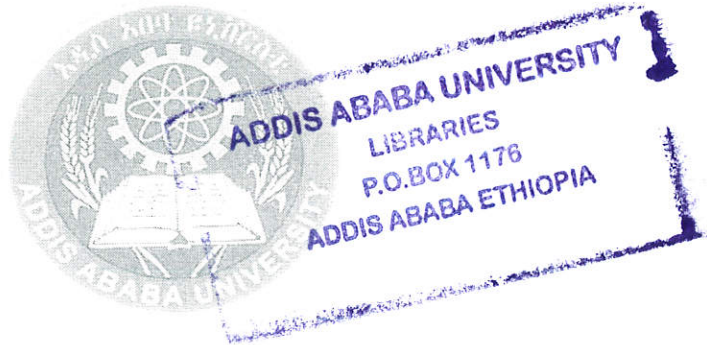


ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF CURRICULUM AND TEACHERS PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT STUDIES



**The Practice and Challenges of Continuous Assessment at
Debre Birhan Teacher Education College: Implication for
Instructional Improvement**

By
Selamneh Zewde



May , 2011
Addis Ababa

ADDIS ABAB UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

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ASSESSMENT AT DEBRE BIRHAN TEACHERS COLLEGE
IMPLICATION
FOR INSTRUCTIONAL IMPORVEMENT

BY

SELAMENEH ZEWDE

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**THE PRACTICE AND CHALLENGES OF CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT
AT DEBRE BIRHAN TEACHERS COLLEGE IMPLICATION
FOR INSTRUCTIONAL IMPROVEMENT**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO SCHOOL OF GRADUATE
STUDIES ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE
DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN CURRICULUM AND
TEACHERS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
STUDIES**

BY

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May 2011

Addis Ababa

Acknowledgements

First and for must, I would like to express my deepest thanks and indebtedness to my thesis advisor Ato Abraha Asfaw for his constructive and valuable comments, insightful suggestions and encouragement throughout my work.

I would like also to express my gratitude to my friends Ato Addis Zemen Hawaz, Ato Belay Getyie, Ato Solomon Mesfine, Ato Gebeyaw Shite, Ato Asseffa Demise, and Ato Berhanu Girma, who scarified their time in giving constructive comments and in editing my thesis.

Finally, my sincere thanks extend to W/rt Misrak Girma who had spared her leisure time to write this thesis.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to assess the current practice and challenges of continuous assessment with emphasis on the implication to improve instruction at Debre Birhan Teachers college. The method of study was Descriptive survey. The participants in this study were 549 students, 85 teachers and three academic deans of the college. Data were collected through questionnaire, interview, observation and Document analysis. Percentage was used as a main technique of analysis for quantitative data and qualitative data were analyzed qualitatively. (in words) The findings of the study depicted that the status of CA implementation was low because the awareness level of students and instructors towards CA and its implementation was low. Teachers and students had negative attitude towards CA implementation. The absence of supervision and guidelines for instructors in the college indicated that the status of CA implementation was generally low. Instructors used CA results for marking purpose and their activities for giving feedback was very low. Concerning hindering factors that affected CA, the study showed that large class size, mis conceptions of the overall concepts of CA by students and teachers, time constraints, lack of administrative support, and the availability of few or no instructional media. The following recommendation were forwarded: The provision of practical training on the use of CA, the preparation of CA guides for instructors, module should be revised in line with the aim of CA, motivating instructors by giving moral incentives, Hiring adequate number of teachers allocating appropriate budget for instructional media, and minimizing extended or over emphasized contents from each subjects. This implies that continuous assessment should be implemented based on the three levels of instruction (before, during & after) appropriately in order to improve instructional activities

CHAPTER ONE

1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

Education, in the largest sense, is any act or experience that has a formative effect on the mind, character or physical ability of an individual. In its technical sense, education is the processes by which society deliberately transmits its accumulated knowledge, skills, and values from one generation to another (Wikipedia, 2011). In Educational activities, one of the elements is assessment. Assessment can be defined as the process of gathering data and fashioning them into interpretable form for decision making. It involves collecting data with a view to making value Judgment about the quality of a person, object, group or event (Ajuonuma, 2006).

Assessment is very vital in helping the learners become effective. It is a collection of different strategies which are believed to make students become competent in their learning. According to different scholars in the field of education, without assessment it is difficult to identify or pin point the students' achievement or their failure to achieve their learning. Due to this, their learning is provided to be less rewarding. Regarding this, citing Airassian (1991), ICDR (1999) described that assessment is the process of collecting, interpreting and synthesizing information to help teachers understand their pupils, plan and monitor instruction and establish a conducive classroom atmosphere. By the same token, Arends (1997) states that assessment is the process of gathering and synthesizing information to make decisions about learners and instruction.

Reece and walker (2003) have also defined assessment as the process of obtaining information (generally through testing) about how much the student knows. On the other hand, Madous and Kollaphan (1993), as cited in ICDR (1999) explained that assessment in the classroom is highly based on teachers' observation of students as they go about their normal learning activities. This

is to mean that assessment is not as simple as testing. Teachers should activate the students' minds spontaneously and involve them in their learning through observational techniques to help them exert a conscious effort to learn than testing.

The benefit of assessing students' different strategies continuously rather than giving examination is further stated by Mulu (2005) as a onetime final examination or test does not bring a complete or true picture of students' performance including the higher order thinking skills. Therefore, it is very important to assess the learners regularly and continuously to prove their achievement and performances in different aspects of their learning instead of simply giving tests and examinations which cannot assess the entire complex learning outcomes.

Now a day, scholars believe that students can learn best and become effective if continuous assessment is effectively implemented in the teaching learning process. That is why advanced nations such as England, Spain, Australia and others are applying continuous assessment partially or wholly in their educational system (Heaton, 1990).

Similarly, in the Ethiopian teachers' education system, there have been continual changes in the curriculum and teachers' profile since the new educational reform of 1994 in the country. Particularly, at present, the teacher education program is guided by the TESO (Teacher Education System Overhaul) document (MOE, 2003) which is guided by a new view of education, one which promotes continuous assessment (ICDR, 1999). The document also stated that in the teacher education, traditional ways of assessing students like giving final exams only has to be replaced by continuous assessment that develops and inculcates higher order thinking skills at different levels of the educational system as a paradigm shift. Accordingly, few studies have been conducted on continuous assessment at colleges and high school levels. Birhanu (2004) conducted a research on teachers' assessment of student performance with emphasis on continuous assessment at high school level.

Moreover, Desalegn (2001) carried out a research on the evaluation of the adequacy of the syllabus of teacher training institutes in preparing trainees to implement continuous assessment in the 1st cycle primary school. However, less attention has been given to the practices and challenges of continuous assessment at the college level.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Assessing students in the teaching learning process has a lot of benefits. It can expose learners to experience creative reflections through which the teacher probes their understanding to elicit answers for the questions he or she poses. Concerning this, Elington and Early (1997) said that continuous assessment is carried out on an ongoing basis while students are actually working their way through a course. Similarly, Farant (1980) states that continuous assessment is practiced on a day-to-day basis to judge the quality of individuals' work or performance. Livingston (2001:129-130) has also put as follows:

Employing continuous assessment enables the teacher to assess more of the intended behavior of the students and to take note of factors such as their active participation, how articulate they are, their relationships with others and their motivation that have high educational relevance.

Students do not learn much just by sitting in class, listening to teachers, memorizing prepackaged items and spitting out answers. They need to be continuously assessed by their teachers while learning. Continuous assessment is a student evaluation system that operates at a classroom level and is integrated with the instructional process. It is important to determine the relationship between what is attended and what is achieved (Curzon, 1990). Likewise, Mkhonta (2003) explains that continuous assessment is an essential component of the instructional process use the "assessment feedback-correction" learning cycle that is missing from the time limited examinations

The essence in continuous assessment is not merely administering a number of paper and pencil test to students. In favor of this, Mulu (2005) reported that continuous assessment is a vehicle for improving student learning through remedial assistance.

Recognizing the importance of continuous assessment, the MOE in our country introduced it at different levels of the educational institutions. As stated in Education and training policy (1994), the practical task of implementing the new curriculum at different educational levels (primary, colleges and universities) requires continuous assessment as part of the curriculum in general and instructional process in particular. To realize this, the role of teachers and students has paramount importance. This means that teachers and students should be well informed and have the awareness about the concept and procedures of practicing continuous assessment before they are made to implement it. In line with this, Teshome (2001) suggested that teachers' knowledge and attitude should be considered for effective implementation of the assessment program. Wiliam and Burden (1997), cited in Abiy (2002) also strengthen this contention and pointed out that teachers' actions are highly influenced by their beliefs even more than they are determined by their knowledge. This implies the need for attention to be given to the practice of continuous assessment and the challenges teachers face in implementing the program at a college level.

