THE QUEST FOR AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT: WHAT ARE WE ASSESSING AND WHY? An examination of the Internal Assessment Initiative at Secondary School Level

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An examination of the Internal Assessment Initiative at Secondary School Level in Fiji

*Cresantia F. Koya*

**Introduction**

It has been apparent for sometime that examinations take precedence in Fiji’s education system. The fact that there are five national examinations is a testimony to this means of measuring student performance. Two of these examinations are administered at upper primary school and the remaining three at secondary school. These include the class six, Fiji Intermediate Examination (FIE); Class 8, Fiji Eighth Year Examination (FEYE); Form four, Fiji Junior Certificate Examination (FJC); Form six, Fiji School Leaving Certificate (FSLC); and, Fiji Form Seven Certificate (FFSC).

One of the first official documents that reports rote learning was the predominant form of teaching and learning in Fiji classrooms, due to the content-heavy and examination driven curriculum, can be seen in the Education Commission Report of 1969 and the UNDP/UNESCO Curriculum Project of 1975. More recently, the Education Commission 2000 states that these problems still plague education in Fiji.

An agreement made between the Governments of Fiji and Australia based on the recommendations of the Commission Report 2000, resulted in the 2003, Fiji Education Sector Reform Project (FESP). While the project was initially intended to last three years, the tenure has been extended to 2008. The primary areas of this agreement are:

1. To identify areas for support which could assist in the achievement of education and training sector policies and objectives; and
2. To propose specific activities, including feasibility and design/scoping work, which should be undertaken to underpin an assistance program and prepare draft terms of reference where applicable (Dixon and Dixon, 2004)

One of the major changes that have come about as a result of this agreement is Outcomes Based Education (OBE). As a part of this approach, assessment for
learning (AfL) has been identified as the assessment strategy employed by the MOE Fiji. Under the umbrella of AfL, an Internal Assessment Initiative (IA) was piloted in 2003 and institutionalized in January 2007.

This paper reports on a study that was conducted to examine the beliefs, values and experiences of third and fourth form students and their teachers at one of the initial pilot schools. The findings have practical implications for curriculum planners in Fiji and other Pacific Island Countries (PICs) who may be considering similar initiatives in their country assessment strategies. Such a review, even on a small scale as in this study is significant as there has been to date no real stakeholder feedback on IA and the impact that IA has had on student learning and teacher pedagogies.

**Background and Literature Review**

The literature available provides little empirical evidence of the process of the OBE model (McNier, 1993; Glatthorn, 1993 cited in Anderson, Moore, Anaya and Bird, 2005; Berlach, 2004). This review is therefore limited in that it provides a theoretical discussion of the philosophy of these. The literature available is predominantly sourced from Australia, the United Kingdom and United States of America. The South African example of OBE is presented as a case study for comparative analysis of the Fiji-FESP model.

**The FESP Direction of Educational Reform in Fiji**

The Education Commission Report 2000 is undoubtedly the most comprehensive educational review document providing information regarding perceptions of stakeholders about the education system. One of the main findings of the report is that there was an over-emphasis of rote-learning which seriously impeded the ability of students’ to transfer knowledge to real life (Sharma and Sadler, 2000). It stipulated that this was in part due to the content heavy, examination curriculum.

Interestingly, public opinion at the time indicated that while some felt that the three first examinations FIE, FEYE and FJC should be removed. Others thought the national examinations were too important to remove. Sadler (2000) reports:

> The quality of education, the motivation of students and the efforts of teachers, principals and head teachers would all suffer or be wasted if external examinations were abolished or their importance reduced. Examinations were seen as the necessary and final guardians of achievement standards. (p.344-5)

The commission found this latter view troubling as it demonstrates a certification mentality that is deeply entrenched in society. The view that examinations are the
‘guardians of achievement standards’ needs to be changed particularly in the early years where the examination appears to serve no other purpose then to gauge student progress. This is something, the commission argued could be adequately provided through school based assessment.

In September 2005, an inaugural Education Summit was held in consultation with educational stakeholders to review a 48-page document titled the Suva Declaration: “Building a Strategic Direction for Education in Fiji 2006 – 2015.” The document provided recommendations of six core curriculum ‘task-force’ groups on the following primary areas: the child, the curriculum, the school, Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET), human resources and the community.

The Suva declaration is a comprehensive curriculum document developed around the new vision for education in Fiji: “Educating the Child holistically for a peaceful and prosperous Fiji.” The goals of education based on this vision are articulated as: [to]

1. Facilitate the holistic development of every child,
2. Promote fundamental shared values amongst students,
3. Motivate children and prepare them to be lifelong learners,
4. Help children to live a full and productive life in a shrinking global village, and,
5. Prepare children for the world of work where change is a fact of life.

(Suva Declaration 2005, p. 28-9)

In adherence with the philosophy of holistic education, the declaration advocates that there is a need for the ‘introduction of assessment and reporting tools that will effectively measure children’s learning including children with disabilities” (MOE Policy in FJC Assessment, 2007, p.2). This is further reinforced in the MOE strategic Plan 2006-2008: “Fiji ‘needs to review its assessment methods with the view to incorporating more school-based assessment at all levels’” (Ibid).

It further presents OBE as the necessary framework for developing holistic education in Fiji:

An outcomes-based curriculum is necessary in determining what a child ought to be like as a result of education that s/he has received. The approach will also impact favourably on the areas of the curriculum such as teaching and learning and education assessment. As has been demonstrated by the new Fiji Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (FILNA), an outcome-based curriculum will facilitate
assessment for learning more than assessment of learning. (Suva Declaration, 2005 p.29).

**Outcomes Based Education**

While Outcomes Based Education (OBE) has been advocated in the West as a means towards achieving quality educational outcomes since the 1990's in the USA and UK, the major policy changes in Fiji can be directly linked to FESP which adopts the Western Australian approach to outcomes based education.

Interestingly, the foundation for the philosophy of OBE is elusive in that the literature indicates a number of possible theoretical frameworks as reference points including rationalism, mechanism, faradism and taylorism (Berlach, 2004); as well as the ideology of Mastery Learning (Benjamin Bloom), Behaviourism (B.F. Skinner), objectives curriculum model (Ralph Tyler), and vocational education competency models in the UK (Mahomed, 1996 cited Jansen, 1998 p.2).

