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# Lessons From National Assessment of Educational Progress for Nigeria: A Conceptual Analysis of Large-Scale Assessment Models for Improving Basic Education Outcomes

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**ABSTRACT**

*This paper conceptually examines the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in the United States and draws strategic lessons for Nigeria's basic education assessment system. Despite substantial investments in the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme since 1999, Nigeria faces a persistent learning crisis exacerbated by weak assessment structures that prioritize certification over systemic improvement. Current assessment bodies, including the National Examinations Council (NECO) and the National Business and Technical Examinations Board (NABTEB), operate under political and examination pressures, limiting their utility for policy feedback. Through a conceptual and theoretical lens of Outcome-Based Education, Data-Driven Decision Making, and Program Evaluation Theory, this paper analyzes NAEP's design specifically its sampling methodology, matrix design, and institutional independence to illustrate how large-scale assessments can function as effective "Nation's Report Cards." The study proposes a "NAEP-Adapted Model for Nigeria" (NAM-Nigeria), recommending an independent national assessment body statutorily aligned with the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) and the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC). By adopting rigorous sampling, disaggregating data for equity monitoring, and mandating data-driven resource allocation and teacher training, Nigeria can transform its assessment framework from a high-stakes certification mechanism into a policy-driven tool for improving learning outcomes and achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4.*

**Keywords:** NAEP, Large-Scale Assessment, Achievement, Educational Monitoring, Data-Driven Decision Making.

## Introduction

The global pursuit of educational quality has shifted focus from mere access and enrollment to actual learning outcomes, a transition signaled by Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4). As nations strive to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education, the problem of measuring and improving student achievement in basic education is still a formidable barrier (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, [UNESCO], 2020). Education systems across the world are grappling with what the (World Bank, 2024) "learning crisis" a phenomenon where children spend years in school without acquiring basic literacy and numeracy skills. According to the World Bank's "Learning Poverty" indicator, approximately 53 percent of children in low- and middle-income countries cannot read and understand a simple text by age 10, a figure rises dramatically in Sub-Saharan Africa to over 80 percent. Addressing this crisis is the capacity of a nation to robustly monitor educational progress through large-scale assessments (LSAs). The utility of LSAs depends on their design and practice. When designed for accountability and high-stakes certification, they often lead to curriculum narrowing, teaching to the test, and in some cases, widespread malpractice (Jerome, 2023). When designed as monitoring tools, they may provide vital policy feedback, enabling systemic adjustments, resource targeting, and equity monitoring. The divergence in how countries deploy LSAs basically determines their efficacy in improving basic education outcomes. The function of assessment has expanded beyond the traditional gatekeeping role to encompass diagnostic, evaluative, and policy-analytic functions in global modern education (Ezewuzie et al., 2025). International assessments such as the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), and the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) have shown how cross-national assessment data can catalyze educational reform (Braun & Qian, 2005). However, for such data to be meaningful at the national level, countries must develop indigenous assessment systems that are technically rigorous, contextually relevant, and policy-oriented. In the landscape of global large-scale assessments, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) of the United States stands out as a paradigmatic model of a monitoring assessment (Solem, 2022). NAEP is the largest continuing and

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nationally representative assessment of what American students know and can do in various subject areas. Established in 1969, NAEP was designed to provide a common national metric for student achievement, independent of the varying state standards and high-stakes testing mandates that characterize the decentralized American education system (Linn, 2000).

NAEP's unique design employing sophisticated sampling techniques and matrix item designs ensures that no student or school takes the entire test, thereby minimizing the testing burden and eliminating the incentive to "teach to the test" (Solem, 2022). NAEP serves purely as an informational tool for policymakers, educators, and the public, offering disaggregated data by race, gender, socioeconomic status, and region, which is critical for tracking educational equity and long-term trends. Unlike state-mandated tests that carry consequences for students, teachers, and schools, NAEP's results are reported only at the aggregate level, preserving its integrity as a diagnostic rather than punitive instrument. Nigeria's basic education sector, despite the practice of the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme since 1999, continues to exhibit alarming deficits in learning outcomes (Egbebi, 2024). The National Examinations Council (NECO) and the National Business and Technical Examinations Board (NABTEB), alongside the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks of the UBE Commission (UBEC), were established to standardize and quality of basic education. However, these systems suffer from conceptual and structural weaknesses. NECO and NABTEB operate at high-stakes certification bodies. Their census-based approach testing every eligible student strain logistical capacity, compromises test security, and encourages widespread malpractice (Egbebi, 2024). The data generated by these examinations are rarely utilized for policy feedback, admission placement or curriculum reform; they serve merely as summative gatekeepers for transition from one educational level to another in science-based subject (Ayua, 2020). The UBE M&E system, intended to provide systemic feedback, is characterized by irregularity, poor funding, and a lack of technical rigor, making it impossible to track national learning trends longitudinally in the area of placement of students grading system (Ayua, 2020). The consequences of these weaknesses are far-reaching. Nigeria cannot objectively determine whether the billions of naira invested in UBE have translated into improved learning outcomes (Adekunle, 2019). Policy decisions are made in an evidence vacuum, and interventions are designed based on anecdotal observations rather than empirical data. The absence of a credible national assessment system means that Nigeria cannot benchmark its educational progress against other nations, cannot identify which regions or demographic groups are being left behind, and cannot hold itself accountable to the promises of SDG 4. Nigeria lack a credible, policy-driven assessment model capable of diagnosing the learning crisis and can also provide a solution of self-sufficiency among basic school learners through creativity (Ayua et al., 2026).