Besides, from the observation and experience of the writer of this paper, most teachers seem that they do not have a clear understanding of the concept of continuous assessment. A teacher, for instance, might interpret continuous assessment as continuous testing. This wrong conceptualization of the term will even affect the need to employ a variety of techniques to assess the learners' progress. It is worthwhile, therefore, on the part of the investigator to look into the practice of continuous assessment and the challenges teachers face at Debre Birhan Teachers Education College.

Hence, the following are the basic questions that guide the study:

1. What are the perceptions of teachers about continuous assessment?
2. What types of continuous assessment techniques do teachers use during lessons?
3. What do teachers do with the results of continuous assessment?
4. What are the major factors that influence teachers' practices related to continuous assessment?

1.3 Objective of the Study

1.3.1 General Objective

The general objective of the study is to investigate the current status of continuous assessment in Debre Birhan Teachers Education College.

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. Investigate the extent of the awareness of continuous assessment among members in Debre Birhan Teachers Education College
2. Identify the continuous assessment techniques practiced by teachers in the college.
3. Examine how continuous assessment is practiced in the college.

The research aims at assessing the practice and challenges of continuous assessment in Debre Birhan Teachers Education College.

1.4 Significance of the study

It is hoped that this study would contribute to the concerned bodies in general and instructors of Debre Birhan Teachers College in particular in the following way:

1. Giving insight on how to solve the problems hindering the effective implementation of continuous assessment.
2. Initiating the teachers to improve their assessment approach.
3. Initiating the authorities at various level of educational administration who are responsible for implementing the policy, to create a conducive working environment for a proper application of continuous assessment.
4. The study may also contribute to initiate further and in depth research on the problem under study.

1.5 Delimitation of the study

The researcher believes that it could have been better if the study had been conducted in a wider scope. However, this research is limited in its dimension to tertiary education and is confined to only Debre Birhan Teachers College.

The study also focuses on describing what the teachers' practice related to continuous assessment looks like at Debre Berhan Teachers College. It also attempts to give insights into the challenges teachers face in implementing continuous assessment at classroom level. This is due to the researcher's wider experience of the college and various constraints, particularly time and other resources.

1.6 Operational definition of terms

Assessment- is concerned with observing learners and collecting information about how they are progressing in their learning

Continuous Assessment (CA) – assessment done formally and informally on a regular and continuous basis. It is integrated with instruction to improve learning, help, shape, and direct the teaching learning process

Formative Continuous Assessment (FCA) - Assessment made to improve learning and to help, shape, and direct the teaching learning process

Summative Continuous Assessment (SCA) - is an assessment made at the end of a unit in structure semester based on the cumulative progress and achievement of the learners

Feedback- giving information about the learners' performance back to the learners. Telling them about their progress in learning

Observation- a technique for assessment of students' practical work where instructors watch the completion of a given task and assess the process and the products

CHAPTER TWO

2 A Review of Related Literature

2.1. The concept of classroom Assessment

According to Angela and cross (1993), classroom assessment is both a teaching approach and a set of assessment techniques which refers to all the activities under taken by teachers and by their pupils in assessing themselves. It provides information which serves as a feedback to modify teaching and learning activities (CCSRI, 2006; Hamilton, 2008). Classroom assessment can also be defined as a process of gathering evidences of what pupils know, understand and are able to do (BC-Home, 2008). Current literatures suggest that there are three approaches to classroom assessment that can be used in conjunction with each other: “assessment for learning”, “assessment as learning”, and “assessment of Learning” (BC-Home, 2008, Nitko, 2004).

Recently, educators advocate that assessment going on at the classroom level should surpass high stake tests, because, the former since it operates in the context in which instruction is going on, is better, suited to monitor and guide the teaching learning process so as to continuously improve teaching and learning (NOE, 1995; USAID/BEP, 20066). Besides, unlike nation or region wide tests in the form of high stake tests, assessment that takes place at the classroom level focuses not only on assessment of learning but also on assessment for learning (Nitko, 2004; NOE, 1995). In a similar vein, Broad from Gipps, Torrance, cited in Hassen (1998) stated that classroom assessment has a much more potential to provide immediate diagnostic and formulate feedback better than the summative one.

In the emerging view, therefore, the main purpose of classroom assessment is to guide pupils’ learning and teachers’ instruction. Because, it offers a mechanism how curriculum, instructional activities and assessment impact pupils’ effort and achievement and provides appropriate information about the

progress and competence of pupils to stake holders (Brookhart, 1997; Hassen, 1998; USAID, BEP, 2006).

Hence, it is recommended that inculcating the new approaches to assessment is vital to improve instruction and help educational stake holders benefit from the process. Realizing this fact, Hassen(1998), and NOE (1995) pointed out that classroom assessment has now become the most crucial, frequent and pervasive issue in Education system to determine the quality of learning: how much pupils know, how efficiently they perform and what attitudes they have developed for future learning.

Classroom assessment as explained above is usually carried out by teachers to improve pupils' learning and teachers' instruction on the basis of impressions gained through a variety of assessment techniques they employ. However, this part of educational assessment is the most difficult aspect of teaching. Because judging a pupil's work with respect to the different educational domains is difficult since it is a continuous process highly takes teachers' knowledge, skills, time, and energy (CCSRI, 2006).

The ideas above indicate that classroom assessment is carried out by teachers on continuous basis while teaching and learning is going on and is vital to improve pupils' learning and teachers' teaching. When classroom assessment has such features, it is termed as CA (Farrant, 1981; kayoed, cited in Adebowale and Alao, 2008).

2.1.1. Epistemology of classroom Assessment

In the literature, the epistemology of classroom assessment falls under two contrasting paradigms: traditional and constructivist. Traditional assessment which is terminal in nature is based on the premise that it is best to wait until the end of a segment of instruction before conducting any recorded part of assessment (GCU, 1997; Wilso, cited in Bekiroglu, 2008). The justification given is that carrying out important assessment before the end of a course

material is unfair to pupils because the advocates viewed that it does not allow them to develop to their full potential. GCU has described this as follows:

... typically assessment in the traditional paradigm culminated in a length diet of final examinations which often covered the entire course curriculum and were generally truly final in the sense that students were allowed to no second attempt (1997: p.3).

The primary purpose of traditional assessment is summative in its nature and it aimed at determining whether or not whatever objectives set for them were attained (GUC, 1997; Wilson cited in Bekiroglu, 2008) and in ranking pupils according to certain traits (GCU, 1997). This approach, thus, views assessment as something apart from teaching rather than an integral part of the teaching learning process (USAID) BEP, 206b).

However, assessment based on the traditional approach is recently considered as unfair and inaccurate to show the overall picture of what pupils have achieved in the subject(s) taught. The unfairness and inaccuracy may be due to the fact that such assessment is prone to time factor, limited content validity and scope. Besides, the psychological and physiological condition of pupils on the occasion of testing and the physical condition of the testing environment affect pupils' performance (NOE, 1995; USAID).

In view of this, Adebowale and Alao (2008) stated that pupils may not be benefited from the instructional process unless there are assessments aimed at determining their level of competence on the different stages of the instructional process: before, during and after.

The second paradigm, constructivist approach, is evolved from the critiques of the traditional approach. It is carried out on an ongoing basis while pupils are actually working in the subject(s) they learn (GCU, 1997). This approach is concomitant with current trends in the classroom assessment such as more to make assessment an integral part of the teaching learning process (Assessment for learning) and the shift from the content to assessment of process (GCU,

1997; Hamilton, 2008; Freedman, 1998). Heints, Negro, and Reach have pointed out the primary reason of the shift in the following way:

The paradigm shift in classroom assessment has stemmed from a growing sentiment that more powerful ... assessment strategies are now needed to target the complexities of the knowledge that teachers bring to bear in their teaching (2005;1)

The advocates of this approach recommend that assessment should be used as a tool to enhance the pupils' learning and teachers' understanding of pupils' current progress and this could happen only when assessment evolves out of instruction and reflect what pupils learn and can do (GCU, 1997; Wilson and Stiggins, cited in Bexirglu, 2008).

