



## Teachers' concerns of the implementation of school-based assessment in the Cape Coast Metropolis, Ghana.

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**Abstract:** *The study examined Teachers' Concerns of School Based Assessment in the Cape Coast Metropolis in the Central Region. A descriptive survey was used in the study and seventy-three teachers were selected using a convenient sampling technique. The adapted stages of concern questionnaire (SoCQ) were the instrument used to collect data for the study. The analysis of the data was done by using descriptive statistics. The study revealed that the teachers had their highest concerns (most intense concerns) towards SBA implementation at Stage 4\_Consequences and their second highest concern and lowest concerns at Stage 5\_Collaboration and stage 0 (unconcern) respectively. The study also found no statistically significant association between teachers' demographic characteristics (gender, age, and teaching experience) and stages of concern. From the study the teachers are adopters, implementers, and users of SBA; therefore, they still need more information about the change. The study recommends that the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service through the Cape Coast Education Directorate should design and implement programs to conscientize teachers on the need to develop and practice effective SBA to their teaching. Finally, teachers should be equipped with relevant knowledge on assessment through in-service training on the nature of SBA and assist them (teachers) to develop and sustain SBA in their schools to realize educational goals.*

**Key Words:** *Assessment, School-based Assessment, concerns, concerns-based adoption model.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION:

The significance of teaching and learning processes in educational organizations is heralded on assessment. In education, assessment refers to the process of obtaining information that is used for making decisions about students, curricula, programs, and educational policy (1). Assessment aids educational stakeholders in educational organizations to make appropriate decisions that would benefit individuals in such institutions. (2) proposes the use of "formative and summative" assessment to make the distinction between the roles of evaluation. Hence, assessment is giving the impression to serve two completely different purposes (3). The use of assessment to classify, predict, and sort has additionally been modified to advance the tactic of teaching and learning in addition to accountability purposes (4). School-Based Assessment (SBA) is a system for collecting periodic information on pupils' learning status to design improvement programs within the performance of pupils. SBA, previously mentioned as Continuous Assessment within the Ghanaian establishment, has unfortunately not made the expected contribution to pupils' school performance due to a spread of reasons, the foremost important of which was the massive number of assignments that the teacher had to administer, mark, and record. The new SBA presents a reduced number of assignments that will be easily handled by both teachers and pupils (3). It is expected that the SBA will help teachers and pupils to realize the objectives of the syllabuses and consequently raise the quality of learning within the country. School Based Assessment is envisioned to offer schools with an internal assessment system that will advantage schools to realize standards in achievement in the subject area. Nevertheless, the unveiling of SBA has led to numerous changes in the classroom. Formerly, in the Continuous Assessment system, the total class score was 30% but, in the SBA, it is total class score was 50% hence the motivation of the study to examine the concerns of the SBA implementation. Consistent with (5) advances in modern education have changed the way we do many things



including the way we learn, study, and communicate. This means that what goes on among the schoolroom nowadays is compact upon by the school-based assessment and might probably influence the abilities that today's kids learn in faculties and so the means they are tutored to perform among the planet (6). Consistent with (7) as education becomes a lot pervasive, SBA is integrated into each facet of schools' operation, influencing the student's performance.

SBA is described as a process where students as candidates undertake specified assignments during the school year, under the guidance of the teacher. SBA brings assessment and teacher together for the benefit of the students and provides the teacher with the chance to participate uniquely within the assessment process that results in the ultimate grade obtained by his/her students. School Based Assessment (SBA) is a system for collecting periodic information on pupils' learning status for the aim of designing improvement programs within the performance of pupils.

School-based Assessment is supposed to feature price to education and to support easier pedagogy that facilitates knowledge for learners. Many researchers declared that the employment of School-Based Assessment in teaching and learning will facilitate learners to become more knowledgeable. However, in Ghana, it seems that the acceptance and implementation of SBA remains a quandary that poses great challenges to the majority of Ghanaian teachers. Teachers across all grades and educational subjects ought to have a sturdy operating knowledge to administer SBA and to use the information these assessments give. At its core, assessment is the gathering of information that shows what students know and measure what they can do. Once you complete an educational assessment of students, you need to study and analyze this information. Conducting assessments of student learning is also a vital aspect of the teaching and learning method.

In Ghana, studies are conducted on basic schools and senior high schools' teachers' perceptions about classroom assessments and SBA in the fields of mathematics, economics, and social studies (1; 8; 9; 10.; 11). However, none of those studies have researched teachers' concerns of school-based assessment in senior high school schools using the SOCs. This study, therefore, sought to investigate specifically the concerns of school-based assessment in senior high school within the Cape Coast Metropolis, Ghana. The research is guided by the following research questions.