This paper is confined to a conceptual analysis of large-scale assessment models, focusing specifically on NAEP in the United States and the basic education assessment ecosystem in Nigeria. It does not delve into empirical data collection but relies on theoretical and documentary analysis, drawing from assessment literature, policy documents, and the author's extensive research on Nigerian educational assessment (Olatunji & Ajero, 2022). The paper is structured into eight sections, covering the introduction, conceptual and theoretical framework, analysis of NAEP, analysis of Nigeria's current system, lessons from NAEP, a proposed conceptual framework, policy implications, and the conclusion.

## Conceptual Framework

The concepts were clearly described here as shown in Figure 1.

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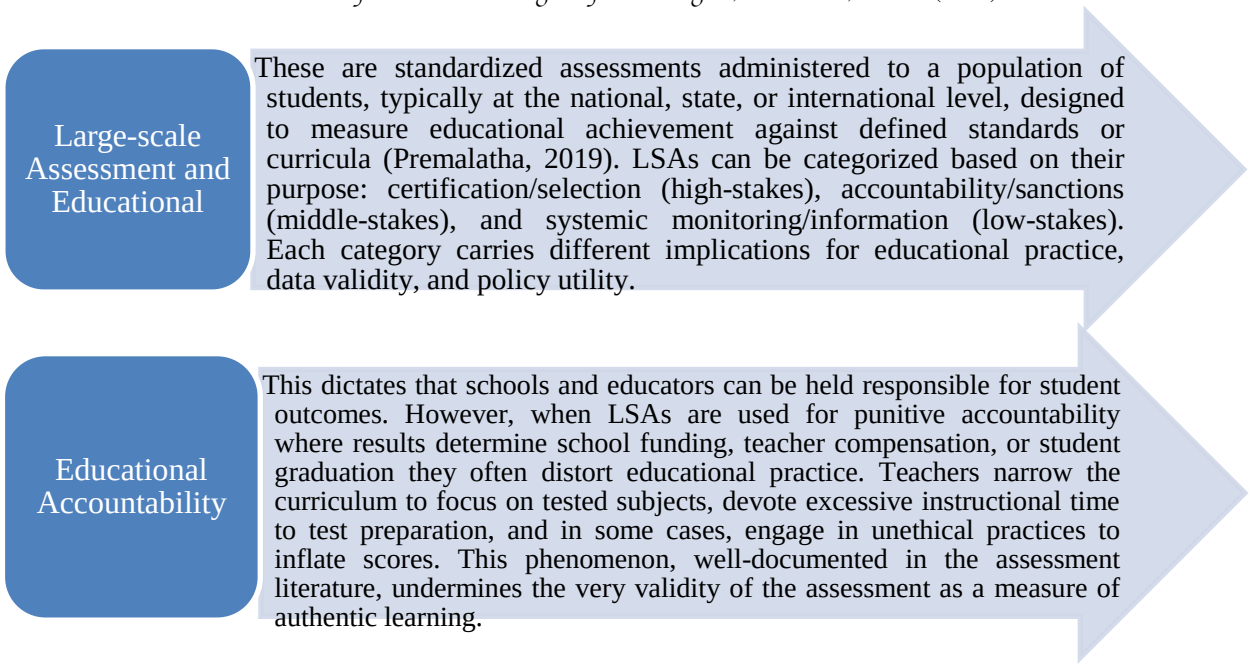




