

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO CANDIDATES' PERFORMANCE IN BIOLOGY
IN NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2002 WEST AFRICAN SENIOR
SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION (WASSCE) IN NIGERIA**

(RPL/2/2005)

ABSTRACT

The study investigated the factors responsible for the good but sharp astronomical improvement in candidates' performance in Biology in the November/December 2002 when compared with previous years. The survey design was employed. The sample comprised all candidates that sat for the November/December 2002 Biology examination, five Biology examiners/experts and the WAEC Subject Officer. In addition, six of the candidates, three Biology examiners/experts along with the WAEC Subject Officer participated in a Focus Group Discussion.

Instruments used included the Experts' Analysis Form, Question-Syllabus Analysis Forms for Objective, Essay and Practical Questions, and Marking Scheme Analysis Forms for Essay and Practical Questions. Relevant reference documents were also analysed. Both quantitative and qualitative techniques of data analysis were employed. These included percentages and the Pearson Product Moment Correlation.

Results of the analyses showed that the November/December 2002 Biology paper compared favourably with those of previous years in all the attributes measured. However, experts adjudged the essay paper for the November/December 2002 as being made up of questions that were similar to or repetitive of the questions in the papers of the previous years. The findings were discussed and it was recommended among others that the Test Development Division should explore the options made possible by Information Technology for test development processes to evenly distribute items and avoid repetition of questions in successive years.