answering the research questions, while inferential statistics of t-test and One-Way Analysis of Variance were used for hypotheses testing. The result revealed that teachers' scores were close to the principals' and students' rating of the teachers. Findings of the study revealed that using composite assessment is effective in assessing performance in educational institutions.

Howard and Maxwell (2002) studied the effects of grades and student satisfaction on students' ratings among 411 high school students. The instrument for the study comprised 34 students' rating items. Data collected from the sampled students were analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC). The researchers found out that grading leniency had a minor effect on ratings while student motivation had a significant impact on ratings and thus should be controlled. The researchers concluded that grading leniency has no significant effect on student rating. They therefore recommended that teachers should use more than one assessment method.

The foregoing discussion culminates in the realisation that the issue of students' acquisition of lifelong skills for self-actualisation after graduation has continued to be a serious matter in the educational system worldwide. Consequent upon the observed deterioration in the academic achievement, attitude and values of university students, one wonders if the high failure rates of students and lack of acquisition of lifelong skills is not a reflection of the assessment techniques in schools. In Nigeria, there is a high level of assessment of learning rather than assessment towards acquisition of life skill. This situation has resulted in Nigerian universities producing graduates with little or no life skills whose main aim was to graduate and get employed by either federal or state governments (Willie, *et al.,* 2018).

While single-measure approaches to assessing students have grown in prominence, there is a need to take a more holistic approach to student assessment in which each student will be evaluated by their peers, teacher and the student himself. It is against this backdrop that the researchers sought to determine the relationship between multiple assessment and lifelong skill acquisition among university students in Akwa Ibom State.

Research Hypotheses

This study tested the following hypotheses at .05 level of significance:

1.   There is no significant relationship between self-assessment and lifelong skill acquisition among university students.

2.   There is no significant relationship between peer-assessment and lifelong skill acquisition among university students.

3.   There is no significant relationship between teacher-assessment and lifelong skill acquisition among university students.

Methods

The correlational design was used for this study. It was considered suitable for the study because the event studied is ongoing and it helped to assess the opinions of the respondents regarding the relationship between self, peer and teacher assessment and acquisition of lifelong skills by university students in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. The population for this study comprised all the 7839 (University of Uyo–5027 and Akwa Ibom State University –2812) university students studying in the two universities in Akwa Ibom State during 2018/2019 academic year. The sample size for this study consisted of 470undergraduate students in Akwa Ibom State. Taro Yemane formula was used to determine the sample size and the students were selected using simple random sampling technique. A questionnaire tagged, "Multiple Perspective Assessments and Students' Acquisition of Lifelong Skills Questionnaire (MPASALLQ)" with 30 items were used for data collection. The questionnaire was divided into two sections. Section A contained 15 items on multiple perspective assessment, while section B had15 items on acquisition of life-long skills. Face-validation was carried out by three lecturers who are evaluation experts from University of Uyo. Their comments were incorporated into the final draft of the instrument before they were taken to the field. To ascertain the reliability of the instrument, a trial-test was conducted using 20 students who did not take part in the main study. Data collected from the trial-test were analysed using Cronbach Alpha Reliability Statistic. A reliability coefficient of .87 was realised. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21 and Pearson's Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) were used for testing the hypotheses. To interpret the result, the *p*-value was used. Where the p-observed (p-obs.) was less than .05, the null hypothesis was rejected, otherwise it was retained. All the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between self -assessment and lifelong skill acquisition among university students.

Table 1: Pearson's Product Correlation Coefficient Analysis of Scores on Self-Assessment and Life-Long Skills Acquisition

		Self-Assessment	Life-Long Skills Acquisition
Self-Assessment	Pearson Correlation	1	.552**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	470	470
Life-Long Skills Acquisition	Pearson Correlation	.552**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	470	470

In Table 1, the calculated correlation index for the relationship between self -assessment and lifelong skill acquisition among university students is .522 while its corresponding observed p value, *p-obs*, at df 468 is .001. The *p-obs, .001* is less than .05 level on which the decision is based. This indicates that there is a significant positive relationship between the two variables. Hence, null hypothesis one (Ho$_1$) which assumes that there is no significant relationship between self-assessment and lifelong skill acquisition among university students is rejected.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between peer-assessment and lifelong skill acquisition among university students.

Table 2: Pearson's Product Correlation Coefficient Analysis of Scores on Peer-Assessment and Lifelong Skills Acquisition

		Peer-Assessment	Life-Long Skills Acquisition
Peer-Assessment	Pearson Correlation	1	.498**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.006
	N	470	470
Life-Long Skills Acquisition	Pearson Correlation	.498**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.006	
	N	470	470

In Table 2.the calculated correlation index for the relationship between peer-assessment and lifelong skill acquisition among university students is .498 while its corresponding observed p value, *p-obs*, at df 468 is .006. The *p-obs, .006,* is less than .05 level on which the decision is based. This indicates that the relationship between the two variables is statistically significant. Hence, null hypothesis two (H$_o$2) which assumes that there is no significant relationship between peer-assessment and lifelong skill acquisition among university students is rejected.

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant relationship between teacher-assessment and lifelong skill acquisition among university students.

Table 3: Pearson's Product Correlation Coefficient Analysis of Sco res on Teacher-Assessment and Lifelong Skill Acquisition

		Teacher-Assessment	Life-Long Skills Acquisition
Teacher-Assessment	Pearson Correlation	1	.619[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002
	N	470	470
Life-Long Skills Acquisition	Pearson Correlation	.619[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	
	N	470	470

In Table 3, the calculated correlation index, r-cal, for the relationship between teacher assessment and lifelong skill acquisition among university students is .619 while its corresponding observed p value, *p-obs*, at df 468 is .002. The *p-obs, .002,* is less than .05 level on which the decision is based. This indicates that there is a significant positive relationship between the two variables. Hence, null hypothesis one (H_{o3}) which assumes that there is no significant relationship between teacher assessment and lifelong skill acquisition among university students is rejected.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study revealed that self-assessment has a significant relationship with lifelong skills acquisition among university students probably because students assess themselves based on the latent traits they possess. The finding corroborates that of Amo and Jarerio (2011) t that students tend to be more critical when they evaluate themselves because their self-evaluation scores are always lower than the teacher assessment score.

The findings on hypothesis two revealed that peer assessment has a significant relationship with lifelong skill acquisition among university students. This implies that students who are assessed by their peers tend to perform well in the future as most students believe more in the appraisal of their peers than that of the teacher. This gingers the students into skill acquisition such as being creative and promotes collaboration. The findings support Obot (2016) who revealed that using composite assessment is very effective in assessing performance in educational institutions.

The findings on hypothesis three also revealed a significant relationship between teacher assessment and lifelong skill acquisition among university students. They show that teacher's assessment is likely to correlate with their own assessment and that of their peers. The findings agree with that of Howard and Maxwell (2002) who advocated the use of more than one assessment method by teachers.

Conclusion

This study concludes that multiple perspective assessment is a potent strategy for achieving the acquisition of life skills by students in tertiary institutions of learning. Multiple assessment makes learners to be in charge of not only of the teaching learning process but also the assessment process.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended by the researchers as follows:
1. Multiple perspective assessment of students should be encouraged in the universities to ensure lifelong skills acquisition after graduation.
2. Students should be periodically assessed by their peers to enhance collaborative skills acquisition.
3. Teachers should conduct periodic assessment of students using multiple assessment perspective to ensure the acquisition of lifelong skills such as creativity among the students.

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