OBE is based on the premise of the life-long learner and requires that the starting point is an identification of the challenges and needs of school leavers. These needs are articulated as outcomes of education (McNeir, 1993). William Spady who is often credited as one of the founders of OBE provides five key principles of an outcomes based curriculum:

1. Begin with the end (outcome) in mind;
2. Individual schools design a curriculum around predetermined outcomes; 
3. Comparing student performance is educationally counter-productive; 
4. All learning should be calibrated so as to allow for individual success; and, 
5. Process is at least as important as product. (Cited in Berlach and McNaught, 2007, p.2).

This means that the schools are actively engaged in assessment and that student development is at the centre of assessment. The focus of OBE is “observable, achievable and measurable statements of student attainment.” (Mcleod and Reynolds, 2003, p.29)

The main features of OBE include:

1. OBE emphasizes process: It is primarily a process approach that demands reform in the areas of curriculum, assessment and reporting. It is argued that OBE results in a tension between content and outcomes with a tendency to over-emphasize the latter.
2. There is a shift in the teaching and learning process: OBE shifts focus from teaching to student learning. This requires a clear understanding of OBE by schools and teachers.

3. Students are the masters of their learning: The teachers’ role changes significantly in line with Habermas’ cognitive interest three, focusing on the critical thinking and development of the student. The teacher of facilitator and motivator. In order for higher order thinking to occur, teachers need to be well versed in designing learning experiences that enable active student participation.

4. Change in accountability of educational process: OBE stresses the need to prioritize both student learning outcomes as well as traditional measures of quality assessment. (McNeir, 2003; Curtin University of Technology, 2004).

While most of the literature is in favour of OBE, Berlach (2004) provides a compelling critique of OBE in Australia arguing that serious doubts about the model have not been adequately discussed. These include a ‘marketization’ of the education and a de-prioritization of the value of knowledge, an over-emphasis on vaguely described student learning outcomes and de-emphasis on inputs. Significantly, he posits that a lack of teacher consultation on the impact of OBE raises questions of the validity and value of the approach.

The general success of OBE still remains to be persuasively demonstrated. Apart from several reference to overseas exemplars (e.g. Johnson City, New York, Alessi et al., 1991; Thorpe Gordon Elementary School, Jefferson City, Gusky and Block 1991), the literature is generally silent. Evans (1994) makes the point that “despite the popularity of outcomes-based education, research documenting its effects is rare” (p.12). Failure receives even less publicity, although Deming’s research (in Neave, 1990) has indicated that in the now defunct Soviet Union, the enforcing of outcomes only led to inefficiency, management complacency and low morale. (Berlach, 2004, p.4.)

Other critiques of OBE have said that it accentuates affective (emotional) outcomes as opposed to objective outcomes (Schafly, 1993) and that despite advocating a shift towards a sound teaching and learning pedagogy that OBE actually promotes an ‘ends-means’ approach. The general lack of comprehensive impact analysis in the school (Glatthorn, 1993) and parental concerns regarding a decline in numeracy and literacy skills have also been documented, as well as problems in the transition towards effective measurement of vague student outcomes and the cost of reform (Jansen, 1998). In the case of Australia, one of
The predominant issues in OBE has been the difficulty faced in incorporating articulated values of schooling into outcomes (McLeod and Reynolds, 2003, p.30).

The South African example (Jansen, 1998; Soudien and Baxon, 1997) is pertinent to this discussion as it bears striking resemblance to the approach taken in Fiji. Firstly, the speed at which OBE was adopted should be considered. In South Africa, the launch of Curriculum 2005, in 1997, was quickly followed by the adoption of OBE in January 1998. In Fiji, FESP began operations in 2003 and changes in assessment aligned with OBE were in place that very same year. This includes the FILNA and IA which will be discussed in depth in the next section.

This short time-frame may indicate one of two things; (1) that there was a good understanding of OBE and its benefits prior to its implementation; or (2) that the MOE simply adopted the approach promoted by the respective consultant teams. In either scenario, it is doubtful that a critical analysis of OBE was conducted before adopting it as the national curriculum model.

Secondly, in both cases, Australia played a large role in developing the OBE package and implementation of the process. And, thirdly, the South African National Qualifications Framework (NQF) document appears reminiscent of the current National Curriculum Framework (NCF) currently being drafted by FESP consultants in Fiji. While the NCF has yet to be released, the South African NQF is a reform in the areas of education and training. “Its primary objectives are "to create an integrated national framework for learning achievements and to enhance access to, and mobility and quality within, education and training" (RSADE, 1997 Cited in Soudien and Baxen, 1997, p.2). NQF advocates OBE as the vehicle by which to achieve educational reform and address issues of human resource development and increased economic activity (Soudien and Baxen, 1997; Jansen, 1998; Young, 2003). This is inline with primary area one of the FESP agreement.

In both countries, the official take on OBE has been that it provides an education that prepares learners for lifelong learning and that it espouses a fairer form of assessment enabling teachers to address students’ needs. Additionally, in both cases a centralized approach to curriculum development is employed with minimal teacher participation in curriculum development.
OBE in Fiji and Assessment for Learning

Changes to assessment in Fiji began in 2003. Firstly, the FILNA examinations (Fiji Islands Literacy and Numeracy Assessment) which are administered in Years 4 and 6 (Classes 4 and 6) were designed that year and trialled in 2004. It was administered nationally for the first time in 2007. FILNA is modelled on WALNA (Western Australian Literacy and Numeracy Assessment which according to the official WALNA Website: “is a curriculum-based assessment that is criterion-referenced and tests students’ knowledge and skills in numeracy, reading, spelling and writing.” (Department of Education and Training, Government of Western Australia, 2007, p.1).

The second change in assessment brought about by FESP has been the Internal Assessment Initiative which was piloted in 2003 in select secondary schools and implemented nationally in 2007. The IA covers a two-year period comprising fifty percent course work (covering Form 3 content), with the remaining fifty percent contributed by final examination grades of the Fiji Junior Examination (covering Form 4 content) (Drova, 2007).

The FJC IA Programme is promoted as Assessment for Learning (AfL) which has been defined as assessment that attempts to improve students’ learning. Tasks are assigned to help teachers and students determine levels of attainment and areas needing improvement. AfL is a formative means of gauging students’ progress and to help students’ reach their optimal levels of development (The Standards Site, 2007; FESP, 2007, p.54). Where assessment for learning is seen as a formative means of assessment, assessment of learning is seen as a summative measure of student learning (FESP, 2007).

