From Evidence to Action: Enhancing learner performance by utilizing assessment data in South Africa

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Presentation outline

- Introduction
- Problem statement
- Rationale and significance of the study
- Research question and sub-questions
- Context of the study
- Literature review and conceptual framework
- Research design and methods
- Methodological norms
- Ethical considerations
1. Introduction

1.1 Problem statement

- Consistent under-performance of SA learners in national and international assessment studies despite availability of data from these studies.
- Assessment policy is not clear on formative assessment (Murphy & Lubisi, 2002).
- Quality assurance of assessment in the GET band by an approved quality-assurance body is non-existent as Umalusi focuses on FET band only.
1 Introduction

1.2 Rationale and significance of the study

- Understand teacher classroom assessment practices and how teachers use assessment data.
- Improving teacher formative assessment practices thus enhance learner performance.
- Implementation of formative assessment will also close the gap in performance between low and high performing learners.
- Develop assessment guidelines.
- Close gap in literature as most studies in SA focus on policy rather than practice.
- Contribute to policy decisions.
1. Introduction

1.3 Research question and sub-questions

Main research question:

• How can primary school teachers’ use of assessment data to inform practice be enhanced?

Sub-questions:

• How do primary school teachers currently conduct classroom assessments?

• How can primary school teachers be supported to improve their knowledge and skills to develop valid assessments and use assessment data to inform classroom practice?
Context of the study

- South African education system post apartheid – unitary.
- Three governance levels: national, provincial and districts (Constitution, 1996)
- Three bands of education system: GET, FET and HET (NEPA, 1996)
- Public and independent schools, variations between the public schools is also reflected in learner performance (SACMEQ, 2011).
- Curriculum revision: C2005, NCS, CAPS.
The absence of Teacher Development Policy from 1994 - 2011 has compromised provision of standardized quality teacher development.


Continuous assessment contributes 100% to final mark in GET (National Protocol on Assessment, 1998, 2011)
## Literature review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition and comparison between formative and summative assessment</th>
<th>Black (1998); Perie, Marion and Gong (2009:6), Black and Wiliam (2009), Stiggins (2002), Bernett (2011) and Brookhart (2007)</th>
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<td>Lack of assessment literacy and poor preparation during initial teacher development</td>
<td>Stiggins (1995)</td>
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## Literature review

| Professional learning communities | Elmore (2004); Griffin (2009), McLaughlin & Talbert (2006); Timperely & Robertson (2001); Hawley & Valli (1999); Fullan (2009); Preskill and Torres (2000); Christie (2009) |
Conceptual framework

Conceptual framework

**INPUT**

**PROCESS**

**OUTPUT**

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES

DISTRICTS

SCHOOLS

- Improved pedagogical knowledge
- Improved formative assessment skills
- Improved professional content knowledge

IN-DEPTH KNOWLEDGE AND MOTIVATION

IMPROVED ASSESSMENT PRACTICES

IMPROVED LEARNER PERFORMANCE
Methodology: Design research

- Why design research?
- Design research- methodology can be used to improve educational practices through collaborative reviews, analysis, design, development and implementation by teams of researchers and practitioners in real contexts (Nieveen (2007); van den Akker (1999)).
- Design research: offers opportunities to learn, yields practical lessons that can be employed as well as engage researchers in the direct improvement of the educational practice (Edelson 2002).
Methodological norms

- Qualitative Data-Transferability, member checks and Audit trails, rich thick descriptions
- Team participation to mitigate authorship bias
- Collaboration nature of the research will alleviate power relations
- Triangulation of different sources
Ethics

- Ethical clearance from the university
- Gaining access – permission from DBE and GDE
- Written consent & voluntary participation
- Confidentiality and anonymity
- Maintaining & assuring participants of role as researcher