

Necessity of Assessment of Student Learning: A Review

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Abstract - The present paper is a review of research on Necessity of Assessment of Student Learning. Assessment in different forms has always been a central part of educational practice. Evidence observed from the literature survey suggests that assessment, especially high stakes external assessment has effect on how teachers teach and consequently, how students learn. Assessment establishes ways for academic units to know the dimensions of student learning when seeking to enhance student achievement and the educational process. Assessment is needed for accountability which provides evidence of student achievement to accreditation groups, state legislators, and other stakeholders in education. In an accreditation process, Criterion II-Teaching Learning and Evaluation is related at issues for assessment of teaching, learning and evaluative processes and reforms, to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the system. One of the aims of evaluation is to provide development-inducing feedback. The qualitative dimension of evaluation lies in its use for enhancing the competence of students. Innovative evaluation process is needed to judge the knowledge and skills acquired at various levels of the programmes.

Keywords: Assessment, teaching and learning, teachers, evaluation

I. INTRODUCTION

Assessment in different forms has always been a central part of educational practice. Assessment is essential for teaching and learning activities and mediates the interaction between teachers and students. Assessment of student learning is needed for improvement, with its internal focus providing opportunities for the academic community to engage in self-reflection of its learning goals, to evaluate the degree to which these goals correspond to student and societal needs, and to examine if students activities, products, or performances coincide with the academic community's expectations. Assessment also reflects ways for academic units to understand the dimensions of student learning when seeking to improve student achievement and the educational process. (George, 2016)

Methodologies used to assess students are the most critical part of all influences on their learning, it is well understood that assessment have a deep impression on what and how students study, how much they study and how effectively they study. Two particular characteristics need to be considered: the amount of assessed work and the quality of the assessment types. Assessment is about several things at once. It is not about simple duplicity such as grading versus diagnosis. It is about reporting on student achievements and about teaching better through expressing to them more deeply the goals of our curriculum. It is about measuring student learning and diagnosing specific misunderstandings in order to help students to learn more brilliantly and effectively. It is concerned with the quality of teaching as well as the quality of learning. (Jimma S., 2011). Curriculum, instruction, and assessment are the three fundamental components of education as said by John Orlando. According to Author Milton Chen these are the "three legs of the classroom stool" and remind us that each leg must be equally strong in order for the "stool" to function properly, balanced and supportive to withstand all the responsibilities.

II. ASSESSMENT

Assessment is about getting to know our students and the quality of their learning (Rowntree, D., 1977). Quality of assessment is one of the key features of good teaching. Setting appropriate assessment tasks should question students in a way that demands evidence of understanding. It is also essential to use a number of techniques for discovering what students have learned and understood from the teaching.

Ways of assessment knowledge and understanding are assessed through a combination of unseen examinations and assessed in-course assignments including quizzes, essays, presentations, group discussions, role play, reports and problem solving-based assessments. Intellectual skills are assessed through a combination of unseen written examinations, coursework related to experimentation, which requires analytical skills and problem solving. Practical skills are assessed through a combination of continuous formative assessment, summative assessments, and objective structured and/or practical examinations. Transferable skills are assessed through a range of assignments built into the curriculum, including coursework reports, oral presentations and research exercises.

Learning outcomes assessment is a critical section of a program's success. It directly reflects the program's reputation, enrolment, funding, and even its continued existence. Therefore, it is important to get useful assessment data without creating an overwhelming burden for busy faculty members.

Assessment helps faculty to know how their course is connected to the overall program. At another level, it may help faculty to aid students to understand why they might need a particular course as part of their program. Effective assessment needs to include direct evidence of student learning—what skills, abilities, knowledge, expertise and attributes they are exhibiting as a result of participating in the program. There can be a combination of direct and indirect evidence, which is typically measured by certain techniques such as surveys and an exit questionnaire. (Jimma S., 2011)

Assessment can be defined as all activities that teachers and students undertake to gather information that can be used to improve teaching and learning. This includes teacher's observation and analysis of student's work. All these are concerned with sampling what a student may or may not know / understand. Assessment is also used in 'selecting, controlling or motivating students, and to satisfy public expectations as to standards and accountability'. (Biggs J. 2003). Consequently, assessment has been categorised as formative or summative depending on how the results are used (Dunn & Mulvenon, 2010). Formative assessment is embedded in the teaching and learning process and provides feedback to the teacher in the course of teaching to enable him or her to judge how effectively students are learning. It also provides necessary information on the effectiveness of teaching which will help to determine an appropriate remedial action whenever required. For this reason, it is appropriately referred to as assessment for learning. Summative assessment takes place at the end of a course or programmes to determine the level of student's achievement or how well a programme has performed. It often takes the form of external examinations or tests and is referred to as assessment of learning. Students spend a relatively large part of their time in institution practising the kind of knowledge and skills demanded in assessment and this is what they are acquiring. (Amua-Sekyi E. T, 2016)

The teacher and the student are often in a hierarchical relationship that inhibits collaboration in their learning.

According to literature survey a methodology is developed, based on Graham Gibbs methods (Gibbs G., 2007), for characterizing assessment environments in terms of:

- The percentage of marks from examinations
- How many times students experienced summative-only assessment
- How many times students experienced formative-only assessment
- The variety of assessment methods used
- The amount of oral and written feedback that students experienced
- The average timelines of feedback from the time of submission
- The degree of explicitness of specification of course objectives and outcomes
- The level of arrangement between outcomes and assessment methods

Each program could then be rated high, medium or low against these characteristics to enable us to establish recent patterns in assessment characteristics. This could be done by examining course documentation and by interviewing program chairs and students. (Jimma S., 2011)

The process of assessment, as it is reviewed, recommends that academic unit undertake activities to clarify the needs of their students and faculty, relevant administrators, community persons and others involved with the outcomes of student learning, enable the unit to decide what academic goals they value and thus what they expect students to learn, determine and implement the best approaches to methods and measures that will evaluate the degree to which student learning outcomes meet these expectations, and finally agree on ways to use this evidence to support improved student learning as well as an improved process for its assessment. (George S., 2016)

III. CONCLUSION

Assessment is continuous process aimed at recognizing and enhancing student learning. It involves making our expectations explicit and public. All academic units should express clearly their learning goals as measurable objectives of their programs and ultimately of their courses, involving and sharing the development of these objectives with students, administrators, and other public, setting appropriate criteria and high standards for learning quality. Standards of excellence are required when establishing learning expectations and the criteria for evaluating learning outcomes to assure the assessment process has as its primary goal the continuous improvement of the quality of student achievement. Systematically collecting, analysing, and interpreting evidence to determine how well performance matches those expectations and standards. Faculty members in academic units should use valid and reliable ways to assess student learning, employ multiple measures on a regular basis, and

ascertain the degree to which learning outcomes coincide with objectives and standards agreed on by the unit and using the resulting information to document, explain, and improve performance.

Assessment is needed for accountability which provides evidence of student achievement to accreditation groups, state legislators, and other stakeholders in education. In an accreditation process, Criterion II-Teaching Learning and Evaluation is related at issues for assessment of teaching, learning and evaluative processes and reforms, to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the system. Evidence observed from the literature survey suggests that assessment, especially high stakes external assessment has effect on how teachers teach, explain and consequently, how students learn. Assessment establishes ways for academic units to know the dimensions of student learning when seeking to enhance student achievement and the educational process.

IV. REFERENCES

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