1. At which stage, are teachers implementing the SBA in SHS?
2. Is there any statistically significant association between teachers' demographic characteristics (gender, age, educational qualification, teaching qualification, and teaching experience) and their stages of concerns?

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW:**

Teachers are the main implementors of the curriculum and as such their concerns regarding the SBA implementation need to be researched to meet the main purpose of the innovation. (12) researched the concerns of English teachers in Malaysian schools. Findings from the study indicated that the respondents are concerned about the innovation and that their concerns are multidimensional regardless of their experience in the innovation. Additionally, although the means for the respective stages of concern differ, they still had similar concerns regardless of their experience in the innovation. This was indicated by similar peaks shared by both groups of respondents in informational-personal, consequence collaboration, and refocusing. (13) in their study of re-examining the stages of concern questionnaire. A Test of Alternative Models indicators found that the concerns of teachers were multiple-peak concerns prof which imply that the advocated innovation is inappropriate or there are problems in the implementation process". This means that it was important to highlight that "The multiple-peak profile signals the need for immediate attention teachers wanted to change but they lacked a good understanding of the characteristics, benefits, requirements, and operation"(13). Additionally, the respondents were uncertain about the role they needed to play in SBA. This suggested that in-service training was much needed to ensure the smooth running of SBA. As it was, the respondents were aware of the importance of cooperation. Their awareness could be maximized in potential in-service training as an attempt to minimize their intense concern at Stage 5. It was feared that if no in-service training were provided, there was a possibility that the teachers would implement SBA "Superficially, go back to more comfortable old assessment practices, or develop a negative attitude toward SBA"(13) (14) examined teachers' perception of the implementation of school-based oral English assessment and the results revealed that their participants represented a positive perception of SBA. Their concern at the third stage may be indicative of areas that need further development. The participants declare that they require training on management of time when it comes to enforcing SBA. For example, they declare that they did not have enough time which they invested in nonacademic matters and workload associated with the SBA. (11) on economic teachers' conceptions of the classroom assessment, found that the respondents demonstrated positive responses in respect of the idea that classroom assessment leads to improvement in teaching and learning, ensures school accountability, and makes students accountable to their learning. The improvement conception underscores the importance Economics teachers attach to the use of data from assessment to effect valid changes in teaching and learning(15; 11). This conception appreciates assessment as a tool to improve the



quality of teaching and learning of Economics. The study of (1) in Ghana, on the implementation of SBA, also found that teachers had positive attitudes towards the application of SBA guidelines. (10.)found that Social Studies teachers were more aligned to assessment as a means of improvement of teaching and learning, followed by the students' progress whereas classroom assessment as school accountability was least practiced by Social Studies teachers. The concern Based Adoption Model is probably the most validated individual-oriented model in literature when comes to evaluating the concerns of respondents about a change and how it is implemented (16; 17). According to concern is "the composite representation of feelings, preoccupation, thought, and consideration given to a particular issue or task". They further elaborated that the concerns of teachers were both multidimensional and developmental. In other words, the concerns could be categorized into distinct stages and the concerns change according to the respective teacher's development in implementing the innovation as presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: A Brief Description of the Stages as Categorized by Hall et al. (1977).**

Level	Stages of concern	Expressions of concern	Relationship with SBA usage
Level 1 (Self-concerns)	Stage 0 (Awareness)	I am not concerned about it.	Low SBA users, implementer
	Stage 1 (Informational)	I would like to know more about it.	
	Stage 2 (Personal)	How will using it affect me?	Non-adopters
Level 2 (Task concerns)	Stage 3 (Management)	I seem to be spending all my time getting materials ready.	Moderate SBA users, implementer late adopters
	Stage 4 (Consequence)	How is my use affecting clients?	High SBA users, implementer
Level 3 (Impact concerns)	Stage 5 (Collaboration)	I am concerned about relating what I am doing with what my co-workers are doing.	Adopters
	Stage 6 (Refocusing)	I have some ideas about something that would work even better.	