Classroom assessment in constructive approach is, therefore, authentic, accurate, and fair for different reasons. First, such a form of assessment can take a wide range of forms including periodic tests, daily observations, oral presentations, ongoing assessment of practical works, portfolios and/or situational assessment which are either formative or summative in nature. This would provide comprehensive and valid information to stakeholders (CCSRI, 2006; GCU, 1997) actively involved in the teaching and learning process. This involvement in turn enables pupils to obtain timely feedback on how they are progressing. It also encourages them to attempt to master the materials learned as the teaching learning process is going on because the assessment tasks are spread throughout the semester that a subject runs rather than being clustered at the end (Freedman, 1998; GCU, 1997; Pido, 2004). Third since this form of assessment allows pupils to demonstrate their progress continuously, a pupil who works consistent but is not good at sitting examinations may not be placed at a disadvantage compared to the less performing pupils who do the minimum amount of work needed to pass examinations or those who are wise in taking tests (GCU, 1997; Njabil, 1999; and pido, 2004).

Generally, the constructivists approach to classroom assessment understands pupils' assessment as a systematic comprehensive and cumulative process

which should be conducted continuously while the teaching learning process is going and that CA based itself on the constructivist approach to the assessment of pupils' learning progress (GCU, 1997, USAID/BE, 2006b).

2.1.2. Purpose of Assessment

According to Capper (1996), the following purposes of assessment were suggested:

1. Improving instructional materials. Teachers need information regarding how effective teaching procedures, activities, the text book, and other materials are in teaching. Assessment can provide this. If the teacher has the information and updates it frequently, then he can modify and plan instruction that will be best for the students
2. Improving students' learning. Both teachers and students need to know how students are doing. First, of course, they should know what the goal is toward which the students are studying what they eventually need to know or to be able to do. If through assessment teachers and students get feedback as to what students already know, have learned or do not know yet, then teachers can direct students' study appropriately to learn the remaining material
3. Determining content mastery. Teachers assess students to determine if and when they have mastered the subject matter.
4. Establishing criteria or standards or performance for the course. Through assessment, a teacher can better decide how much of the material to be taught can be learned in the time available by the kind of students who usually enroll in the class. With this information, the teacher can establish realistic criteria or standards of the class
5. Teaching Assessment activities, if appropriately planned and used, can be powerful learning activities. Self tests, for example, can communicate to students what the teachers think is important and give students valuable practice in doing whatever they are learning to do.

6. Grading students, parents, administrators and sometimes employee's need evidences of pupils' progress whether progress is reported as a ranking in the class or as a score that represents how much of the subject has been acquired by the student, assessment provides the data for the report
7. Placing students in special groups or ranking students for special purposes sometimes teachers choose to group students according to their ability, students are selected for special experience or honors, or contents assessment is used to help teachers make the decision
8. Conducting research and teaching methods or curriculum. Researchers often measures students' ability or growth or needs in order to make decisions regarding which method is effective or which should be taught
9. Assessment and making decisions about school programs. Assessment is also used to monitor school programs and to compare programs or projects.

2.1.3. Assessment and Steps of Instructional Process

The main purpose of classroom instruction is to help students achieve a set of intended learning goals. These goals should typically include designed changes in the intellectual, emotional and physical spheres. When classroom instruction is viewed in this light, assessment becomes an integral part of the teaching learning process. The intended learning outcomes are established by the instructional goals, the designed changes in students are brought about by the planned learning activities and the students learning progress is periodically assessed by tests and other assessment devices.

Assessment is an essential component of effective teaching as far as leaders in the advancement of teaching as a profession recognize critical role of assessment as an integral part of effective teaching. The interdependence of teaching, learning and assessment in education can be clearly seen in the following steps of instructional process (CEERC, ICDR, 2004):

1. Identifying instructional goals

The first step in both teaching and assessment is determining the learning outcomes to be expected from classroom instruction. A classroom teacher should question and give explicit answers to the questions he/she raised.

- How much should students think and act when they complete the learning experience?
- What knowledge and understanding should students possess?
- What skills should they be able to display?
- What interests and attitudes should they have developed?
- What changes in habits of thinking, feeling and doing should have been taken place?
- In short, what specific changes is he/she striving for, and what do students look like when they have succeeded in bringing about these changes?

2. Pre assessing the learners' needs. When the instructional goals have been clearly specified, it is desirable to make some assessment of the learners' needs in relation to the learning outcomes to be achieved. The teacher should also asks questions, such as:

- Do the students posses the abilities and skills needed to proceed with the instruction?
- Have the students already developed the skills and understanding of the intended goals?

Assessing students' knowledge and skills at the beginning of the instruction enables teachers to answer such questions. Moreover, this information is useful in planning work for students who lack the prerequisite skills and in modifying instructional plans to fit the needs of the learners

3. Providing relevant instruction. Relevant instruction takes place when course contents and teaching methods are integrated into planned instructional activities to help students achieve the intended learning

outcomes. During the instructional phase, assessment provides a means of monitoring learning progress and diagnosing learning difficulties. Hence, process assessment during instruction provides feedback to the teachers. Most of the assessments taking place during instruction enable teachers to monitor and make adjustments.

4. Assessing the intended learning outcomes. The final step in the instructional process is to determine the extent to which the learning objectives were achieved by the students. This is accomplished by using tests and other types of assessments that are specifically designed to measure the intended learning outcomes.
5. Using the results of assessment. Properly used assessment procedures can contribute directly to improved student learning by:
 - a) Clarifying the nature of the intended learning outcomes.
 - b) Providing short term goals to work towards
 - c) Providing feedback concerning learning progress
 - d) Providing information for overcoming learning difficulties and selecting future learning experience

Information gained from carefully developed tests and other assessment types can help in judging:

1. The appropriateness and attain ability of instructional goals.
2. The usefulness of instructional materials
3. The effectiveness of instructional methods.

Assessment results are also used for assessing marks and reporting students' progress to parents in addition to marking and reporting. Assessment results are used in the school for various administrative and guidance function. They are also useful in curriculum development in helping students with educational and vocational decisions, and in assessing the effectiveness of the school program.

2.1.4. Basic Requirements for Assessment

The following pre conditions need to be met to make an effective and appropriate assessment (ICDR, 2004):

- Assessment must be a planned activity. It should plan how and when the assessment will be made.
- The teacher must be equipped with adequate knowledge and capacity about assessment techniques.
- The assessment should be based on the actual condition, time, place and social factors of the class; pupils' level of knowledge and the nature of instruction
- Variety of items and assessment techniques should be selected and applied
- The items should be prepared in a clear, readable and precise language
- Assessment should be well administered and its results must be recorded, documented and also reported

2.1.5. Principles of Good Assessment

Furthermore, Jorolimk and parker (1997); Ruddell (1997) suggested the following as principles of good assessment. These include:

1. Assessment should focus on learning. Its goals are to encourage, assist and enhance learning, not to punish students who perform poorly. Reward students who struggle to take risk for their learning.
2. Treat assessment as an integral part of curriculum and instruction. If assessment is to facilitate student learning, it must be woven into the fabric of curriculum and instruction. It must be done before, during and after instruction.
3. It should reduce competition and increase cooperation in the classroom. This is against the commonly held belief of traditional paper and pencil test systems. Many researchers have opposed this view. They say it has

negative impacts on learning. The purpose of assessment is to find out how well and in what ways students are able to do what they want them to do. Thus, cooperation among the students is needed. Assessment should build feelings of self worth and competence

4. Assess students' performance in authentic tasks.

Assessment should be aimed at looking into students' ability to apply knowledge and skills successfully in meaningful or authentic tasks which show their ability to use what has been learned.

5. It should be equitable.

Assessment procedures are fair, just and impartial. There is no bias in terms of race, gender, abilities, culture, socioeconomic status or language background

6. Provide ample opportunities for students to learn.

Before students are to be assessed, they should be given ample opportunities for their learning.

7. It should include consistent and meaningful reporting

2.2. Meaning and Nature of Continuous Assessment

2.2.1. Meaning of Continuous Assessment

Continuous Assessment is a classroom strategy implemented by teachers to ascertain the knowledge, understanding and skills attained by students (USAD, 2003). USAID, in EQ Review news letter, explained that teachers administer assessments in a variety of ways over time to allow them to observe tasks and to collect information about what students know, understand and can do. These assessments are curriculum based tasks previously taught in the class. Continuous assessment occurs frequently during the school year and is part of the regular teacher pupil interactions. Pupils receive feedback from teachers based on their performance that allows them to focus on topics they have not yet mastered. Teachers learn which students need review and remediation and which pupils are ready to move on to work that is more complex. Thus, the

result of assessment helps to ensure that all pupils make learning progress throughout the school cycle thereby increasing their academic achievement.

The other definition given by the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture of Namibia (1999) showed that when both formal and informal assessments are done on a regular and continuous basis, they are referred to as continuous assessment. Continuous assessment is meant to be integrated with teaching in order to improve learning and to help, shape and direct teaching learning process.