**Figure 1:** Diagrammatic Representation of Conceptual Framework

## Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on three theories that collectively provide a robust foundation for reimagining Nigeria's assessment system as presented in Figure 2 below:

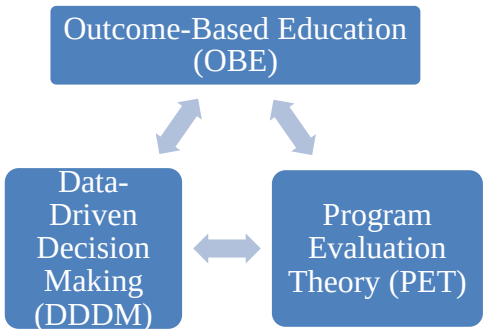



**Figure 2:** Diagrammatic Representation of Theoretical Review

As shown in Figure 2, OBE theory reviews that educational focus is on inputs and processes (what is taught, how long, with what resources) to the actual outcomes, what students know and can do as a result of their educational experience. OBE requires that learning outcomes can be aligned with curriculum and instruction, and robust assessment systems that verify whether outcomes have been achieved (Macayan, 2017). For OBE to be successfully implemented, a robust monitoring system can be required to verify that outcomes are being achieved across diverse populations and contexts (Umar, 2015). Nigeria's current system fails to verify OBE outcomes systemically, as NECO examinations are not designed to measure outcomes against clearly defined national proficiency levels but rather to rank students for certification purposes. Data-Driven Decision Making (DDDM) in Figure 2 posits that educational policies, resource allocations, and pedagogical strategies can be informed by empirical data rather than intuition, tradition, or political expediency (Mandinach, 2012). The utility of LSA data is central to DDDM, as large-scale assessments may provide the system-level data necessary for strategic planning. While NAEP data explicitly drives national and state policy in the United States influencing legislation, funding allocations, and curriculum standards. Nigerian assessment data from NECO is still largely

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unused for systemic decision-making (Ayua, 2022). DDDM requires not only the availability of data but also the institutional capacity and political will to use it. Program Evaluation Theory (PET) in Figure 2 shows that CIPP (Context, Input, Process, Product) model of program evaluation can provide a comprehensive framework for assessing the design, practice, and outcomes of educational programs (Aslan & Uygun, 2019). The UBE programme is a massive public intervention requiring rigorous evaluation at all four CIPP stages. Program Evaluation Theory may provide a rationale for a NAEP like assessment in Nigeria: to serve as the primary evaluation instrument to determine if the UBE programme is achieving its mandated objectives. The "Product" component of CIPP is particularly relevant, as it demands systematic assessment of learning outcomes the ultimate product of the educational system (Ayua, 2021).

## Overview of Assessment in Nigeria: NERDC, UBEC, NECO, and State Assessments

Nigeria's assessment architecture is fragmented across multiple institutions with overlapping mandates and poor coordination. The NERDC, established in 1972, is responsible for curriculum development and educational research. It sets the 9-year Basic Education Curriculum that governs instruction from primary 1 through JSS 3 (NERDC, 2013). Also, UBEC, established by the UBE Act of 2004, oversees the national practice of nine-year basic education. Also, NECO, established in 1999, administers the standardized national summative evaluations, most notably the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) at the end of Junior Secondary School (JSS3), which serves as a major high-stakes promotional benchmark for transition into senior secondary tracks. Additionally, state-level assessment managing local primary and junior secondary school evaluations, Continuous Assessment (CA) frameworks, and state-specific promotional examinations (Ayua, 2019). This fragmentation results in a disjointed system where the curriculum and the practice and the assessment which are poorly aligned. There is no statutory bridge that compels NECO to format its assessments to provide feedback to NERDC or UBEC, resulting in an accountability vacuum. The UBE Act mandates monitoring and evaluation, but the institutional framework for doing so is weak, underfunded, and lacks the technical sophistication necessary for credible large-scale assessment. This fragmentation is not merely bureaucratic but can reformed to achieved its educational improvement just like a quality assurance mechanism used by the local state assessment bodies (Ayua et al., 2026; Ayua et al., 2021).

**Features of National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)**

The key features of NAEP are presented in Figure 3.