In Fiji, IA is introduced as: “a process where the assessment tasks are part of the normal teaching and learning.” (MOE Policy in FJC Assessment, 2007, p.2). The MOE explains the process as one that is context-friendly allowing teachers to modify tasks to suit both context and content of learning. “The IA tasks support authentic, relevant, purposeful learning by students providing reliable and valid information to be communicated to the teachers, students and their parents.” (Ibid).

The IA Process

Coverage
Students in Form 3 study between six or seven compulsory examinable subjects including: English, Basic Science, Commercial Studies, Mathematics, Social Science, Home Economics (or: Woodwork and Technical Drawing, or: Graphic Design and Technical Drawing), and Agricultural Science (or: Office Technology,
or: vernacular (Fijian, Hindi, Urdu, Rotuman, French). In the new IA initiative, between 3 and 4 assessment tasks (referred to as IA tasks) are completed in each core-examinable subject area.

This means that students submit a minimum of any number between 18 to 28^5 (if not more) tasks for IA purposes in addition to the normal workload, which comprises coverage of the syllabus, homework tasks and internal school tests and examinations. IA tasks and their marking criteria are designed at the CDU and disseminated to schools.

In addition to these core-examinable subjects, students also study a number of additional compulsory core non-examinable subjects of Physical Education, Art and Craft and Music (PEMAC) and optional non-examinable subjects comprising Family Life or Religious Studies, Virtues or Values Education. This translates to at least ten subjects of study (depending on the number of non-examinable subjects offered at their school).

**Assessment and Moderation of IA**

IA tasks are first marked by their subject-teacher. This is followed by a centralized moderation process which involves the selection of five samples of each IA task at the school level. These samples include the highest score, the middle (median) score, the lowest score, and two of the mid-scores) a middle-high (between highest and median) and middle low (between median and the lowest score). Moderators include subject-teachers from a number of select schools and a CDU officer. The moderators’ task is to re-mark these samples, to arrive at an agreeable mark for each task before then assigning a moderation range for each school. Teacher-moderators are physically located within the MOE complex for the duration of the moderation process, this currently takes about two days to complete, although initially pilot schools engaged in a week-long moderation workshop.6

A SWOT analysis of the IA conducted by the MOE in 20077 showed that while the philosophy of the IA was in line with global education movements towards AfL empowering teachers to determine both the quality of the tasks as well as, student learning, that there was some opposition to change. Moreover, that finance, human resources and a lack of infrastructure prevented full realization of the initiative. The overview indicated that there was potential to further develop IA and that teachers’ could be accorded more leeway in improving student learning and performance in the IA tasks. Articulated threats included finance, human resources, brain-drain and time constraints in creating awareness and
understanding about the benefits of IA and a lack of understanding of AfL in context.

**The Present Study**

This study is significant in that it provides an insight into the IA experience bridging the gap between the theoretical and the practical experience of IA in the context of OBE. Given that there has been very little local discourse (in Fiji) about OBE and the effects and implications of IA, the incentive to conduct an exploratory study at a pilot school was driven by a desire to find out more about the initiative. This was fuelled by the feedback and comments made by teachers, parents and students regarding the initiative. Furthermore, the international literature indicates a general lack of empirical research into OBE which makes this study even more significant.

There were two main research questions which drove the investigation.

1. What are students and teachers perceptions of the IA Initiative?
2. What were their experiences of the IA process?

**Methodology**

**Sample**

The school selected was St Joseph’s Secondary, an all-girls Catholic secondary school in Suva. This school was selected because it was one of the first schools to pilot the IA initiative in 2003.

The sampling method employed was both purposeful and convenience sampling (Wiersma, 2000). Basically, twenty five percent of all third and forth formers were sampled using a survey method of questionnaires. Ten teachers and sixty students (ten students<sup>8</sup> from each of the form 3 and form 4 strands) participated in the survey. (See Appendix 2 for sample demographics). All the teachers who agreed to be a part of the study were surveyed and student participants were selected at random by their form teachers. Interviews were conducted with the MOE Education Officer in charge of IA and two teacher-moderators who had been involved in the piloting of IA.

**Research design**

The present study employed a mixed methods approach (Creswell, 2003; Tashakkori and Teddie, 2003) to describe the experiences and interpretations of both teachers and students on IA. A very simple methodology was employed in this study comprising three main methods of data collection: *Talanoa* (or informal conversation); a survey questionnaire and document analysis.
The ‘talanoa’ methodology has been described as a culturally appropriate means of eliciting important information from respondents in a non-threatening, informal conversation. In some instances, particularly with outsider-researchers coming into Pacific contexts, talanoa is only possible when and if a rapport has been established between the researcher and the traditional community in question. This may involve traditional presentations made to the chief or community leader before commencing any field work in the community. The existing working relationship with the school, the MOE and the moderators used in the study, coupled with the fact that the study took place in the metropolitan Suva area, meant that such traditional protocols did not need to be adhered to. Permission was obtained from the school, the teachers and students as well as the MOE officer and moderators before conducting field work.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the Education Officer IA at the MOE in Suva and with two teacher-moderators. Following these, survey questionnaires were disseminated to students and teachers at the school. Ministry policy documents and reports on OBE, and IA were also examined.

Data Analysis
Survey questions were coded by sample thematically into eight main categories. These were then analysed by theme across teacher and student samples for comparative purposes. These are presented in the main body of findings and a table of results is presented in Appendix 3. Field notes from the Talanoa sessions held were analysed in accordance with the main categories identified in the survey analysis.

Results
In the interest of brevity, a result summary is presented in Appendix 3. This section will present a discussion of the findings of the study under the following themes of workload; school based assessment; guided learning; research; resources; strengths; weaknesses and general beliefs.

Workload: IA Work Load and Time Frame
At the time of the survey, Form three students were working on an average of two to six IA tasks with varying time frames ranging from two to six weeks per tasks. 27 percent (N=8) were working on two tasks; 20 percent (N=6) were working on three tasks and 53 percent (N=16) were working on five tasks. More than two-thirds of the third formers said that they had been allocated seven tasks for the term (67 percent, N=20), with 20 percent (N=6) allocated six tasks and 13 percent (N=4) with eight tasks for the term. The IA load for the year appeared to be
somewhere between 18 and 23 (67 percent, N=20 had 21 tasks; 20 percent, N=6 had 18 tasks and 13 percent, N=4 had 23 tasks). This translated to about 3 tasks per subject.