According to the Ministry of Basic Education and Culture of Namibia, the assessment is continuous because

1. It occurs at various times as part of instruction
2. May occur following a lesson
3. usually occurs following a topic and
4. Frequently occurs following a theme

Another definition by Airasian (1991), put in Y.A Alausal n.d) describes continuous assessment as an assessment approach which should depict the full range of sources and methods teachers use to gather, interpret and synthesize information about learners, information that is used to help teachers understand their learners, plan and monitor instruction and establish available classroom culture.

Similarly, Baker and States (1991), as cited in Y.A Alausa (n.d) explained that continuous assessment should involve a formal assessment of learners affective characteristics and motivation in which they will need to demonstrate their commitment to task over time, their work force readiness and their competence in team or group performance contexts.

Furthermore, continuous assessment is a way of collecting information about learners on regular basis in order to improve the teaching learning process (Puhl, 1997). Continuous assessment as the process of gathering information

to make decision about the learner based on what they know and can demonstrate as a result of instruction (Pasnica, 1997).

Continuous Assessment is more formative means of assessing learners that gives an opportunity for them to improve their performance. It is used as a process of gathering and integrating information about learners shifting from a judgmental role to a development role (Byrns, 1992; Puhl, 1997).

According to Mkhonta (2003), continuous assessment is a way of finding out what pupils know, understand and can do so as to promote learning. In the same manner, Curzon (1990:135) stated that continuous assessment is a comprehensive term, which refers, particularly, to enquiring into the learners' competence, knowledge, attitude and skills through various students' profile using different assessment methods to improve learning.

From the above definitions one could infer that continuous assessment is an assessment approach that involves the use of variety, of assessment instruments assessing learning and teaching to improve instructional process.

2.2.2. Nature of CA

CA, by its nature, is systematic, comprehensive, cumulative and guidance oriented activity and that its effective implementation needs to fulfill these peculiar features (Adeboale et al, 2008; Eggen and Kauchak, cited in Birhanu, 2004; Hounsell, et, al, 1996). In terms of comprehensiveness, CA implementation requires the use of varied approaches and assessment tools stated; otherwise, teachers by using CA can address behavioral domains which could not be assessed by terminal based assessments. In view of this, ICDR (2002) has listed the following areas which CA can address:

- Assessing achievement in various subjects using oral exams and different written tests

- Assessing school related behavioral aspects, such as participation in the instruction process, extracurricular activities and fulfillment of assessments discipline and punctuality.
- Assessing general behavioral aspects like characteristics, interests, beliefs and attitudes

Comprehensiveness is not only in terms of the behavioral domains measured but also in terms of the assessment tools teacher use to assess those areas. According to Freedman (1998), CA other than tests of examinations must include varied assessment tools such as projects, presentation, interviews, observations, oral questions, home works, seat works and similar other kinds

Therefore, comprehensiveness in assessment is meant addressing multiple learning styles, variety in semester and weekly projects and variety in the thinking skills and inquires. Hence, pupils' marks could then be a profile of many areas of competence rather than concentrating on a single behavioral domain (Ali et al, 1988).

The cumulative nature of CA is related with decisions making. This means, in order to make dependable and reasonably accurate decisions, teachers must depend on variety of evidences collected using instruments at different times. In support of this, Suskie (2004) prescribed teachers to collect enough evidence to get a representative sample of what their pupils have learned and can do. The justification is that a complete picture of pupils' performance could be known only when teachers put together enough pieces of evidences (Mc Millan, 2004).

Assessment is not an end by itself but the means to an end (Gronlund, 1981; Lin and Gronlund, 2005; and Nitko, 2004). The guidance nature of CA is driven from this general principle of measurement and evaluation. CA mainly focuses on monitoring and guiding pupils' progress throughout the content of the subject matter taught. This nature of CA is summarized by Adebowace et al, (2008); Hassen (1998), and USAID/BEP (2006) below:

- Identifying pupils' learning problems and daily and timely basis.
- Providing immediate feedback about their progress
- Diagnosing pupils learning problems

Another nature of CA: systematic planning milestone of CA implementation. Planning CA ensures whether or not the proposed assessment scheme is progressive and properly integrated and that the different assessment vehicles are properly matched to the objectives and learning outcomes that they intended to assess. These integrated natures of CA are put together by Adebowale et al., below:

CA is a systematic in that it requires an operational plan, it is also cumulative in nature in that only decision making about a learner is based on earlier decisions and is guidance oriented in that any data gathered on pupils will serve as the basis further academic growth and development (2008:J)

Therefore, teachers' CA implementation is said sound only when the actual practice suits with what the theory states.

2.3. Theoretical and Educational Foundation of CA

The theoretical foundation of CA lies on Piaget's and Vygotsky's learning theories. According to these inter related learning theories, children construct their own view of the world simply in the course of doing rather than acquiring passively what is transmitted from a source (Cobb; 2001; USAID/BEP, 2006b). Hence, learning is reflective, constructive and self regulated and learners are seen not as there reviewers of information but as creators of their own unique. Knowledge structure (Liu cited in USAID/BEP, 2006b).

Educationally, CA is based on the constructivist epistemology which assures knowledge as something produced through a meaningful interaction between the learner and the world around him/her/ICDR, 2002). This would be possible when pupils are made to actively involved in the entire system of the teaching learning process.

The insights from the learning theories and emerging educational philosophies led to a set of changes in classroom assessment. One area of change is the assessment tools and frequency of the assessment itself. Regarding this, Change Liu cited USAID/BEP (2006b) asserted that pupils do not need to acquire a vast amount of information, typically the focus on traditional assessment but rather the ability to think and organize that information for specific purpose. The implication is that assessment should move away from the narrow focus on simple tests to assessment methods that address the overall development of pupils. The other area of change is the role of teachers in classroom assessment. It should take the form of regularly monitoring the teaching learning process using varied ways of assessment and providing frequent and constructive feedback on how learning is progressing rather than merely auditing learning USAID/BEP, 2006b).

Generally, the foundations that CA established itself are the contemporary developments in cognitive and constructivist theory which in turn change educational practitioners view of knowledge acquisition and competence.

2.4. Characteristics of Continuous Assessment

A more complete view of continuous assessment requires that a teacher understands information about students' learning and should be used continuously during the teaching process to improve teaching and learning. Therefore, according to Jamaican Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture (2004), in effective classroom assessment mode, there are four features of continuous assessment

1. Continuous assessment encourages the use of multiple of work.

Assessment often occurs and for different purposes and is not limited to the end of term or end of year.

2. Continuous assessment allows for timely feedback to the major stakeholders in the systems.

When a Continuous assessment mode is used, the teacher can regularly monitor and report on the progress that students are making towards the attainment targets and objectives set out in the official curriculum. If a teacher does not recognize a student's learning errors until the end of the term or the end of the year, it is usually too late for any corrective measures to be taken. The nature of the feedback a student receives as well as its time lines can significantly impact on how a student responds to it.

Feedback benefits students, teachers and parent, and critical persons during the teaching learning process.

3. The Continuous assessment model makes it easier to use a variety of assessment methods.

For example, a teacher can use a class discussion, oral questioning, a project, class work, assignments, and students observation to help him gather the different types of information he need to plan, teach, decide and report.

The validity of your decisions is greatly improved when you use a variety of assessment methods for gathering and interpreting student information.

4. Continuous assessment gives opportunities for collaboration

Including students in the assessment process through self evaluation and peer evaluations and asking for reflection on what they have learned motivates them. In this manner, each student can be challenged to show evidence of his/her mastery of the objectives (Jamaica Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture (2004). Similarly, USAID/Basic Education Program (2006) explains the following basic characteristics of Continuous assessment:

- a) It is an on-going process of gathering information about students' learning progress.
- b) It uses a variety of techniques to make decisions
 - About what to teach
 - About how to teach

- About how well students have learned
- c) It provides timely feedback to students about what they need to do to improve their learning
- d) It is aligned with curriculum goals and objectives. USAID Basic Education Program (2006)

CA occurs throughout the teaching process

A teacher's more complete understanding of CA requires the teacher to realize that assessment information should be used all through the teaching process. In other words, that assessment really must be continuous. If we divide the teaching process into three stages, we can describe CA in each stage along with the main purpose for the assessment.