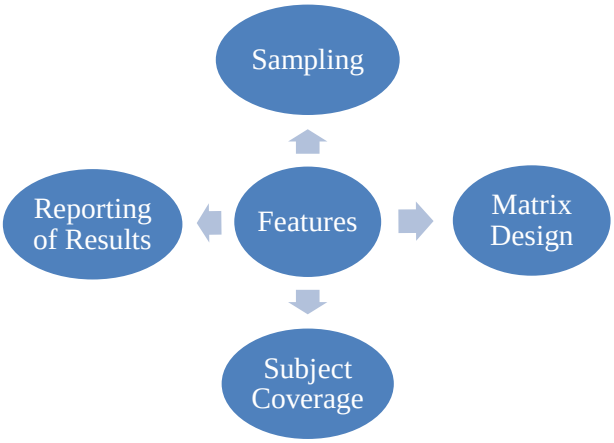



**Figure 3:** Schematic Representation of NAEP Features

NAEP's technical superiority lies in its sampling and item designs, which together represent the pinnacle of modern assessment engineering: Sampling as presented in Figure 3 reveals that NAEP does not test every student. It uses a complex, multistage stratified probability sample to select schools and students that are representative of the national population. The sampling design ensures that results can be generalized to the entire population with known margins of error. This drastically reduces the testing burden and cost compared to census-based testing. Matrix Design in Figure 3 shows that no student takes the entire NAEP assessment. Each student takes only a small portion of the total item pool typically three 15-minute blocks of items. Items are systematically rotated across student groups using a spiraled design. This allows NAEP

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to cover a broad and deep curriculum framework without exhausting any individual student. The matrix design is the technical innovation that makes comprehensive curriculum coverage feasible without overburdening students or schools.Subject Coverage in Figure 3 explains that NAEP periodically assesses mathematics, reading, science, writing, arts, civics, economics, geography, and history, ensuring a broad view of educational outcomes rather than a narrow focus on literacy and numeracy. This broad coverage reflects a commitment to a comprehensive vision of education that goes beyond the basic skills often emphasized in high-stakes accountability systems. Reporting of results as presented in Figure 3 explicates that results are reported at the national and state levels, disaggregated by demographic variables including race/ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, English learner status, and disability status. Crucially, NAEP does not report individual student or school scores, reinforcing its low-stakes nature. Results are reported in terms of achievement levels and scale scores. The reporting format is designed for policy audiences rather than individual diagnostic use.

**Strengths of NAEP: Independence, Technical Rigor, and Public Reporting**

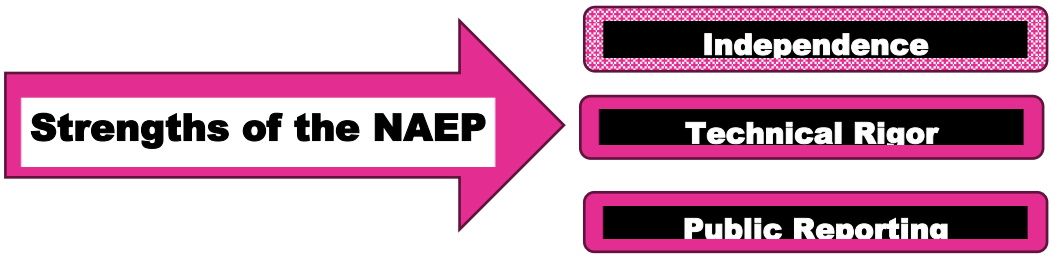



**Figure 4:** Diagrammatic representation of Strengths of the NAEP

The strength of NAEP as shown in Figure 4 is its institutional independence. Managed by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) within the U.S. Department of Education (Solem, 2022). NAEP is buffered from political control. This independence guarantees technical rigor item development, scaling, and equating are conducted by leading psychometricians using state-of-the-art methodologies. NAEP's technical reports are publicly available and subject to peer review, ensuring transparency and continuous improvement. Furthermore, public reporting ensures transparency; the data is available to all stakeholders, fostering democratic accountability (Braun & Qian, 2005). NAEP results are released through public events, press releases, and an interactive website, generating media coverage that keeps educational issues in the public discourse.

## Challenges

The Nigerian assessment system is riddled with challenges that collectively undermine its utility for educational improvement as show in Figure 5.