The three samples agreed\(^{10}\) that IA was demanding in terms of workload. While all the teachers believed that the time allocated for each task was adequate, some students felt otherwise (Form 3: 17 percent, N=5/ Form 4: 43 percent, N=13). In addition, 40 percent of teachers (N=4) felt that there were too many projects and that sometimes more than one IA task was due at the same time. They also said that students’ who did not have home support had difficulty completing their tasks (20 percent, N=2). Another area highlighted the time that IA consumed, conflicting with other aspects of their students’ school and home life (30 percent, N=30).

Teachers’ views on the impact of IA on their teaching were varied. One teacher reported that she was burdened with paper work (10 percent, N=1), and another said she felt rushed to complete IA tasks (10 percent, N=1). Other challenges included the time that IA consumed (40 percent, N=4); rushing coverage to complete IA tasks (10 percent, N=1) and class size which ranged between 38 and 42 students per class (10 percent, N=1). Most teachers said that careful time management was essential to coping with the IA load (80 percent, N=8). This meant starting with IA in week 1 of the term to give students more time (20 percent, N=2) and bringing due dates forward to accommodate for more marking time (20 percent, N=2).

School based Assessment: Clarity and Marking of IA at school level
About half of the student sample said that instructions were not clear (Form 3: 50 percent, N=15/ Form 4: 43 percent, N=13). An overwhelming 93 percent (N=28) of form three students said that marked tasks were not returned before the next task was submitted making it difficult to learn from earlier mistakes. Just under half the form four sample had experienced similar problems (47 percent, N=14). This contradicted the teachers, 60 percent (N=6) of whom said that they returned marked work to students before collecting the next IA task.

Few students expressed misgivings about the level of marking used at the school, with 26 percent of Form 3 students (N=8) and 17 percent of Form 4 students (N=2) saying the level of marking was high. Comparatively, 40 percent of the teachers (N=4) believed their marking was strict and 20 percent (N=2) that they were fair markers who commented on student weaknesses enabling them to improve on their tasks.
Guided Learning: Teacher Guidance and External Assistance
On the matter of preparation for IA, about two-thirds of the Form 3 group felt that the teacher did not spend enough time discussing IA (60 percent, N=18) compared to 73 percent of Form 4 students (N=22) who believed otherwise. Not surprisingly, all teachers sampled (100 percent) believed that they had covered the IA requirements thoroughly in class.

A majority of students said that additional assistance from family and friends was needed to complete the tasks (Form 3: 93 percent, N=28/ Form 4: 67 percent, N=20). Teachers agreed that many students asked parents for assistance and in some cases, to actually compile student tasks (80 percent, N=8). Just over a half of the Form 3 students surveyed (60 percent, N=18) worked with other students on their tasks and some even admitted asking others to complete an IA task when they were overloaded (Form 3: 25 percent, N=15/ Form 4: 77 percent, N=23).

Research Skills and Plagiarism
Given the comments that had surfaced during conversations with parents, teachers and students prior to the survey, a series of questions on plagiarism was included in the survey. About one-third of students said they knew what plagiarism was when asked in an open ended question (Form 3: 26 percent, N=18/ Form 4: 30 percent, N=10).

When asked to indicate in a likert scale the degree of agreement, results were surprising. Only one-third of students agreed that “copying from texts without reference or inclusion of a bibliography” constituted plagiarism. Many were unsure about this (Form 3: 30 percent, N=10/ Form 4: 67 percent, N=20). The remainder of students disagreed. 13 percent of Form 3 (N=4) students and 30 percent of Form 4 (N=10) students said that copying from internet sources without reference was plagiarism. 30 percent of Form 3 (N=10) and 40 percent of form 4 were unsure.

When asked about copying from other students’ or asking someone else to complete a task, more form 4 students said that this was plagiarism (Form 3: 20 percent, N=6/ Form 4: 60 percent, N=20). 30 percent (N=10) of third formers and 20 percent (N=6) of fourth formers were unsure.

Despite their confusion, over two thirds of form 4 students said that referencing skills were adequately covered by teachers (73 percent, N=22) with 60 percent (N=18) of third formers saying that they had been taught these by family and
friends. All teachers (100 percent) believed that referencing skills had been adequately taught where needed. A further 80 percent (N=8) believed that students were aware of proper referencing and compiling a bibliography.

On the issue of copying, about one-fifth of the student sample admitted they had copied from another student (Form 3: 17 percent, N=5/ Form 4: 20 percent, N=6). Approximately two-thirds of all students (Form 3: 67 percent, N=20/ Form 4: 77 percent, N=23) asked others to complete their tasks when they were overloaded. This included school friends, siblings and parents. Two form three students admitted to plagiarizing (7 percent) and said that they had not been caught and the same number admitted having a parent complete at least one IA task for them.

Most teachers (80 percent, N=8) said they had found students copying from each other or asking others to complete tasks for them. Teachers of English and Social Science raised the issue of duplication of tasks across the years which enabled copying. In particular in the English subject, a research question did not engage students in research but instead required students to compile an expository essay on any topic of choice (20 percent, N=2). Teachers said that students could easily resubmit a paper obtained from a friend at another school without detection.

In the case of Social Science, a teacher raised her views about a genealogy task requiring students to map their family tree, meaning that siblings could share the task over the years. Two-fifths of teachers (40 percent, N=4) said that students resorted to plagiarism when they did not manage their time effectively or did not hand in their drafts for review.

**Resources**

While all teachers said that it was not a requirement to have IA tasks typed, all students felt that it was an important part of presentation. A majority of students said they had access to a family PC (Form 3: 93 percent, N=28/ Form 4: 67 percent, N=20). 17 percent of form three students (N=5) said that parents had typed their IA tasks for them. All students said that they had to make use of a combination of sources including the school library, external libraries and on-line research to complete their tasks. Four in five teachers 80 percent (N=8) believe that their students have regular access to a PC and internet but they do agree that in some cases locating resources are difficult.
Perceived Strengths and Weaknesses of IA

Strengths
Most students (Form 3: 67 percent, N=20/ Form 4: 100 percent, N=30) said that IA enabled the development of research skills. Similarly, 60 percent (N=18) and the entire form 4 sample said that the IA encouraged independent learning. Teachers said that IA was a good change from rote-learning (20 percent, N=2), and that it credits students’ efforts (20 percent, N=2). They also said that it was a practical approach (20 percent, N=2) which enabled academically weak students’ time to work on and complete a task (20 percent, N=2). One in five teachers (20 percent, N=2) believed that IA ‘forced’ parents to take a more active role in their children’s learning.