1. Before instruction: gather information about what students already know about the upcoming unit and what misconceptions they may have used this information to help plan the instruction and teaching activities for the unit.
2. During instruction: gather information about how well students are learning thus far, use the information to decide which students are making good progress and which are struggling, use the information to guide change that should be made in the lesson plans or to guide remediation or re-teaching
3. After instruction: gather information about how well students have learned the material that was taught, use the information to assign grades or re-teach students who have fallen defined

2.5. Rationales for Using Continuous Assessment

The conventional assessment focuses more on the end results that students get. Some scholars argue that although it is important to judge the achievement of students at the end of a semester or a course, assessment should mainly be used to improve the teaching learning process (Plessis et al,

2003; Pasiona, 2002; Ellington and et al, 1997). Hence, they advocated a paradigm shift from conventional assessment to continuous assessment. "The central characteristic of this shift (a paradigm shift in educational assessment) is the moving of assessment from a judgmental role to a developmental role... this move reflects evolving ideas on the nature of assessment and its purposes" (Puhi, 1997:3).

The scholars present a number of rationales for using continuous assessment in schools and colleges. Continuous assessment is a way of collecting information about students to find out the strengths and weaknesses of them and provide important remediation in order to maximize their learning. Bock, Elago and Kunyanda (2003: 9-10) point out the following rationales as to why continuous assessment is used classrooms:

- To diagnose learner strengths and needs (so that appropriate teaching can be provided)
- To provide feedback to teachers about how well they are teaching (so that they can make needed changes and continue doing things that are effective)
- To inform and guide instruction (for example, to help a teacher decide if remedial teaching is needed by some learners or if the whole class needs more teaching on a topic)
- To inform learners how well they are learning (so they continue to do good work and so that they know when they need to improve)
- To make clear to learners what they are expected to learn
- To motivate and focus learner attention and effort (to help them learn better)
- To evaluate and grade learner achievement
- To provide a record of progress
- To predict learners readiness for future learning
- To provide a basis for instructional placement
- To ensure and improve the effectiveness of your school

Generally, by assessing students continuously, it is possible to get regular information about teaching, learning and the achievement of learning objectives and competencies. Moreover, teaching and learning is not a process that can be completed in a short period of time, so it needs an ongoing assessment.

2.6. Advantages and Drawbacks of Continuous Assessment

2.6.1 Advantages of CA

A. For learners

Research findings in south Africa national education documents in 1996, concluded that the following uses of continuous assessment in developing ability of learners:

- Reflect on and use a variety of learning strategies and enhance lifelong learning.
- Solve problems and make responsible decisions using critical and creative thinking.
- Work with others as a member of a team (group) organization community
- Deal with information critically
- Communicate effectively using visual, mathematical and language skills
- Use science and technology critically showing reasonability towards the environment and the health of others.
- Participate as a responsible citizen locally, nationally and globally.
- Make wise and safe choices for healthy living
- Explore education and learner opportunities
- Appreciate the links between mental conceptions of knowledge and manual tasks informed by such knowledge
- Act in a way that reflects justice, democratic values, and respect for human dignity (National Education Ministry, 1996), cited in Dene, 2010)

B. For Teachers

Stiggns (1998; Osterhof (1999); Popham (1999), as cited in Derje (2010) concluded the use of continuous assessment for teachers in the classroom by the following nine points:

1. To find out what students know and can do.
2. To gain confidence in what we say our students know and can do
3. To provide all children with opportunities to show what they know.
4. To promote learning for understanding
5. To improve teaching
6. To help determine what kind of remediation and enrichment activities to provide, and to identify with students need assistance
7. To let the students know how well they are progressing in their own learning
8. To let parents know how their children are progressing
9. To lead to over all evaluation

2.6.2. Draw backs of CA

Even though CA is a preferred way of assessing learners for some scholars, it is not without some drawbacks which are discussed in some details below. Learners who are assessed continuously may feel that they are always under surveillance for every mistake they commit (Nitko, 2005; Pleases, et al 2003). This may have a negative impact on the learners' performance. CA may also bring a profound negative effect if it is not well planned and properly protected. Regarding this, Ellington and Earl (1997) stated that:

Unless CA is carefully planned and coordinated, there is a very real danger that student may be grossly over assessed particular of certain times of the year, when several lectures are asking simultaneously for assignments to be handed in ... CA can, if not properly managed adversely and their tutors with the latter being regarded with suspicion and (in some extreme cases) enmity and occasionally even introducing malpractice, as in improving penalties for seeking help.

In order to enhance the effectiveness of CA, it is important to minimize the draw backs. Ellington and Early (1997) point out that teachers need to have a well developed knowledge and skills to be creative in their implementation of CA. Teachers should also have a well organized plan of assessment to maximize the success of CA, and all the problems listed above can be overcome by carefully planning and good practice (Ellington and Earl, 1997: online).

2.7. Forms of CA

According to USAID/BEP, 2006b), CA can occur in two forms in the teaching learning process: Formative CA and Summative CA

2.7.1 Formative Continuous Assessment

CA is called formative when the evidences gathered about students' progress is used to adopt the teaching learning process to meet their needs. Thus, formative CA is a format of CA that occurs frequently while instruction is going on for the purpose of improving teaching and learning (Gronlund, 1981; Pido, 2004; USAID/BEP, 2006b).

Recently, educators and educational stake holders are advocating the incorporation of formative CA into the teaching learning process. In view of this, Stiggn, cited in CCSRI (2006) stated that teachers should replace their assessment of learning with a more balanced approach; using not only assessment "of" learning but also assessment "for" learning

The former is meant assessment which comes terminally to check whether or not the curriculum objectives has been achieved, where as the latter is meant using assessment as an integral part of the teaching learning process to improve instruction (Alausa, 2003; CCSRI, 2006; Nitko, 2004). The argument for formative role of assessment is that instruction and assessment are not separate entities, rather they are closely tied one another (Broadfot; Torrance; cited in Hassen, 1998). Of course, this is undeniable that assessment conducted in continuous basis, as Nently et al. (2007) described is the bedrock

of an effective teaching. This is because regular, timely, and reliable feedbacks are central to improve learning and to enhance quality of education.

Black and William (1998), (cited in CCSRI, 2006) described this fact that collecting data on students understanding is an essential step in moving students toward full understanding of important concepts and standards, instruction and formative assessment are indivisible (2006: 143). The reason behind this is that when exercising Formative CA, teachers will employ a range of diagnostic assessment techniques as part of the usual teaching-learning process. The techniques that teachers use while practicing Formative CA are mostly informal methods like or questions observations, spot checks, during lesson, storytelling role play, drama, home work, class work, and the like (AED/EQUIP, 2008; USAID/BEP, 2006a). However, implementing Formative CA requires teachers acquaint them with practical Skills. The skills, as USAID/B (2006b; 26) pointed out, are on how to give students feedback, on how to improve their learning by reviewing homework and seat works, observing how students solve problems, using drafts of writing, dances, plays and projects.

- Identify students' misconceptions and errors by interviewing, listening during class discussions and identifying errors they make while working on assessment activities
- Determine students level of understanding using formal oral or written quizzes
- Plan how to use assessment activities to improve learning.

Thus, for effective implementation of formative CA, teachers should possess skills related to feedback provision, identifying students learning problems, integrating assessment with instruction, and incorporating formative tools in to the lesson plan.

USAID /BEP, 2006p stated the following strategies for FCA

Six major strategies for FCA

Adjusting teaching to take account of learning

1. Plans should be regarded as guides not strait jackets
2. Short and medium term plans need to be adopted to match students needs
3. Finding out about students' knowledge and skills before starting a topic enables adjustments to be made to the plans so that learning becomes more effective. Short term plans should be regarded as working documents

Sharing learning objectives

1. There should be an expectative that the learning objective for every lesson will be made clear for the students
2. Sharing learning objectives is more effective if success criteria are also clarified
3. Refer to the learning objective throughout and at the end of the lesson
4. Use a variety of questions for specific purposes
5. Use strategies in the classroom so that students are thinking all the time
6. A part from rapid recall questions, time is needed for students to think and answer and for teachers to think and respond.

Questions to support learning

1. use a variety of questions for specific purposes
2. use strategies in the classroom so that students are thinking all the time.
3. A part from rapid recall questions, time is needed for students to think answer and for to think and respond

Self assessment

1. It is a thinking and talking activity, not a writing one

2. Self assessments needs to be taught
3. Self assessment should be related to the learning objective and success criteria.

2.7.2. Summative CA

The other category, Summative CA comes terminally after a segment of instruction has been completed. It combines students' assessment results that were obtained periodically throughout an instructional sequence to arrive at an overall mark (Lin and Gronland, 2005; Nitko, 2004). Summative CA combines assessment results collected at different times using tests, exams, projects, etc. improves the fairness and accuracy of students' evaluation However, summative CA addresses only area of the three basic reasons of using CA: improving the accuracy and fairness of students evaluation. The other two basic principles, improving teaching and improving students learning, could not be touched (USAID /BEP, 2006b).