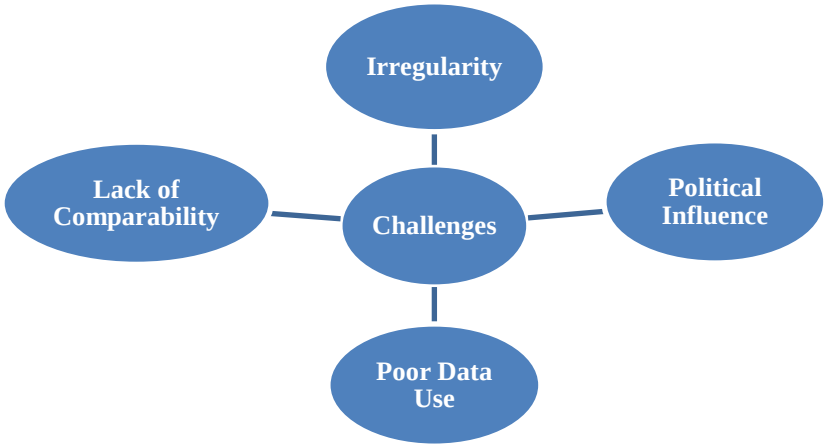



**Figure 5:** Schematic Representation of Challenges

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Irregularity in Figure 5 explains that UBEC's National Assessments are not conducted on a regular cycle (e.g., biennially or quadrennially), making it impossible to track longitudinal trends in learning outcomes (Akinloye, 2020). When assessments are conducted sporadically and with different methodologies, the data cannot be compared across time, rendering trend analysis impossible. Political Influence explicates that NECO and state examination bodies are highly politicized. Appointments to leadership positions are often based on political patronage rather than technical competence and creative thinking (Ayua et al., 2022; Ayua & Agbidye, 2020). There is immense pressure to pass students and release "favorable" results, leading to grade inflation and compromised standards. Poor Data Use reveals that the massive datasets generated by NECO BECE are used almost exclusively for certification and student placement. The data is not mined for policy feedback. Item-level analyses that could reveal systemic weaknesses in mathematics or reading are rarely, if ever, conducted or disseminated to NERDC or UBEC (Akinloye, 2020). This represents a colossal waste of data every year, millions of student responses are collected, processed, and discarded without generating any insight for system improvement. Lack of Comparability in Figure 5 presents that because NECO exams change in difficulty and format from year to year, and because state exams vary wildly, there is no common national metric for basic education achievement. A score of 70 in NECO one year may represent a different level of achievement than a 70 the next year, making the data meaningless for tracking progress (Terhemba & Ayua, 2025; Akinloye, 2020).

## Lessons from NAEP for Nigeria

Based on the analysis of Nigeria's current assessment and monitoring system, its lesson can be significant to a study.

**1. Need for an Independent National Assessment Body**

The most critical lesson from NAEP is the necessity of institutional independence. Nigeria must separate its national monitoring assessment from the certification bodies (NECO) and the direct control of the Federal Ministry of Education. If the body responsible for monitoring learning outcomes is also subject to political pressures to show improvement, the data will be inherently untrustworthy. An independent National Assessment Governing Board for Nigeria, modeled on the U.S. NAGB, is essential. This body would set the assessment frameworks, determine the achievement levels, and oversee the technical administration of a "Nigeria's Report Card," insulated from political interference and exam fee revenue dependence. Independence must be enshrined in legislation, with clear protections against political interference in the appointment of board members, the setting of achievement levels, and the release of results. The model for such independence exists in other Nigerian institutions also.

**2. Adopting Sampling and Matrix Models to Reduce Testing Burden**

Nigeria's attempt to test every student in the country through NECO is logistically disastrous and psychometrically flawed for monitoring purposes. Adopting NAEP's sampling methodology could revolutionize the system. By testing a rigorously selected representative sample of students across the 36 states and FCT, Nigeria could obtain accurate national and state-level data on learning outcomes at a fraction of the current cost. The statistical basis for sampling is well-established. A properly designed sample of approximately 25,000-30,000 students, stratified by state, school type, and demographic characteristics, can provide estimates of national achievement with margins of error of less than 1 percentage point. This compares to the millions of students tested in the current census-based approach, with no greater accuracy and considerably more logistical challenges. Furthermore, implementing a matrix design would allow Nigeria to assess a comprehensive range of subjects and cognitive domains without overburdening individual students (Fullan, 2007).

**3. Using Assessment Data for Policy and Resource Allocation**

NAEP shows that the true value of an assessment lies in its use. Nigeria must transition from an "assessment of learning" (for certification) to an "assessment for learning" (for systemic improvement). This transition requires both technical capacity and political will. The data from a NAEP-adapted model may be legally mandated to inform UBEC's resource allocation. For instance, if the data reveals that girls in the North-East are underperforming in numeracy, UBEC and the Federal Ministry must direct targeted interventions, teacher training, and resources to that specific demographic. This is the essence of data-driven decision making using empirical evidence to guide the allocation of scarce educational resources. Furthermore, the data must be systematically fed back to NERDC to identify curriculum areas that are failing to translate into student learning. NERDC can use this data to revise curriculum materials, develop targeted teacher support materials, and prioritize professional development in identified areas of weakness.