Weaknesses
Some of the weaknesses identified by students already highlighted included heavy workload; inadequate time and a lack of resources (Form 3: 17 percent, N=5/ Form 4: 63 percent, N=19). A number of students were adamant that the IA was a waste of time (Form 3: 25 percent, N=8/ Form 4: 7 percent, N=2). A further three in ten Form 4 students (30 percent, N=9) said that they were not sure of the personal benefits of IA to their learning. Teachers said that the IA was both time consuming and a heavy load on both students and teachers. They also believed that the moderation process was unfair and that the marks did not always reflect student’s efforts (40 percent, N=4).

General Beliefs: IA vs. Examinations
Although, teachers (60 percent) believed that students enjoyed the IA form of assessment, student views on this were varied. Most students indicated that they preferred IA to examinations (Form 3: 83 percent, N=25/ Form 4: 70 percent, N=21).

A point of interest was the comparison of examinations against IA. A majority of form 4 students (80 percent, N=24) said that IA was a better way to assess students ability and progress than tests and examinations, compared to only 13 percent of third formers (N=4). More than half the form three sample were unsure of this (53 percent, N=16).

About one-third of both student samples believed that exams and tests are the best way to assess student learning (Form 3: 33 percent, N=10/ Form 4: 30 percent, N=9). A similar number disagreed with this (Form 3: 33 percent, N=10/ Form 4: 27 percent, N=8).
It is important to report that this particular ranking is not reliable as students who gave tests and examinations the same rating as IA are significant. One group saying that both IA and examinations are the best way to assess student learning (Form 3: 7 percent, N=2/ Form 4: 47 percent, N=14) and a second group negating this (Form 3: 20 percent, N=6/ Form 4: 7 percent, N=2).

Teachers opinions also appear to be split; while a majority said that IA was a good way to assess student learning (80 percent, N=8), only 60 percent (N=6) believe that IA is a better way to assess student learning than tests and examinations, 20 percent (N=2) were unsure and 20 percent disagreed. Four in ten (40 percent, N=4) said that tests and examinations were still the best way to assess students’ ability and progress, with the same number (40 percent) in disagreement. Notably 20 percent (N=2) of teachers said they were not sure if either IA or examinations was the better way to assess student learning.

While most students said their parents believed IA to be a good idea (Form 3: 20 percent, N=6/ Form 4: 47 percent, N=14), some said that parents thought it was demanding (Form 3: 20 percent, N=6); time consuming (Form 4: 7 percent, N=2) and that it cuts into student study time (7 percent, N=2).

Teachers said that parents have indicated that while IA is a fair measure of students’ efforts and that they try to help their children (20 percent, N=2); it is expensive (40 percent, N=4); demanding on students (20 percent, N=2) and that some tasks were particularly difficult especially in tracing family history (20 percent, N=2).

Discussion of findings
The moderation process:
The moderation process appears to be exclusive only to teachers located centrally in each division and moderators felt that many teachers do not understand how moderation works. Moderators also said that it is sometimes hard to judge if it is students work or adults (parents or teachers). They agreed that the workload was heavy for teachers especially when teaching examination forms. They said that problems arose with marking standards when teachers do not follow the criteria provided or do not know how to use it. Sometimes big changes to marks occurred when internal school moderation was not conducted.

The moderators interviewed said that teachers needed to explain requirements to students better. They also expressed similar views regarding the repetition of tasks which meant that there was no real check on plagiarism. One moderator argued
that research as used in the IA English task was not really research (more essay writing) and because the topics were open to student choice, plagiarism could in all possibility be happening to a larger extent than currently thought.

Another problem raised by moderators was the quality and understanding of the teacher-moderators selected. One moderator said that in her group, a number of teacher-moderators were unable to use the criteria effectively and that this slowed the moderation process considerably. She said that her social science group was responsible for forty schools, which at five samples per school, translated to two hundred samples tasks that had to be marked by each teacher-moderator before a standard could be determined for each school. This process took two full days.

**MOE Perspective**

It was clear from the interview with the Education Officer IA that the IA rationale was not clearly understood and the MOE recognized that a fuller consultative process was needed of both OBE and AfL. It was highlighted that schools had expressed their alarm when there was a noticeable drop in FJC results in the first pilot IA examination of 2004. It was reported, however, that results had since improved. IA was seen as a work in progress and that initial problems with the number of IA tasks (initially 5 per subject\textsuperscript{12}) had been addressed. MOE is also mindful of the financial constraints of implementation, the cost of awareness workshops and the lack of MOE personnel to oversee the initiative. Additionally, IA is being reviewed for special needs students as an Inclusive Education report prepared in 2006\textsuperscript{13} found the IA to be restrictive particularly for visually impaired students who found IA tasks which required the construction and interpretation of graphs, tables and charts to be difficult.

The MOE conducted an Impact Analysis\textsuperscript{14} in 2007 which surmised that there is inadequate data to show whether the teaching and learning process in schools had changed. More importantly, it reports that despite IA being advocated as AfL that the manner by which it was administered (centre-periphery approach) meant that it was in effect another form of summative assessment (assessment of learning) rather than a formative process.

It also states that the current IA model is unsustainable given the number of tasks that students need to complete within the year in Form 3. Although IA was initially intended to be adopted along similar lines to other levels in secondary school, it expressed the view that IA is not feasible for transfer to other levels given the high cost of training, implementation and teacher involvement for moderation purposes. The review considers the spreading of IA tasks over the
form three and four level, and recognizes that this may deter students from adequate preparation for the FJC examination in Form 4.

On teaching and learning, it summarizes that early surveys show some teachers may be using the IA as a substitute for the subject prescription which had implications for content coverage. There had been some initial reports that students may be dropping out of school because the IA was too demanding and costly but this was not been substantiated by actual cases or numbers. There were pedagogical concerns given that some teachers said they simply wanted to get IA done and others admitted having to ‘assist’ students compile their tasks. The levels of assistance however were unknown. Other issues raised included complaints that IA in form three, led to a level of student complacency in Form 4 when students were expected to prepare for FJC. Additionally, IA tasks were sometimes seen as context-unfriendly in particular for rural schools and schools which had poor facilities and resources.