Proper implementation of formative CA as stated in USAID/BEP (2006b.31) requires teachers to possess skills on:

- Evaluating how well students met standards by using tests, final versions of writings, formal oral questions, oral presentations and reports.
- Determining marks that reflect students' achievement standards, i.e. the marks given must reflect only the achievement of the pupil, not extraneous factors.
- Planning how to use assessment tools.

The descriptions above reveal how the two forms of CA differ. The distinctions between them lies on the purposes and the ways they are practiced. Formative CA is vital to guide teaching and improve learning and can be implemented before and during instruction. The evidence on students' progress in formative CA is collected by using informal methods while teaching and learning is going on. On the other hand, summative CA is conducted at the end of a segment of

instruction to evaluate students' achievement of the curriculum objectives using mainly formal assessment methods.

Although both formative CA and summative CA are necessary for a smooth running of the teaching learning process, in the literature, formative CA seems more promising for improving teaching and learning. In support of this view, Desalegen has the following to say:

Students supposed to benefit from the most formative methods. The Intention is to optimize feedback to students, pointing out strength and weakness and guiding their subsequent work (2001:189)

Nevertheless, complete view of CA urges teachers to understand as well as practice both formative CA and summative CA because one is complementary for the other; assessment must help learning (FCA) and learning must be assessed (SCA).

2.7.3. FCA and SCA Skills for Teacher Education Institution

According to Nitko (2004), the following points are systems to learn:

A. Identifying CA Skills Teachers Need

The following are lists of general FCA skills that may form the beginning of planning for pre service candidates' instruction in FAC

1. Giving students feedback on how to improve their learning by:
 - Reviewing home work, seat work
 - Observing how students solve assignment and how they behave
 - Using first drafts of writing dances, plays and projects.
2. Identifying students' conceptions and errors by
 - Interviewing/conferencing
 - Listening during class discussions
 - Identifying the errors they make in written work and on tests
3. Determine students' level of understanding by using an informal oral and written quiz

4. Planning how to use assessment to improve learning

Notice that these skills are grouped into 4 categories. The first concerns feedback for improving learning. Teachers may give feedback with marks or with grades but that type of feedback is not what is needed. Teachers need to use assessment information to give specific feedback to help students improve their learning. This may not need to be elaborated feedback, but it must be at least some clear and specific feedback that describes what the student must do to improve. The feedback may be informal and may not be in written form for some subjects and grade levels.

The second category contains skills teachers need in order to identify the types of errors a student makes or type of misconceptions a student may have. This will vary with the subject matter. Of course, since error and misconceptions are usually subject-specific but the skill of listening to students responding in class or watching them perform with the purpose of identifying errors and misconceptions is an important teaching skills. The skill of reviewing students with work and tests to identify errors is another important teaching skill. It is when the teacher can pin point what student's error or misconception is that the teacher can take the necessary step to help the learner improve.

The third category of skills is to be able to evaluate how near each student is to the desired level of performance on the curriculum goals and objectives. If the teacher can evaluate how near the student is to success, then the teacher can help explain to the student where he or she is now and how much further the studying needs to go before reaching success. Sometimes this means that the teacher needs to show the student what the desired performance or product look like, to compare the student performance or product to it, pointing out what needs to be done to reach the desired goal. This guides the student to help the student determine what needs to be learned text.

The fourth category involves planning for FCA. Teacher candidates are already taught how to plan for teaching activities. There is a need to extend this

planning exercise to make it more complete by including planning for FCA (and SCA as well), including planning for student feedback. This plan does not necessarily have to be written or elaborated but must include components that will comprise the final grade for the unit. The plan should indicate what weight each component will carry in the calculation of the final grade. The plan in the exercise is illustrative, but teachers need not prepare such an elaborated document.

B. Identifying SCA skills teachers need to learn

Although teacher education institutions now train teachers in some aspects of SCA, it is not clear that they do so from a skill perspective. Below are some general skills needed by teachers to effectively use SCA

1. Re-evaluating how well students meet standards by using:
 - Tests set by a teacher or a group of teachers
 - Final reasons of writing, dances, plays, projects
 - Formal oral questions, oral presentation, oral explanation of projects, reports
2. Determine grades that
 - Reflect students achievement of standards (objectives)
 - Use valid weights when several assignments are combined into the final grade.
3. Planning how to use assessment to evaluate achievements of standards.

This list has three categories of skills. The first category contains the skills teachers need to evaluate how well students have met the curriculum objectives and standards by using the assessment materials commonly available to teachers. The important aspects of the skills is not just to administer the assessments, rather it is to use them corporately to evaluate (i.e. judge) how well the student has achieved the learning objectives. The second category contains the skills needed to properly determine a grade for each student in each subject, properly determine grades. Means that the grade must reflect

only the achievement of the student, not extraneous factors such as attendance or department (social behavior)

The latter factors be important educational goals and the attainment of these goals should be assessed and reported but their assessment should not be mingled with achievement information when determining and reporting grades. To do so lowers the validity of grades as SCAs of subject matter achievement.

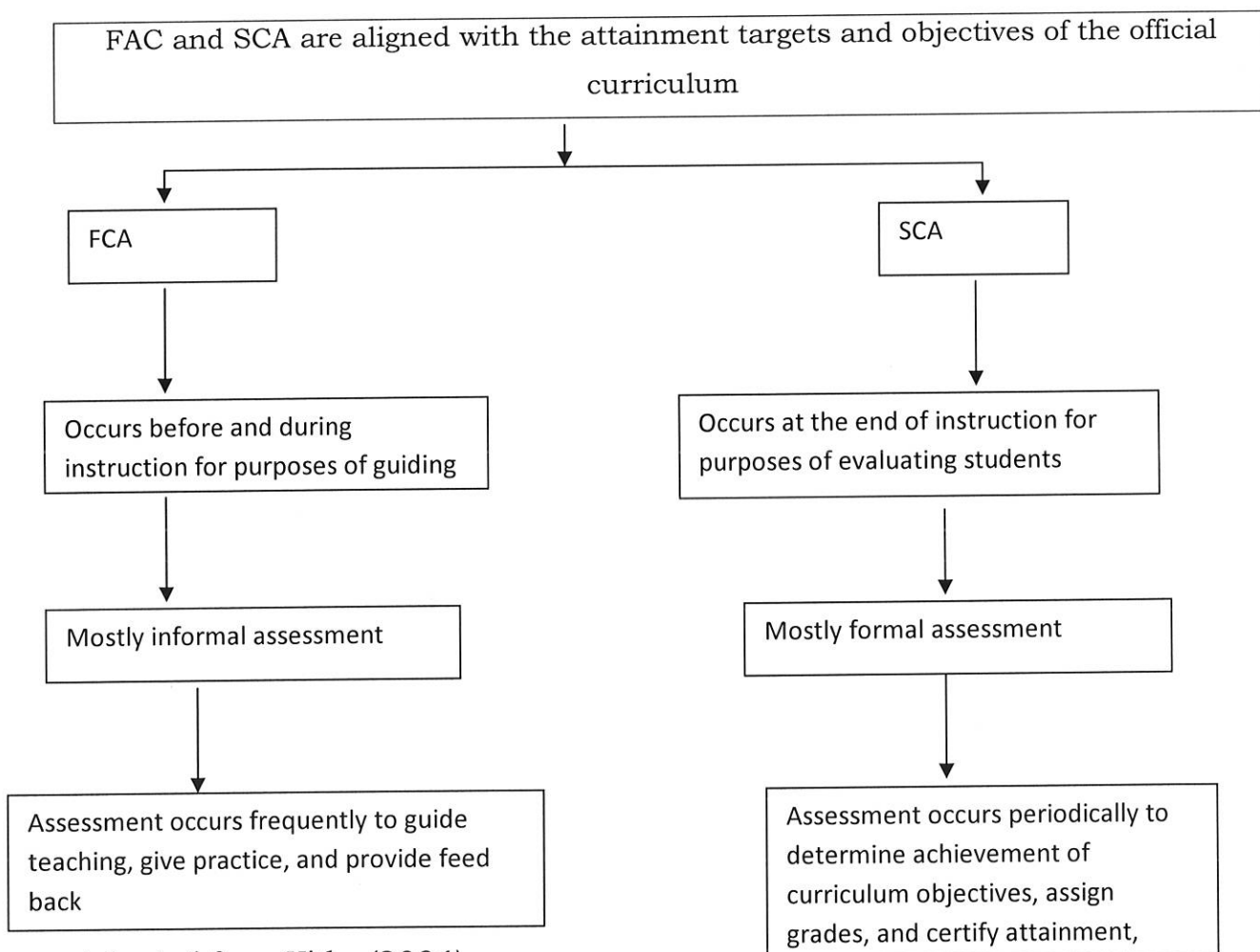
2.7.4. The Distinction between Formative Continuous Assessment and Summative Continuous Assessment

According to Nitko (2004), FCA and SCA are stated distinctively. Formative Continuous Assessment (FCA) and summative Continuous Assessment (SCA) are both aligned with the curriculum goals and objectives. The distinction between FCA and SCA lie in when they are used and the purposes for which they are used in the teaching leaning process. It was stated that assessment should occur before and during instruction to guide teaching and to improve student learning while it is in progress. A teacher uses mostly informal assessment methods for FCA and most of the time the teacher does not record the marks of student because the FCA information is used to improve learning and guide teaching.