### 3. RESEARCH METHODS:

The study employed a descriptive survey design in examining the teachers' concerns about School-based assessment. A descriptive survey design describes and predicts the phenomena without manipulating any factor which might influence the subject's behavior (18). The target population included all teachers in public SHS in the Cape Coast Metropolis. This was considered adequate for the teachers to provide the desired information as it pertains to their schools. Convenience sampling technique was used to select all 76 teachers (49 males & 27 females). Data was gathered using modified stages of concern questionnaire (SoCQ) developed by (17). The questionnaire contained 35-item recommended for innovations like SBA adoption and implementation. Primarily, the SoCQ is constructed on the stages of concern (SoC) that discourses the emotional and sentimental side of change. It pays attention to people's feelings, anxiety, reactions, perceptions, and attitudes when adopting, integrating, and implementing an educational innovation like SBA. The SoCQ acknowledges seven stages, and these stages are further categorized into three levels as indicated in Table 1. The data gathered was processed using SPSS version 24.0 and analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentages, means, standard deviation and chi-square).



**4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS:**

This section presents the results, interpretation, and discussion of the findings based on the research questions that were formulated to guide the study.

**Research Question One:** At which stage, are teachers implementing SBA in SHS?

The objective of research question one was to explore the concerns of teachers about the school-based assessment (SBA) implementation in senior high schools. The data gathered from the teachers were analyzed using means, standard deviation, and mean percentile scores. The mean and standard deviation scores of the respondents' responses were calculated to indicate the trends of their concerns of SBA implementation and the extent of variation from the trends. The relative percentile intensity (RPI) scores were also estimated to indicate the intensity of the concerns among teachers towards SBA implementation. The RPI was computed using a percentile conversion chart recommended by the developers (19). The raw scores were converted into percentiles and these percentile scores were then used to construct cohort (group) profiles of the SoC relative intensity graphs (Figure 1). The results are presented in Table 2

Table 2: teachers' stages of concerns about SBA implementation

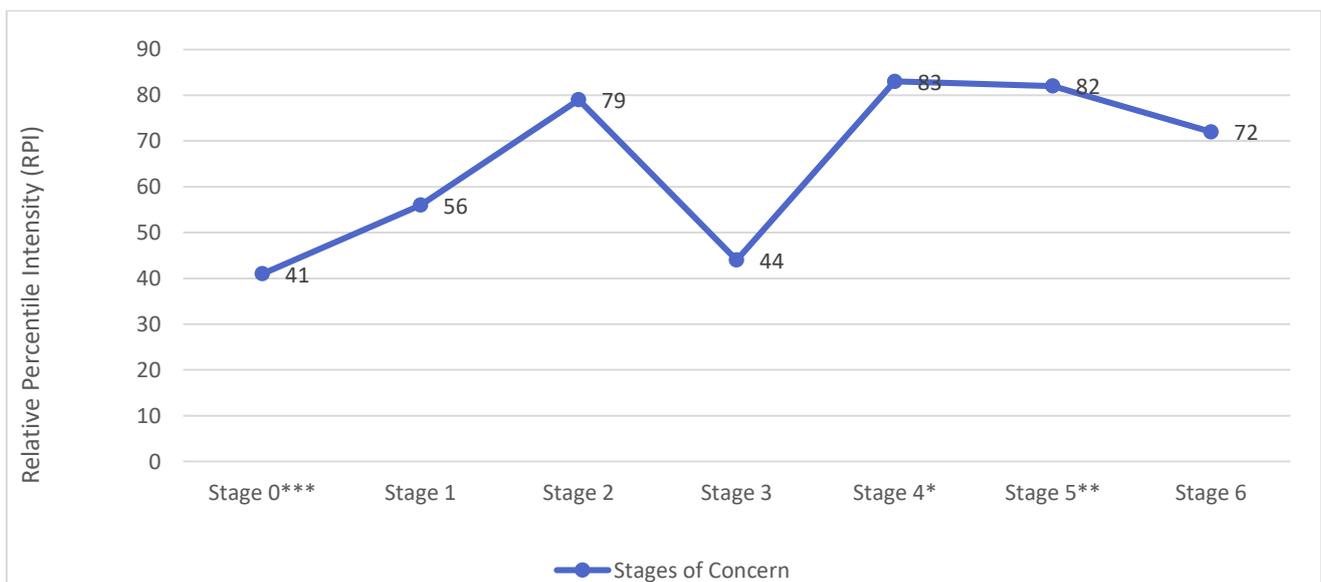
Stages of concern	Mean	SD	RPI
Stage 0 <u>Unconcerned (awareness)</u>	2.07	0.68	41*
Stage 1 <u>Informational</u>	2.80	0.38	56
Stage 2 <u>Personal</u>	3.93	0.38	79
Stage 3 <u>Management</u>	2.21	0.82	44
Stage 4 <u>Consequences</u>	4.12	0.31	83*
Stage 5 <u>Collaboration</u>	4.11	0.33	82**
Stage 6 <u>Refocusing</u>	3.61	0.26	72

