

Teachers and students participation in character assessment in secondary schools in Tanzania

**Mesaki Shanshandumi Munuo
Master of Arts**

University of Dar es Salaam, School of Education, 1982

Currently teachers in secondary schools in Tanzania are responsible for the assessment of the character of their students. Because of the limited teacher-student contacts, the validity and reliability of the assessments are somehow doubtful. It was felt that there is need to involve in this exercise with greater contacts with the students. The present study undertook to establish the relationship between teachers and students' assessments of given sets of students' dispositions and to determine teachers and students' attitudes towards student participation in character assessment. The study involved 343 respondents (97 teachers and 246 students) from six state secondary schools. Questionnaires and documentary review were employed in the data collection. Respondents rated students on nine character aspects and also responded to twelve items purporting to measure attitude towards student participation in character assessment. Ratings by teachers and students were correlated using the Spearman Rank Order correlation coefficient. The attitude responses were weighted and the sum of scores was calculated. The scores above the mean were taken as showing favourable attitudes and those below the mean as showing unfavourable attitudes towards student participation in character assessment. The findings showed that the majority of correlations between teachers and students' rankings were significant at the 0.05 level. The six character aspects which had significant correlations in most of the classes were work performance, cooperation, respect, leadership, care for property, and cleanliness. On reactions to student participation in character assessment, the findings showed that, in general, students have favourable attitudes while teachers have unfavourable attitudes. As for teachers themselves, female teachers had unfavourable and male teachers had favourable attitudes to students' participation in character assessment. However, teachers' attitudes to students' participation were not dependent on age or length of teaching experience for the 'V' values were not significant at the 0.05 level. As for students, although the majority of both male and female students had favourable attitudes towards student participation in character assessment, female students were significantly more favourable than male students. When Form 6 and Form 4 were compared, the former were unfavourable and the latter were favourable to student participation. It was concluded that student participation in character assessment is a welcome idea. This could be pursued as an effort to improve character assessment in secondary schools. Recommendations on how this could be effected and for further research given.