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**4. Reporting for Equity: Disaggregating Data by Region, Gender, and School Type**

Nigeria is a highly heterogeneous society with profound educational inequalities. National average scores, often reported by UBEC, mask these disparities. A key lesson from NAEP is the necessity of data disaggregation. A Nigerian national assessment must report results by geo-political zone, state, urban vs. rural location, gender, school type (public vs. private, UBE vs. non-UBE), and disability status. Only through such granular reporting can the equity goals of SDG 4 and the UBE Act be monitored. If the assessment does not shine a light on the marginalized, it fails its primary purpose (UNESCO, 2020). The equity dimension is critical in the Nigerian context, where disparities between the North and South, between boys and girls, and between urban and rural schools are stark and persistent.

## Proposed Conceptual Framework: "NAEP-Adapted Model for Nigeria"

Based on the preceding analysis, this paper proposes the "NAEP-Adapted Model for Nigeria" (NAM-Nigeria). This framework is not a wholesale transplant of the American system, but an adaptation of its core principles to the Nigerian socio-political and educational context. NAM-Nigeria rests on four pillars: Independence, Alignment, Use, and Transparency.

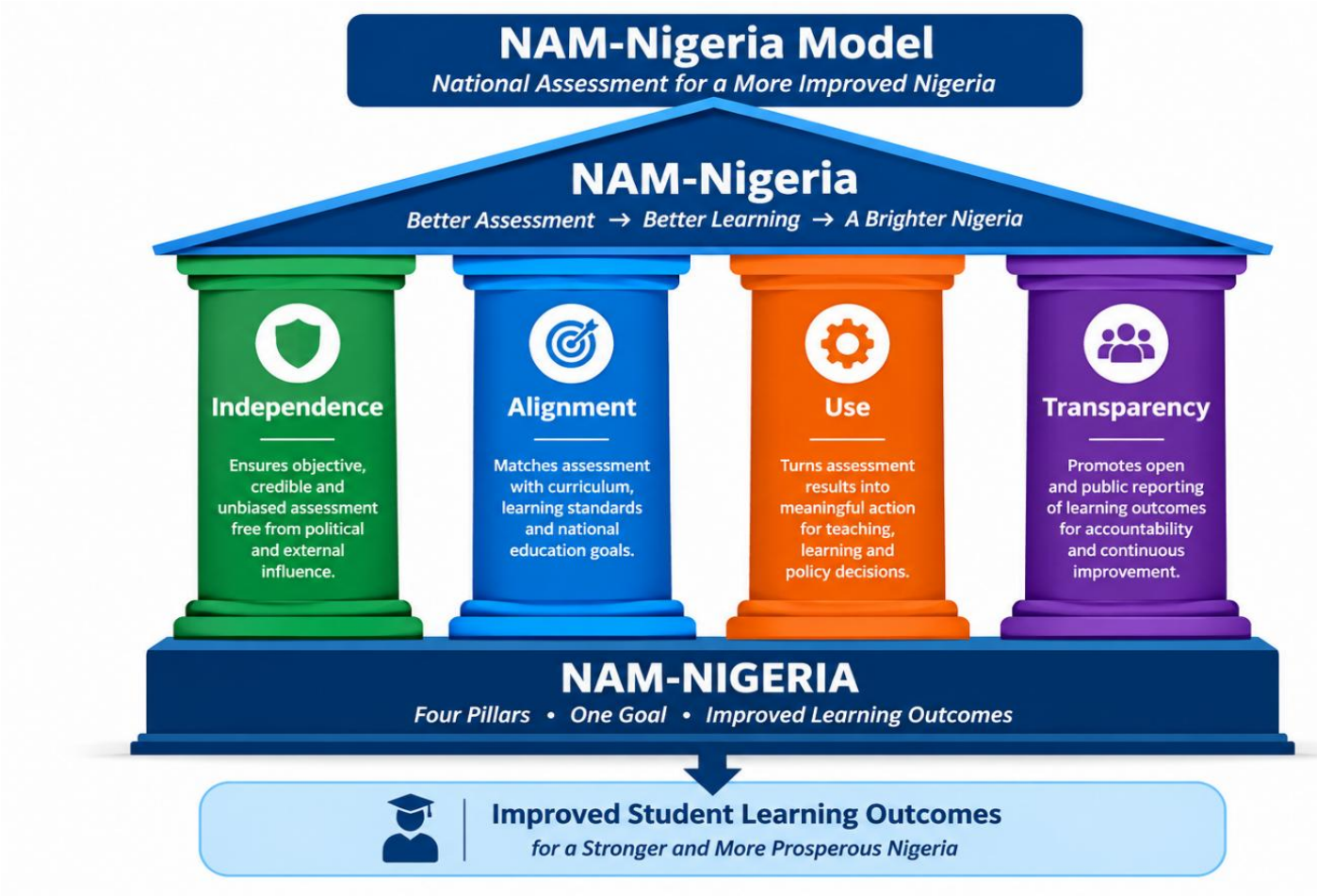



**Figure 6:** Diagrammatic Representation of a NAEP Model

**1. Independence: Statutory Body Under UBEC/NERDC Free from Exam Pressure**

NAM-Nigeria proposes the establishment of the "National Assessment and Monitoring Agency" (NAMA) as an independent statutory body. While it would collaborate with UBEC and NERDC. NAMA may be governed by an independent board comprising psychometricians, subject matter experts, civil society representatives, and teachers. The Governing Board can be appointed through a transparent process involving stakeholder nominations, with members serving

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fixed terms that are not co-terminous with political administrations (Ayua, 2019). The Director-General of NAMA may be a recognized assessment expert, appointed based on technical qualifications rather than political affiliation. The Board can include representatives from the Federal Ministry of Education, UBEC, NERDC, the National Teachers' Institute, civil society organizations, and the Nigerian Academy of Education, ensuring diverse perspectives while maintaining independence from any single governmental body.

