

Realizations

Student Learning Evaluation in Benin

In 1991, Benin began a reform of its educational system at the primary level. The American Government via the USAID (United States of America International Development) proposed a program of cooperation in education touching the primary education. This project of intervention took the name of CLEF (Children Learning and Equity Foundations). From 1992, a set of "action plans" was developed, some touching the educational sectors of the school system: the training and the in-service of the staff, the educational material, the curricula, and the evaluation of the learnings. Consultants from several countries were associated to the implementation of the measures retained by the Beninese persons in charge of their setting-up.

With regard to the introduction of evaluation of the learnings, Micro Centre Pythagore proposed the use of tools developed by this firm. The EduStat software was acquired within the framework of the interventions taking place in this project and used throughout the progress of the activities. Between 1992 and 2002, the realized tasks can be grouped with regard to the following objects of evaluation:

- the raising awareness to the educational evaluation and the preparation of the instrumentation;
- the evaluation of students' performance on selected samples;
- the certification of the studies.

We review certain activities having taken place in Benin within the framework of the sector of the school reform concerning more specifically the evaluation of the learnings.

Sensitization to the educational evaluation and the preparation of the instrumentation

The first interventions to take place within the framework of new practices in educational evaluation touched the training of the school staff, in particular, on the elaboration of the instrumentation necessary for the driving of an evaluation.

Workshops were planned to make sensitive the staff concerned in the procedures of evaluation of the learnings and in the conditions to be respected to set up a rigorous process. The objective aimed with regard to this sector of interventions in educational evaluation is the development and the intensification of the national capacities to be able of realizing in an autonomous way activities of evaluation of the learnings.

It was decided to realize operations of evaluation susceptible to supply information useful for the school persons in charge for decision-making connected with the setting-up of the current reform. And so instruments of collection of the information were elaborated. It was necessary to take into account all the stages being a part of an activity of evaluation, in particular the recording of the available data and their treatment.

Gradually, it was possible to have a set of contextual questions and items touching several disciplines of the primary education. To be capable of using in an effective way these information sources, the EduStat software served to develop some items banks.

Evaluation of students' performance

It was decided to realize evaluations of students' performance in two disciplines (French and Mathematics) with students' samples at grades 2 and 5. These evaluations were realized in May, 1995 and in May, 2001. The first evaluation allowed to know the state of the situation before the introduction of the measures planned to the CLEF project. The evaluation realized in 2001 supplied data on the performance of the students having benefited from the resources recently introduced into the school system

Certification of the primary studies

Within the framework of the reform of the Beninese school system, new curricula were implanted. It was necessary to adapt the procedures of certification of the primary education accordingly. We revised the format of the examination, in particular the tests used for the admission to the CEP (Certificat d'Études Primaires).

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