**Implications**

The findings ascertained have both theoretical and practical implications which provide an insight into the IA experience from the perspective of students and teachers. While this small scale study may not allow for wide reaching hypothesizing, some significant themes and issues that emerged from the study will be discussed. In the case of this pilot school, which has had three years of IA experience, a number of underlying themes have been identified that are worthy of further investigation.

In this small sample of students and teachers, it is apparent that a gap exists between the articulated benefits of IA and the perceived benefits of IA to students’ learning and the teaching and learning and process. The results show that IA is both demanding as it is confusing. Many students felt that teachers had not allocated adequate time to preparing them for the IA tasks which call into question the element of spoon-feeding that goes into rote-learning. It would appear that while teachers accepted the role of facilitating the IA process that many students believed IA should have been taught. This is clearly shown in the student claim that one of the benefits of IA was learning independently, but at the same time most admitted they needed external assistance from family members and friends to complete their tasks. In some cases, students had tasks completed by others. Moreover the number of students who said they believed that IA was either a waste of time, or were unsure of the benefits of IA demonstrates the lack of understanding of students on the purpose of this assessment initiative.
A further gap between content coverage and outcomes is apparent (Jansen, 1998); teachers seem to feel that IA took time away from completing the syllabus, even resorting to beginning with IA on the first week of the term rather than using IA to complement content coverage in their respective subject areas. This indicates that IA has, at least in this case, become product-centred. If IA as an OBE initiative is to be fully implemented change needs to occur in more than just the means of assessment (McNeir, 1993). IA in its current form does not make sense as a solution to the problems highlighted by the Education Commission report 2000, in that it does not address the problem of the content-heavy, examination-driven curriculum.

Current indications point to a fragmented learning experience that does not adhere to the new vision for holistic education in Fiji. In form 3 students are torn between completing the syllabus, as well as compiling about 20 IA tasks. In form 4, student focus then shifts to the FJC examination. There is no indication that students’ take with them research skills in terms of tangible outcomes as their responses regarding referencing and plagiarism indicate. As indicated by the moderators, research appears to be used synonymously with essay writing in the case of English for example, rather than an introduction to basic research methods.

In addition, there is a risk of nurturing an educational culture of academic dishonesty given the findings of this small survey. Because the IA provides raw scores which comprise 50 percent of the FJC result, performance competition comes into play. It is important that curriculum planners consider the ramifications that such a culture of dishonesty would have on society as a whole. This brings to the fore the question of the values of schooling (McLeod and Reynolds, 2003).

Student responses indicate that while most are relieved that the examination pressure has been eased, many still feel overwhelmed and have difficulty maintaining their academic pursuits as well as extra-curricular activities. Given the fact that in many schools, the usual practice has been to relinquish timetabled non-examinable subjects like PEMAC for examination subjects, the additional burden of the IA means that even at Form 3 level, students may not fully engage in creative pursuits bringing into question the ‘holistic’ take advocated by the MOE.

The view that IA gives parents the opportunity to become more involved in student learning is a double edged sword. While some parents may provide advice
and guidance, others appear to be taking the competitive approach and compiling student tasks in an attempt to help them get better marks.

Additionally, because both teachers and schools have in the past been assessed on the basis of student percentage pass rates in national examinations, the MOE concern that some teachers may be doing more than just ‘assisting’ students comes as no surprise. These points to inadequate consultation, dialogue and training at the school level and with teachers (Jansen, 1998). As long as the IA remains a part of the summative evaluation (FJC), IA tasks will be viewed as a means to improve percentage passes and inevitably, the perceived ranking of teachers’ performance and school standing in the community.

A lack of understanding of teachers about the moderation process shows that there is a need for wider consultation and dialogue with schools. Irregularities in marking at a given school means that students who may have seen their marked tasks prior to the MOE moderation process, may be in for a surprise when they receive their final marks post-moderation. It is therefore imperative that internal checks and moderation of standardized marking occurs at the school level. This is particularly important for teachers in the rural areas. Jansen (1998) raises this issue when he argues that one of the main failings of OBE is the assumption that teachers have the necessary skills to understanding of their roles.

The reality of the Fiji model of IA is far from the FESP definition of assessment for learning. The definition makes three bold key statements (NCF Draft, Section 6, Assessment, Learning and Monitoring, 2007, p.54).

Posit 1: AfL “informs the teacher during the teaching programme while the children and students are learning.”

Posit 2: AfL “gives information about how well children and students are learning as they learn and presents information about their learning and developmental needs...”

Posit 3: AfL “tasks provide teachers with reliable and valid information about students’ learning as they learn.”

Firstly, results show that many students are not compiling their IA tasks on their own, and teachers are treating IA as separate from the teaching programme of content coverage for Form 3. Furthermore, depending on the levels of assistance students receive in the compiling of their IA tasks, there is no real way to ascertain how much of the task was completed by the student and therefore no
way to map student competencies of the skills being assessed in the task. And finally, teachers and moderators are unable to say with certainty how much of the IA is the student’s own work so the information gathered from the IA becomes another means of measuring student performance rather than assessing their educational development. More significantly, the outcomes are not in line with the goals of education as stipulated in the Suva declaration.

As the FJC is no longer seen as requirement for entry into fifth form, its validity as a national examination or cut off point is rendered questionable. If the IA is indeed to work as AfL, perhaps it is time to consider FJC as a purely IA initiative without the examination. In this way, tasks may be spread over the Form 3 and 4 levels. Increased autonomy of teachers with regard to tasks is also necessary, so that IA may serve to complement coverage in specific school contexts and assess real student learning outcomes. If however, the purpose of FJC is to determine standards or basic competencies at the mid point of secondary school, a possible alternative may be to devise a FILNA assessment appropriate at that level to ascertain basic literacy and numeracy skills.

Conclusion:
This small study has shown that there is a real need for an in-depth situational analysis of the IA experience, inclusive of student, teacher and parent views. It is not enough to assume that teachers know about students’ and parents’ beliefs and values. It is important that the MOE embark on this survey expediently as this is the first time IA is being implemented nationally.

Despite the solid grounding of AfL within the OBE framework, the IA initiative in its current form does not seem to be working. By all indications students, teachers and parents are of the view that the load of IA is demanding resulting in either an over emphasis of IA and negligence of content syllabus or completing IA tasks for the sake of reporting rather than informing classroom practice.

It is evident that all IA tasks need to be changed annually. Although a genealogical study would benefit students, in the long run, maintaining the same IA task year after year offers too much of a temptation for students to pass up. In the case of siblings, as the genealogy is the same, it stands to reason that the family tree produced would be the same.

