

Application of Scoring Rubrics by Lecturers towards Objective Assessment of Essay Questions in the Department of Social Science Education, University of Calabar, Nigeria

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Abstract : Unreliable scoring of students' performance by lecturers short-chains students' assessment in terms of underequipping the school authority with facts as intended by society through the curriculum hence, the learners, the school and the society are cheated because the usefulness of testing is defeated. This study, therefore, examined lecturers' scoring objectivity of essay items in the Department of Social Science Education, University of Calabar, Nigeria. Specifically, it assessed lecturers' perception of the relevance of scoring rubrics and its level of application. Data were collected from all the 36 lecturers in the Department (28 members and 8 non-members adjourned to the department), through a 20-item questionnaire and checklist instruments. A case-study design was adopted. Descriptive statistics of frequency counts, weighted means, standard deviations, and percentages were used to analyze data gathered. A mean score of 2.5 and or 60 percent and above formed the acceptance or significant level in decision taking. It was found that lecturers perceived the use of scoring rubrics as a relevant practice to ensure fairness and reliable treatment of examiners scripts particularly in marking essay items and that there is a moderately high level of adherence to the application of scoring rubrics. It was also observed that some criteria necessary for the scoring objectivity of essay items were not fully put in place in the department. It was recommended strongly that students' identities be hidden while marking and that pre-determined marking scheme should be prepared centrally and strictly adhered to during marking and recording of scores. Conference marking should be enforced in the department.

Keywords : essay items, objective scoring, scorers reliability, scoring rubrics

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