Analysis of Policy Issues on Computer-Based Testing in Nigeria

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Abstract : A policy is a system of principles to guide activities and strategic decisions of an organisation in order to achieve stated objectives and meeting expected outcomes. A Computer Based Test (CBT) policy is therefore a statement of intent to drive the CBT programmes, and should be implemented as a procedure or protocol. Policies are hence generally adopted by an organization or a nation. The concern here, in this paper, is the consideration and analysis of issues that are significant to evolving the acceptable policy that will drive the new CBT innovation in Nigeria. Public examinations and internal examinations in higher educational institutions in Nigeria are gradually making a radical shift from Paper Based or Paper-Pencil to Computer-Based Testing. The need to make an objective and empirical analysis of Policy issues relating to CBT became expedient. The following are some of the issues on CBT evolution in Nigeria that were identified as requiring policy backing. Prominent among them are requirements for establishing CBT centres, purpose of CBT, types and acquisition of CBT equipment, qualifications of staff: professional, technical and regular, security plans and curbing of cheating during examinations, among others. The descriptive research design was employed based on a population consisting of Principal Officers (Policymakers), Staff (Teaching and non-Teaching-Policy implementors), and CBT staff (Technical and Professional-Policy supports) and candidates (internal and external). A fifty-item researcher-constructed questionnaire on policy issues was employed to collect data from 600 subjects drawn from higher institutions in South West Nigeria, using the purposive and stratified random sampling techniques. Data collected were analysed using descriptive (frequency counts, means and standard deviation) and inferential (t-test, ANOVA, regression and Factor analysis) techniques. Findings from this study showed, among others, that the factor loadings had significantly weights on the organizational and National policy issues on CBT innovation in Nigeria.

Keywords : computer-based testing, examination, innovation, paper-based testing, paper pencil based testing, policy issues

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