\*Primary concern \*\*secondary concern \*\*\*least concern

Source: Field data, 2020

Table 2 shows the results of the teachers' concerns about SBA implementation in Ghanaian schools. The concerns of the teachers were measured using the concerns-based adoption model (CBAM), the SoC questionnaire (SoCQ) 20). Figure 1 shows a pictorial representation of the relative percentile intensity (RPI) of those concerns. The results in Table 2 indicate that teachers had mixed concerns about SBA implementation in schools ranging from Self-concerns (unconcerned, information, and personal), Task-concerns (management), and Impact-concerns (consequences, collaboration, and refocusing). However, a critical examination of the results revealed that teachers had impact concerns (consequences, collaboration, and refocusing) about SBA implementation in schools.

Figure 1: Stages of Concerns



\*Primary concerns \*\*secondary concerns \*\*\* least concerns

Source: Field data, 2020



The results in both Table 2 and Figure 1 revealed that the teachers had their highest concerns (most intense concerns) at Stage 4\_Consequences (M=4.12; SD=0.31; RPI = 83<sup>rd</sup> percentile). This result implies that the teachers are focusing on the effect that SBA will have on the students. The teachers' second highest stage of concern was Stage 5\_Collaboration (M=4.11; SD=0.33) with 82<sup>nd</sup> percentile. This result shows that the teachers are engrossing in coordinating and cooperating with other teachers to implement SBA in the curriculum. This is an indication of teachers' teamwork in discoursing and deliberating on SBA and its resources usage in the curriculum in the SHS. The third highest intense concerns among the teachers were recorded at Stage 2\_Personal (M=3.93; SD=0.38; RPI = 79<sup>th</sup> percentile). This result explains that the teachers are uncertain about the demands of assessment reforms (SBA). They are focusing on how their roles will change in the implementation of SBA as well as their adequacy (competencies and ability) to meet the demands of the SBA during implementation. This stage of concern among teachers represents their ego-oriented questions and uncertainties. They are concerned about status, rewards, and what effects the SBA implementation will have on them. Although this concern reflects uneasiness about SBA, it does not indicate teachers' resistance to SBA implementation. In addition, the fourth highest concern of teachers about SBA implementation was Stage 6\_Refocusing (M=3.61; SD=0.26) with 72<sup>nd</sup> percentile. This result implies that the teachers are focusing on ways to explore to reap more universal benefits from the SBA. Thus, the teachers seem to have ideas about how to change their use of SBA in schools or the SBA itself. These ideas seem to be positive and more likely towards the SBA implementation. In this regard, they are interested in learning more about the SBA reforms. As indicated in both Table 2 and Figure 1, the lowest (least) relative intensity of the respondents' stage of concern was reported at Stage 0\_Unconcerned/awareness (M=2.07; SD=0.68) with 41<sup>st</sup> percentile. This result suggests that teachers have more positive concerns about SBA implementation during the instructional discourse. They are also highly involved in using or implementing SBA in the curriculum. Thus, the teachers are positively thinking about SBA implementation, and it is their highest priority in the school.

From the results in Table 2 and Figure 1, it is concluded that teachers have Impact-Concerns (consequence, collaboration, and refocusing stages) towards SBA implementation in schools. This suggests that the teachers are not resistant to SBA implementation, but rather users or adopters of SBA in the schools. The results of the current study agree with the study of 7) which found that teachers were deeply concerned about the impact of the Teacher Assessment Scheme on student learning and their professional development. (12) also found that respondents were concerned with the SBA with an indication of the high mean score (>3.5) in most stages and items, indicating that their concerns were multidimensional, yet the teachers had their highest concern at the management stage. In the study (1) in Ghana, the results revealed that teachers had positive attitudes towards the application of SBA guidelines. (10.), found that Social Studies teachers were more aligned to assessment as a means of improvement of teaching and learning, followed by the students' progress whereas classroom assessment as school accountability was least practiced by Social Studies teachers.