**2. Alignment: Link Assessments Directly to Basic Education Curriculum and SDGs**

The NAMA assessment frameworks would be directly derived from the NERDC Basic Education Curriculum. This ensures that the assessment tests what the curriculum intends to teach. The framework development process would involve NERDC curriculum specialists, subject matter experts, classroom teachers, and assessment professionals, working collaboratively to define what students can know and be able to do at key grade levels. The assessment design must move beyond multiple-choice questions to include constructed-response items that measure higher-order thinking, using sophisticated matrix sampling to make this logistically feasible. Alignment also requires attention to the language of assessment. In a multilingual society like Nigeria, decisions about language of instruction and assessment are complex and politically sensitive.

**3. Use: Mandate Data Use for Planning, Teacher Training, and Intervention**

Under the NAM-Nigeria framework, data use is mandatory, not discretionary. The enabling legislation for NAMA must require UBEC and State Universal Basic Education Boards (SUBEBs) to utilize the biennial assessment report for strategic planning. This mandate should specify the types of decisions that must be informed by assessment data, including resource allocation, teacher deployment, curriculum revision priorities, and intervention design (Elems-Ikwegbu, 2023). NAMA can publish "Item Maps" showing what students at various achievement levels can do. These item maps translate statistical results into educational descriptions, making the data accessible and actionable for practitioners. Teacher training institutes and the National Teachers' Institute (NTI) may use these maps to redesign pedagogical modules. If the data shows, for example, that students struggle with algebraic reasoning but excel in arithmetic, teacher professional development can be adjusted accordingly (Ayua, 2022).

**4. Transparency: Public Annual Reporting of Learning Outcomes**

NAM-Nigeria could mandate the public for the release of a "Nigeria's Report Card" every two years. This report can be written in accessible language, highlighting national trends, state comparisons, and equity gaps. The report may include narrative descriptions of what students at different achievement levels know and can do, making the statistical results meaningful to non-technical audiences. Public reporting creates pressure on state governors and education commissioners to address failing systems. It empowers parents and civil society organizations to demand accountability. Transparency is the mechanism by which monitoring translates into systemic improvement (Fullan, 2007). The report may be released through a public event, accompanied by media engagement and stakeholder consultations. NAMA can maintain an interactive website where citizens can explore the data, compare states, and track trends over time.

## Implications for Policy and Practice

The Policy implication of NAEP is comprised of the Federal ministry of Education, UBEC, NERDC and State Schools.