A teacher uses SCA, on the other hand, at the end of instruction to evaluate students' achievement of the curriculum goals and objectives. A teacher uses mostly formal assessment methods because it is important to be as accurate as possible when recording students' achievement in official records. Both FCA and SCA are necessary for good teaching. However, it is FCA that holds the promise for improving teaching and learning. The diagram shows the relationship between FCA and SCA

Improving learning with FCA

Formative and SCA are both necessary



Adapted from Nitko (2004)

It is important for teachers to understand that CA information's can be used to improve learning and guide teaching. Commonly, teachers are taught the different methods or format of assessment, for example, True-False, multiple-choice, check list, observation, etc., but are not taught what to do with the assessment results to help their teaching or to guide student learning. It is not enough to administer assessment to students and mark papers. Teachers must use the assessment results for guiding learning and teaching.

2.8. Tools and Techniques for Assessing Cognitive and Non Cognitive Behaviors

A variety of instruments and techniques are required by the classroom teacher to assess cognitive and non-cognitive (Affective and psychomotor) behaviors of the students. The instrument and techniques include: 1. Test, 2. Project, 3. Assignments, 4. Interview 5. Rating scale, 6. Observation, 7. Questionnaire, 8. Anecdotal Records, and 9. Socio-metric techniques

Some of the instruments enumerated are appropriate for the assessment of affective and psychomotor behaviors. The assessment tools and domains where they can be applied are indicated below in Table 3.

Assessment Tools and Their Related Domains

Evaluation tools and techniques	Cognitive behavior	Affective behavior	Psychomotor behavior
Tests	*		
Projects	*	*	*
Assignments	*	*	*
Interviews		*	
Rating scales		*	*
Observation		*	
Questionnaire		*	
Anecdotal records		*	
Socio metric technique		*	

Source: Adopted from Ughamadu, (1991), and cited in Hleinemann (2005)

From the above table, it could be seen that test is useful for assessment of cognitive behaviors. Project and assignment can be used for assessing affective and psychomotor domain, and the others are useful for assessment of affective behavior. The evaluation tools and assessment of the students should be valid,

reliable and usable. If the evaluation tools are valid and reliable, they will give teachers, students, counselors and parents the results that they can depend on in arriving at any decision (Osunde and Ugamadu, 2004) as cited in Heinemeann, (2005).

2.9. How to Plan and Organize CA

Because of the wide variety of forms CA can take, it is difficult to provide detailed guidelines on how to plan and organize such assessment (Robert Gordon university, 1997). However, Bob, Purvis (1997) provided a number of general principles on how to plan and organize CA in CICED booklet on CA.

The following are some of the guidelines:

- a) Ensure that the proposed assessment scheme is progressive and properly integrated and that the different assessment vehicles are appropriately matched to the objectives, learning outcomes or competencies that they are intended to assess.
- b) Remember that examination and other terminal assessment vehicles can be used together with CA programs, so try to use both modes of assessment on the most effective and complementary way.
- c) Always tell your students exactly what you expect them to do and make sure that your requirements and ground rules are properly adhered to. Ensure that other members of staff involved in teaching the course are also fully informed of your plans; their comments will generally be useful.
- d) Ensure that any written instructions or guidelines provided to your students are clear, unambiguous and helpful.
- e) Make sure that you create appropriate opportunities for students to discuss the CA program with yourself and any other members of staff involved both before they embark on the program and during the program itself.
- f) Do not set major assignments too early in a course; begin with simple assignment and then make them progressively more demanding, so that

students develop their competence and build up their confidence in a systematic way.

- g) Make sure that students have sufficient time to prepare for and carry out each element of the CA program, particularly if this involves fact-finding or research of some sort.
- h) Make sure that your students are not over-assessed, either by yourself or by you and your colleagues. Too many assessments can be counter-productive, and can cause students unnecessary stress. Interdisciplinary assessments are possible, and reflect work place practice
- i) Monitor standards carefully to ensure consistency between the marking of different students' work, to ensure that standards are maintained from one year to another, and to demonstrate fitness for purpose. This is particularly important if several people are involved in the marking
- j) Allow sufficient time for adequate marking and comment on the students' work, but try to ensure that they receive feedback in a reasonable time, institutional and course regulations should be followed here
- k) Remember that full and constructive feedback is an essential feature of CA, particularly if it is being used for formative purposes. Make sure that you provide this. If you do not, then an external examiner or verifier will almost certainly spot its absence

2.10. Giving and Receiving Feedback in CA

Research studies have shown that if pupils are given only marks or grades, they do not benefit from the feedback. Low achievers will tend to believe that they do not have the ability to learn. To overcome this, feedback has been shown to improve learning when it gives each pupil specific guidance on strengths and weakness preferably without any overall marks. In this regard, Black and William (1998) reported that the feedback, tests, class work and home work should give each pupil guidance on how to improve and each pupil must be given help and an opportunity to work on the implement.

Students learn more in classes where assessment is an integral part of instruction and which provides feedback about learning progress (Airasian 1997, cited Birhana, 2004).

The aim of CA is to provide feedback. In light of this, Brooks (2002) stated that giving and receiving feedback is a central skill of CA. Similarly, Brown, Bull and Pendle (1997) contend that the purpose of feedback is to help a student improve his/her learning. For them, feedback has to be useful and acceptable to the receiver; it should also be specific, accurate, timely, clear, focused upon the attainable and expressed in a way which will encourage a student to think and change his mind

Teachers must devote much time in giving feedback to pupils. They should not run for 'delivery' and 'coverage' of the lesson with poor understanding of the students. In favor of this, Brooks (2002) asserted that time is crucial for giving and receiving feedback.

More specifically, CA entails intervening during the learning process to come up with feedback, which is used to guide subsequent learning

Moreover, Black and William (1998) pointed out that learner benefits most from rapid feedback. The longer the time lag between performance and feedback the less effective the feedback is likely to be in correcting errors and enhance future performance

In sum, feedback is of paramount importance for improving learning. Supporting this idea, Lissitz and Schafer (2002:70) stated that feedback is a powerful tool in helping students' growth. Teachers should give descriptive feedback related to the criteria for the tasks so that students will know where they stand and those areas they need to work in so that students revise their work.

2.11. Factors Contributing to Current Changes in Assessment

The current changes in assessment are largely attributed to social and educational factors. Among these, changing the concepts of the purpose of assessment, changing of educational goals, curriculum and teaching strategies, the changing nature of the population in schools and the inadequacies of traditional testing are a case in point (MCAfee and Leong, 1997).

a. Changing concepts of the primary purpose of assessment

The trend in using assessment as a means merely to determine whether children pass or fail in paper and pencil test is changed. Instead, there has been a shift in focus of employing authentic assessment to ensure that children actually learn. Regarding this, Tyler and Wolf (1974), as cited in MCAfee and Leong (1997) suggested that assessment should be used to help the individual in his/her effort to learn. Furthermore, Rowntree (1982) stated that assessment of students learning involves finding out what the students' abilities are. This does not necessarily mean testing or measuring their performance in a formal way.

b. Changes in educational goals, Curriculum and instructional strategies

Curriculum goals need to be revised and broadened so as to cope with the changing needs of children. Supporting this, MCAfee and Leong (1997) contend that updating curriculum goals and instructional strategies is worthwhile to include completeness that cut across all developmental and learning domains, such as creative thinking, reasoning problem solving, and learning how to learn.

c. The changing nature of schools and student population

The fact that the number of schools and students' population is on the increase calls for an assessment strategy appropriate for all children. Alternative assessment procedures which employ flexible assessment practices give a true

picture of what children from diverse backgrounds can actually do (Puhl, 1997). In relation to this, Hassen (1998) pinpointed the reasons for designing changes on assessment. These include:

- i. The provision of quality primary education
- ii. The multiple functions of assessment.