**Research Question Two:** Is there any statistically significant association between teachers' stages of concerns and demographic characteristics (gender, age, educational qualification, teaching qualification, and teaching experience)? The purpose of this research question was to find out if there are any statistically significant differences in the stages of concern of teachers based on their demographic characteristics (gender, age, educational qualification, and teaching experience). The results are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: Teachers Background Characteristics and stages of concerns.**

Variables		Stages of Concern						
		0	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Gender</b>	Male	49	49	49	49	49	49	49
	Female	27	27	27	27	27	27	27
<b>Age group</b>	21-30yrs	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
	31-40yrs	35	35	35	35	35	35	35
	41-50yrs	11	11	11	11	11	11	11



<b>Educational Qualification</b>							
Diploma/HND	19	19	19	19	19	19	19
Bachelor's degree	42	42	42	42	42	42	42
Master's degree	12	12	12	12	12	12	12
PhD	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
<b>Teaching Experience</b>							
1-5yrs	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
6-10yrs	33	33	33	33	33	33	33
11-15yrs	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
16yrs and above	4	4	4	4	4	4	4

As indicated in Table 3, it is observed that there was no statistically significant difference in the teachers' stages of concern about SBA implementation at the SHS based on gender. This implies that teachers' concerns about SBA implementation are not sensitive to gender. Accordingly, both male and female teachers had the same concerns towards SBA implementation. This finding was similar to the result of researchers (21; 22; 23; 10.) which showed that gender did not have any significant effect on teachers' stages of concerns. However, this current finding contradicts the results of (24) which revealed that gender affects teachers' concerns. Based on the age distribution of the teachers, it was found that there was no statistically significant difference in the teachers' stages of concern about SBA implementation in SHS. Consequently, the teachers within all the age groups had the same concerns towards SBA implementation in SHS. These findings agree with the results of (25) which revealed that age did not influence teachers concerns about innovation, however, contradicts the results of other researchers who found otherwise (26; 10.; 27; 28) that there were statistically significant differences between teachers' perception on the nature of classroom assessment based on age. The results in Table 3 furthermore revealed that there was no statistically significant difference between the academic qualifications of teachers regarding their stages of concern. This finding corroborates the results of (29) which showed no significant difference between teachers' concerns and educational qualification but oppose prior findings (30; 26; 31; 10; 28), that there were statistically significant differences between teachers' perception of the nature of classroom assessment based on academic qualification. In line with a teaching qualification, the results shown in Table 3 indicated that there was no statistically significant difference between the teaching qualifications of teachers regarding their stages of concern. The finding of the current study confirmed the results of previous researchers who indicated that teaching experiences do not influence teachers' stages of concerns towards an innovation like ICT (32);). This finding also opposes the results of (33; 34; 27) who found that there was a significant difference in the teachers' stages of concern based on their years of teaching.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS:

The study recommends that the Ministry of Education (MoE) and the Ghana Education Service (GES) through the Cape Coast Education Directorate should design and implement programmes to conscientize teachers on the need to develop and practice effective SBA to their teaching. Moreover, teachers should be equipped with relevant knowledge on assessment through in-service training on the nature of SBA. Educational management in Ghana should also assist teachers to develop and sustaining effective classroom assessments in their schools to realize educational goals. The study further recommends that MoE in collaboration with school administrators and the National Association of Graduate Teachers (NAGRAT) should continuously monitor, mentor, and provide support for effective implementation of SBA. Again, the MoE through these agencies should effectively involve educational stakeholders such as teachers, students, and parents in decisions making concerning the implementation of SBA which will help provide clear and accurate information about the SBA. Also, the MoE in collaboration with school administrators should provide Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for teachers on the modifications and usage of SBA. This will help teachers who do not have practical skills in SBA usage to undergo training to become competent and confident in the use of SBA during teaching and learning.



## 6. CONCLUSION:

The results revealed that generally, teachers have impact concerns about the implementation of SBA. Teachers had their highest concern at the consequence stage followed by the collaborative stage. This implies that the teachers are focusing on the effect of SBA on the students. This is also an indication that the teachers are engrossing in coordinating and cooperating with other teachers to implement SBA in the curriculum. The results further revealed that all the feelings, uncertainties, and questions hinge on the consequence and outcome of implementing SBA in the Senior High School by teachers showed that there is no statistically significant association between teachers' stages of concerns and their background characteristics (gender, age distribution, teacher academic qualification, teaching qualification, and teaching experience) towards SBA implementation in senior high schools. Thus, teachers' concerns about SBA implementation in the curriculum are not influenced or sensitive to their gender, age, teacher academic qualification, teaching qualification, and years of teaching experience. Hence, these personal characteristics of the teachers are not significant factors to be considered when considering and addressing teachers' stages of concern towards SBA implementation in the SHS in Ghana. Assessments serve as a critical component of any educational system.

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