English as a subject offers wide and varied topics for research. It is advisable that a thematic approach be taken so that students’ research scope is limited and the possibility of resubmission of a marked task is minimized. Small scale action-
research could easily be taught at Form 3 level. The mark value of such a task could be increased and the number of tasks in English reduced.

There are many creative ways of improving the tasks of the IA and teachers can be creative if given the chance. Workhorse teachers are unlikely to have the energy to be creative and innovative in their classrooms when they are tied down with coverage and paper work. An element of trust and professional development for the teachers is a vital component of any school-based curriculum initiative. In order for teachers to value the IA experience and adjust their teaching styles accordingly, a certain amount of ownership is required.

If implemented properly IA could lead to an improved educational experience for students resulting in creative and critical thinking. In the Fiji context, such a paradigm shift in assessment could mark a much needed realignment of the place of examinations. However, IA has not removed this emphasis. It has instead removed half of the examination content and translated this into a number of tasks spread over the form three year.

AfL claims that it is based on where a student is at and their level of understanding enabling both the teacher and student to identify areas of weaknesses and areas of growth. In order for IA to be successful as an AfL initiative, contexts and student abilities will need to be taken into consideration. The fact that standardization has taken precedent in the current centralized approach used implies that one size fits all and that all students at form three levels would be in a position to successfully complete the assigned tasks regardless of their capabilities and coverage.

As a formative assessment, IA fails its purpose. Tasks, marking criteria and moderation take place at the MOE thereby making IA a centralized assessment which limits school-based curriculum development. This centralized approach and the fact that IA is part of the FJC examination, makes the IA in its very nature, a component of summative evaluation. As assessment for learning, IA would in its ideal form be a school-based curriculum initiative.

Such an endeavour would mean mass-training of teachers to ensure that a reasonable standard is maintained. This would be an added cost that the MOE would find difficult to afford. It makes sense that teachers are in the best position to design and assess students learning for formative purposes as they are aware of student abilities, growth and context. Is it then necessary that AfL be centrally administered and moderated?
If the FJC is seen as a valid examination point for benchmarking purposes, it would be best to maintain the examination as a summative assessment measure. If however, the IA is to function as a formative measure to determine student progress, perhaps it would be best to let teachers continue to devise measures within their classroom contexts in line with the content syllabus and more importantly in line with their coverage.

I would postulate the following recommendations if IA is to work in Fiji. When considering ways by which to improve the IA experience in Fiji, one of the first and foremost considerations must be to reduce the number of IA tasks. There is also a need for a paradigm shift from the ‘one-size-fits-all’ view to contextually developed education systems that are Pacific-based. It is possible to consider a number of group tasks for IA purposes as well as individual tasks, as team work is equally important as competition in education and more pointedly is a culturally appropriate method of learning (Taufe'ulungaki, 2003, p.22).

First of all, there is a need to conduct a national research survey considering parents’ and students’ views and experiences. It would be worthwhile to revisit the vision of ‘holistic education’ and reconsider IA and role of extra-curricula activities in this framework. For example, sports, community work etcetera. A review of the purpose and process of IA and the FJC Examination. Curriculum developers must ensure that activities designed are context-friendly tasks and give teachers greater autonomy to devise contextualized tasks that relate directly to the content coverage, student abilities and resources available. Task questions must be changed annually, using a thematic approach in English research to prevent plagiarism. Still on dishonest practice, there is a need to increase awareness on academic dishonesty and a value for authentic learning, for teachers, students and parents.

Changing the mind set of a society that has a long history of examination predominance in education is a mammoth task. It is essential that there is clarity of terminology and processes. In particular, it would be very easy to confuse the ‘outcomes’ of OBE with examination results, because that has been the outcome or end result of education for so long. Students, teachers and parents need to be informed about the significance of holistic education and the learning experiences of students. If these are not clarified, a product approach to curriculum will remain the focus with the anticipated summative outcome being the task score, the FJC result and the school percentage pass rate.
In the final analysis, while IA appears to have been developed on a theoretically sound model that promises a shift from the examination-driven curriculum, in reality, it is simply a re-organization of summative assessment. A combination of limited funding, a lack of MOE personnel, and limited teacher understanding of IA in addition to the undervaluing of the process by students, makes for a deadly bandwagon destined for failure.

Special Acknowledgement is made to Sr. Genevieve Loo; Ms. Tulia Tuigilai; Mr. Nemani Drova and Mr. Alex Ralulu in the compilation of this research.

References:


Appendix 1 Fiji Junior Certificate Policy

**POLICY:**
2.1 The Fiji Junior Certificate Assessment Policy shall be based on a two-year programme of study which begins in Form 3 and is completed in Form 4.

2.2 At the Form 3 level, the course work will be internally assessed by teachers and curriculum advisors using common, practical tasks and this will comprise the first part of the Fiji Junior Certificate course assessment requirement.

2.3 At the Form 4 level, the course work will be externally examined and this will comprise the second part of the Fiji Junior Certificate course assessment requirements.

2.4 A student’s achievement in the Form 3 Internal Assessment subjects will be reported on the FJCE Result Notice as a mark out of 100. Schools will report each student’s achievement on the IA tasks to their parents progressively during the student’s Form 3 year.

2.5 A student’s achievement in the Fiji Junior Certificate Examination will be reported on a student’s FJCE Result Notice as a mark out of 100.

(MOE Policy in FJC Assessment 2007, p.2-3)
Appendix 2 Sample Demographics:

Table 1: Student Sample: Age and Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Form 3</th>
<th>Form 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13 – 14 years</td>
<td>93 percent(N=28)</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 – 16 years</td>
<td>7 percent(N=2)</td>
<td>13 percent(N=4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 – 18 years</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>87 percent(N=26)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Form 3</th>
<th>Form 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fijian</td>
<td>43 percent(N=13)</td>
<td>30 percent(N=9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>43 percent(N=13)</td>
<td>37 percent(N=11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other*</td>
<td>13 percent(N=4)</td>
<td>33 percent(N=10)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Teacher Sample: Age and Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21 – 30 years</td>
<td>80% (N=8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 – 40 years</td>
<td>20% (N=2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fijian</td>
<td>40% (N=4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other*</td>
<td>60% (N=6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Other is used here as an ethnic category to describe respondents who indicated a mixed background of more than one ethnicity on the questionnaire.