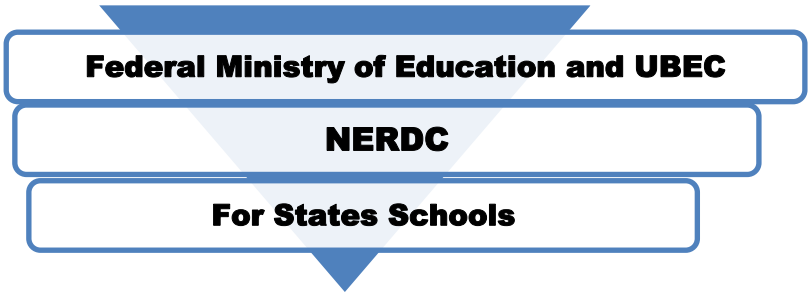



**Figure 7:** Schematic Representation of Policy Implication

**1. For Federal Ministry of Education and UBEC: Legal and Funding Reforms**

The implication of this conceptual analysis for the Federal Ministry of Education and UBEC is the need for statutory reform. The current legal framework prioritizes NECO and WAEC for certification purposes but provides no statutory

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basis for a national monitoring assessment. A new Act of the National Assembly is required to establish NAMA, defining its independence, mandate, and funding stream. Funding could be derived from the UBEC 2% Consolidated Revenue Fund (Umar, 2015). The legal reform may address the relationship between NAMA and existing assessment bodies. NECO can continue to administer certification examinations, but its data may be complemented by NAMA's monitoring data. The legislation could require NECO to share its assessment data with NAMA for secondary analysis, maximizing the utility of existing data collection efforts.

**2. For NERDC: Curriculum-Assessment Alignment**

For NERDC, the implication is a shift in how curriculum is evaluated and revised. NERDC relies recently on feedback from the classroom and sporadic research, with major curriculum revisions occurring approximately every decade. With NAM-Nigeria, NERDC will have a continuous, empirical data stream showing exactly which curriculum objectives are being achieved and which are failing. This will require NERDC to adopt a more agile approach to curriculum revision, using assessment data to refine content and pedagogical guidelines regularly, rather than waiting for a major curriculum overhaul every decade. NERDC could use NAMA data to evaluate the implementation fidelity of the curriculum. If the assessment reveals that students are not achieving certain outcomes, it may be because the curriculum is not being implemented as intended.

**3. For States Schools: Use Results for School Improvement, Not Punishment**

For state governments schools, the NAM-Nigeria framework implies a cultural shift in how assessment data is perceived and used. Schools selected for the sample must understand that the assessment is a diagnostic tool, not an inspector's hammer. Results should not be used to sack teachers or close schools, as punitive uses of data lead to score inflation and manipulation. Instead, school leaders should be trained in DDDM, using the disaggregated data and item maps to identify specific weaknesses in their instruction and design targeted school improvement plans (Mandinach, 2012). This requires investment in data literacy for school leaders and teachers, helping them understand and use assessment data for instructional decision-making. Building this trust, honesty, integrity, and objectivity requires clear communication about the purpose of the assessment and consistent adherence to the principle that results mostly in the science educational environment (Ayua, 2018).

## Conclusion

The learning crisis in Nigeria's basic education sector is basically a crisis of information. Without a credible, technically rigorous, and policy-driven assessment system, the nation cannot diagnose the depth of its educational deficits, target interventions effectively, or track progress toward SDG 4. The current reliance on high-stakes certification bodies like NECO provides a false sense of achievement, obscured by malpractice and grade inflation, while offering no useful feedback for systemic reform. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in the United States provides a compelling blueprint for how a large-scale assessment can function as a true "Nation's Report Card." Through its institutional independence, sophisticated sampling and matrix designs, and commitment to disaggregated data for policy feedback, NAEP monitors educational health without distorting educational practice. Its success over more than five decades shows that monitoring assessments can coexist with, and indeed strengthen, certification systems by providing the systemic feedback that high-stakes assessments cannot generate. Nigeria cannot copy NAEP wholesale, but it can and must adapt its foundational principles. The proposed "NAEP-Adapted Model for Nigeria" (NAM-Nigeria) offers a conceptual pathway to transform the country's assessment paradigm. By establishing an independent National Assessment and Monitoring Agency, adopting sampling methodologies to reduce the testing burden and eliminate cheating, mandating the use of data for resource allocation and teacher training, and publicly reporting learning outcomes to drive equity, Nigeria can build a credible assessment system. Such a system would not merely certify failure; it would illuminate the path to improving basic education outcomes for millions of Nigerian children, ensuring that the promise of UBE becomes a reality rather than a policy rhetoric. The transformation requires political will, legal reform, technical investment, and a cultural shift in how assessment data is perceived and used. But the alternative continued reliance on a broken system that generates unreliable data for certification while providing no guidance for improvement is untenable. Nigeria's children deserve an educational system that is accountable to evidence, not to political expediency. NAM-Nigeria provides the conceptual foundation for such a system.

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