

IMPLICATIONS OF CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT FOR EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING IN A LEARNER-CENTRED CURRICULUM

by

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ABSTRACT

A study of continuous assessment for effective teaching and learning at vhembe district in Limpopo province by E.T.H Ramakhanya.

This study examines the manner in which assessment is applied in a learner-centred approach. The way in which teaching and learning processes are understood influences the kind of assessment practices that are used. In this regard, teachers were faced with the challenge of how to shift from traditional form of assessment to authentic assessment as they were trained in the old traditional methods of teaching and learning.

The research methodology used in this study was: Quantitative Research. The data gathering tool used was: Effective Teaching and Assessment Survey (ETAS). Data was collected from two hundred and forty (240) Grade ten (10) teachers who responded to the same questionnaire instrument.

Literature review in this study has clearly revealed the shortcomings of traditional assessment which refers to 'pen and paper' tests and examinations. This include the ranking and separating of learners according to test scores. The problem with tests is that, tests are often a one-off chance for a learner to show what he or she knows, and even when the teacher suspects that the test result is artificially high or low, the results stand. In authentic assessment various techniques are employed allowing teachers to develop a broader picture of the learner from a wider range of sources of evidence, for instance, portfolios, projects and practical tests are used in this approach. In this way, therefore, authentic assessment would include guidance, multiple chances to improve competence and performance as well as a variety of techniques that would provide learners with a range of opportunities to develop and demonstrate what they know and are able to do.

Quantitative data from the questionnaires was analyzed through the statistical package (SPSS). The following major themes emerged:

- ❖ The majority of grade ten teachers found it hard to apply continuous assessment especially in large classes.
- ❖ More than half of the respondents agreed that they could not implement continuous assessment due to lack of training on the assessment strategies.
- ❖ The majority of teachers completed their teacher training courses more than ten years ago and were trained in the old traditional way of assessment.

There is a greater need for teachers at Vhembe District to be given enough training on the new strategies of assessment which are in line with the present learner-centred approach.

Lastly, findings in this study demand the attention of all stakeholders, especially teachers. The study will benefit the Department of Education officials such as planners, managers, curriculum advisors, principals, teachers and learners. Recommendations have been suggested addressing each shortcoming. The following ethics were considered: freedom from harm, freedom from exploitation, right to self-determination, right to full disclosure and informed consent.

Key concepts: Authentic Assessment, Learner-centred curriculum, Effective Teaching & Learning, Constructivism, Outcomes-Based Education, Traditional assessment.