Table 3: Teacher Qualifications and Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Qualifications</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diploma in Education</td>
<td>20% (N=2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor in Education</td>
<td>40% (N=4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor of Arts with a Teaching Certificate</td>
<td>40% (N=4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Experience</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 – 5 years</td>
<td>20% (N=2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 – 10 years</td>
<td>60% (N=6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 – 15 years</td>
<td>20% (N=2)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 3: Table 4: Results Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme/KEY Questions</th>
<th>Form 3 Sample N=30</th>
<th>Form 4 Sample N=30</th>
<th>Teachers N=10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>WORKLOAD AND TIME FRAME</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Is the IA workload manageable?</td>
<td>All students and teachers (100%) said that the IA workload was very heavy. 40 percent of Teachers (N=4) said that there were too many IA tasks. The same number of teachers (N=4) said the level of difficulty of tasks was high.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Is the time allocated for an IA task adequate?</td>
<td>17 percent inadequate time allocated</td>
<td>43 percent(N=13) inadequate time allocated</td>
<td>100 percent time allocated was adequate for successful completion of IA tasks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CLARITY, MARKING AND MODERATION</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Are the instructions for IA tasks clearly defined?</td>
<td>50 percent(N=15) unclear</td>
<td>43 percent(N=13) unclear</td>
<td>100 percent(N=10) all IA tasks discussed in depth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. What is the level of marking at school?</td>
<td>26 percent(N=8) strict marking</td>
<td>7 percent(N=2) Strict Marking 33 percent(N=10) Marked tasks received too late to be of remedial use</td>
<td>40 percent(N=4) strict marking 20 percent(N=2) fair marking with comments for improved student performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Are marked tasks returned to students before the next task is due for submission?</td>
<td>93 percent(N=28) IA tasks not returned before next task due</td>
<td>47 percent(N=14) Not returned before next task due 13 percent(N=4) tasks returned in some classes</td>
<td>100 percent IA tasks were returned to students prior to collecting the next task</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TEACHER GUIDANCE AND EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Do teachers allocate adequate preparatory activities, and/or discussion of tasks?</td>
<td>66 percent(N=20) teachers do not spend enough time in preparation for IA</td>
<td>27 percent(N=8) Inadequate time spent on tasks</td>
<td>100 percent adequate discussion and preparation for IA tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Who do students seek assistance from when in doubt regarding IA?</td>
<td>93 percent extra assistance from family and friends needed 60 percent(N=18) worked with other students to compile tasks.</td>
<td>67 percent(N=20) required extra assistance from family and friends</td>
<td>80 percent(N=8) believe students asked others to complete their IA tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RESEARCH SKILLS AND PLAGIARISM</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Are research skills adequately taught at school prior to commencing IA?</td>
<td>60 percent(N=18) had learnt about referencing methods from family and friends</td>
<td>73 percent(N=22) teachers had taught referencing methods</td>
<td>100 percent believed research skills were adequately covered in subjects where needed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**b. Do students understand what constitutes plagiarism?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Students' Understanding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26% (N=8)</td>
<td>Knew what PL was</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33% (N=10)</td>
<td>Lifting and paraphrasing without reference is PL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50% (N=15)</td>
<td>Not sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7% (N=2)</td>
<td>No idea</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Students' Understanding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30% (N=10)</td>
<td>Knew what PL was</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63% (N=19)</td>
<td>Not sure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7%</td>
<td>No idea</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

80% (N=8) believe that students are aware of proper referring methods and preparing a bibliography.

**c. To what extent do students plagiarize?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Students' Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17% (N=5)</td>
<td>Copied from other students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17%</td>
<td>Asked someone else to complete a task</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7% (N=2)</td>
<td>PL without being caught</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7%</td>
<td>Parent completed at least one task</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25% (N=15)</td>
<td>Asked another student to complete task</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

43% (N=13) believe teachers are aware of PL but do nothing.
43% believe that parents do IA for better marks.
20% (N=6) copied from another student.
77% (N=23) asked others to complete their tasks when overloaded.

80% (N=8) found that some students had copied and PL.
40% (N=4) Students only PL when they haven’t managed their time effectively or did not submit drafts for marking.

**RESOURCES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Resource Availability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17% (N=5)</td>
<td>Lack of resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63% (N=19)</td>
<td>Lack of resources</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All teachers agreed that in some instances, resources were difficult to find.

**GENERAL BELIEFS ABOUT ASSESSMENT**

**a. What are the advantages of IA?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60% (N=18)</td>
<td>Independent learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67% (N=20)</td>
<td>Research skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td>Independent learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100%</td>
<td>Research skills</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

20% Good change from rote-learning (N=2)
20% Credits students’ efforts (N=2)
20% Practical approach (N=2)
20% Academically weak students are able to manage tasks (N=2)
20% Parents forced to assist students with tasks (N=2)
### b. What are some of the disadvantages?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26 percent waste of time/didn’t learn anything</td>
<td>26% (N=8)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 percent waste of time</td>
<td>7% (N=2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 percent Heavy on students and teachers</td>
<td>10% (N=1)</td>
<td>A lot of paperwork</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 percent Rush coverage to complete tasks</td>
<td>10% (N=1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 percent Don’t spend enough time on content</td>
<td>10% (N=1)</td>
<td>coverage (N=1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 percent Class size (average of 40)</td>
<td>10% (N=1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 percent Moderation is unfair (students don’t</td>
<td>40% (N=4)</td>
<td>get the mark they deserve)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 percent Time consuming process</td>
<td>40% (N=2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of parental support/poor home environment</td>
<td>10% (N=2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 percent Students neglect other aspects of</td>
<td>10% (N=1)</td>
<td>education (N=1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 percent Extra-curricula activities affect IA</td>
<td>20% (N=2)</td>
<td>performance (N=2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### c. How do students’ rank IA against examinations?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prefer IA over examinations</td>
<td>83% (N=25)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure if IA is good way to assess student</td>
<td>67% (N=20)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>learning</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prefer IA to exams</td>
<td>70% (N=21)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>IA is a good way to assess student learning</td>
<td>87% (N=26)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not sure if IA is a good measure of student</td>
<td>30% (N=9)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>learning</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IA is the best way to assess learning</td>
<td>65% (N=9)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### d. How do teachers’ cope with additional IA load?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cope</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Careful time management</td>
<td>80% (N=8)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start IA discussion in Week 1 of term 1</td>
<td>20% (N=2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bring due dates forward so there is more time for</td>
<td>20% (N=2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>