The use of tests to measure students' performance is not the best indicator of the overall achievement of the learner. Supporting this idea, Dietal, et al (1991) claimed that traditional tests tool to assess significant learning outcomes and there by undermine curriculum instruction and policy decision. This calls for employing the multiple functions of assessment other than using only tests.

2.12. Teachers' practice on assessment and the problems

they face

Teachers face a challenge while they assess students' work in an educational setting where they have not enough access to the type of assessment information that will enable them carry out the assessment accurately and fairly (Pierce, 2002). Related to this, Ellington and Earl (1997) out lined that if teachers are not enriched with the basic skills of record keeping as part of continuous assessment of students' work, there is a danger that scores are to be misplaced and they might be made difficult to retrieve. Similarly, Frad and Lee (2001), cited in Pierce (2002) stated that the way the institution or the department requires to be done. They further stated that most teachers use the same type of assessment techniques especially those that they were being assessed while they were in schools.

Successful implementation of continuous assessment demands more work, time and responsibility on the part of teachers. If the teacher is not adequately prepared for operating the system, it may lead to a tendency to look up scores in the name of continuous assessment (Ellington and Earl, 1997). The study carried out by Brooks (1988) in Black and William (1998) also showed that

teachers have not adequate understanding of continuous assessment and this leads to the weak practices. Emphasizing this point, Black and Wiliam (1998) stated that the implementation of continuous assessment calls for deep changes both in teachers' perception of their own role in relation to their students and their classroom practice. On top of this, Papworth (2005) pointed out that lack of receptiveness by students who feel that they are constantly being tested is another problem teachers face. In sum, the study by Brooks (1998) in Black and Wiliam (1998) mentioned the following reasons that led teachers' practices to be weak in putting continuous assessment into practice:

- The fact that the emphasis of assessment is on grading function rather than the learning function of the assessment
- The assessment practices usually encourage superficial and rote learning that focus on recall of isolated facts.
- Teachers do not usually review the assessment questions they use and do not discuss them with colleagues that lead to have few numbers of reflections on what is being assessed.
- There is a tendency to use normative rather than criterion-based approach that emphasizes competition between students rather than personal progress of each. The evidence in such type of practices is that the feedback is to teach the weaker students visualize their own weaknesses that de motivate and lose in their own capacity to learn.

In line with this, Sprinthall and Aja (1994) mentioned the reasons teachers may give for not practicing continuous assessment. These include large class size, limited number of rooms, lack of teachers and heavy work load given for teachers. By the same token, Hayes (1997) cited the effect of class size on teachers' feeling as a problem. In spite of this fact, All Wright (1989) cited in Mayes (1997) asserted that available research evidence indicated class size might not be the problem for student achievement. Locastro (2001) also disregards large class size as a problem in teaching. According to these view points, large class size is seen relative to contexts and purposes. The emphasis

is that teachers are expected to use variety of learning strategies which may help learners to achieve the goal of learning. Regarding large class size, Sarwar (2001) recommends project-based learning as a solution.

Sarwar (2001) also identified the problems that teachers raised in relation to large class size. These include:

- Teachers feel self-conscious, nervous and uncomfortable under the eyes of many students
- Problems in evaluating oral and written works.
- Shortage of time to help individual students.
- Discipline and classroom problems.

Similarly, Hayes (1997) listed down the problems that teachers faced in large class size as follows:

- Control- teachers feel that they are unable to manage disciplinary problems.
- Evaluation- teachers feel uneasy to carry out assessment for a number of students, for it demands more time and energy.
- Individual attention- many teachers feel they are neglecting the needs of their students as individual.

Furthermore, a study carried out by Shimles (2001) at Jimma University reported the following problems:

- Inadequate planning i.e., teachers do not plan the assessment activities clearly.
- Bias of instructors based on sex, race, personality, etc.
- Absence of timely feedback. They attributed this to large class size, work load and lack of time.

2.13. Research Findings on Continuous Assessment

Although researches, specifically on CA, are scarce, there are abundant researches on the implementation of continuous assessment in Teacher Education College. A few will be discussed here to give a sense of the international and national context in relation to primary and secondary school levels.

2.13.1. International Research Findings on the Implementation of Continuous Assessment

A. The implementation of school based continuous assessment (CA) in Zambia

In Zambia, CA is defined as an ongoing diagnostic classroom based process that used a variety of assessment tools to measure learner performance (MOE, 2005-5). Over the years, examinations have been used for selection and certification, without formal consideration on school based continuous as a component in the final examinations of grade seven level. The Ministry of Education introduced school based continuous assessment for two reasons: for certification and selection.

There has been an increasing criticism in the educational field on high stakes examination of having harmful effect on student learning and that it should be reduced to a minimum (Harlem and Crich, 2003; Marrison and Tang. 2002; Black, 1998). Black and William (1998) indicated that formative assessment if properly implemented in schools is a powerful means to improve student learning. In the international scenarios, formative assessment has already been practiced in schools in various western countries including Australia, Canada, Denmark, England, Finland, Italy, Netherland and Scotland (OEGD, 2005).

The objectives of the CA programs are twofold: first to promote the use of formative assessment so as to improve the quality of learning and teaching, and secondly to establish a regular system of managing cumulative pupils

performance marks for the purpose of using them in combination with final examination marks for selection and certification

Challenges in implementing the school based CA

The findings from the timely monitoring visits that were conducted to the pilot schools related that the teachers encountered various challenges in implementing the formative school based assessment

The major challenges

- Large class size
- Staffing
- Remediation and enrichment
- Public absenteeism
- Teaching and learning resources
- Teacher networking
- Monitoring and feedback, etc

The major benefits are:-

- CA offers a way to cater for a diversity of learners in a large class
- Help to standardize the assessment procedure in the schools
- Helps for continuous in service training
- Provision of different teaching and learning materials
- Help for proper record keeping and easily transferable etc.

B. Continuous Assessment in Swaziland

The assessment of students' learning in the classroom by teachers occupies a central role in the learning process. If handled properly by competent teachers, continuous assessment contributes largely to the superior achievement of students (Mkhonta, 2003).

The rationale for using Continuous Assessment, thus, was seen as a procedure to address

- The deteriorating quality of education because the system was failing to meet the demands of high population growth
- The ever increasing dropout and repetition rate
- The nature of the curriculum being abstract and its lack of connection to students every day experience

According to Mkhonta (2003), the CA program in Swaziland was based on the principle of mastery of learning which can make every child become a successful learner given time and opportunity.

In this study, there were many and varied assessment tests. A survey by the CA unit also revealed that a number of teachers' made tests were shallow and merely tested recall, so it was decided that the CA unit should assist teachers by an item specification booklet to guide them in setting good test items.

An evaluation report of the use of CA in primary schools in Swaziland based on interviews, class work, observation and inspection of written works led to the conclusion as follows:

Over 50% teachers were found to be teaching toward clearly defined objectives, only a quarter of teachers used the item specification handbook when constructing their own tests. A majority (70%) did not understand how to draw illustrations, or because a school did not have duplicating facilities. This was the case in most schools. Although there was provision of corrective activities, which offered student explicit, which offered student explicit guidance and direction on how they can correct their learning errors and remedy learning problems very few teachers attempted to carry out remedial and enrichment activities yet this is a key element of mastery learning approaches. Those who did encountered difficulties relating to lack of time, class management, lack of materials and lack of 'Know how'. The most commonly adapted strategy was to provide revision for the whole class. Again this is not accord with recommendations in the use of mastery learning (Magagula, 1995, cited in Mkhonta, 2003)

A challenge for the Swaziland MOE and all stake holders is to design a continuous assessment program that will be compatible with and take into consideration the realities of the situation in schools in Swaziland. To this end,

a number of studies and reports have been made as well as consultations all geared toward finding lasting solutions to the problems that are associated with the implementation of the CA program.

C. CA at primary school level in Namibia

Findings strength and short comings regarding current assessment practices

1. Achievements

According to Plessis (2003), some of the achievements scored through the reform of assessment policy and practice include:

- The democratization of the monitoring and assessment exercise through which various stake holder platforms have been created.
- Numerous in service training initiatives to empower the implementers. In fact, some implementers have become experts in handling the issues under discussions
- Initiatives to empower the learners, through learner centered methodologies and so on.

2. Short comings in assessment policy and procedures

The reports by Directorate of National Examinations and Assessment (DNEA) cited in Plessis (2003) showed that shortcomings related to assessment include:

- Lack of understanding the policy guidelines by some implementers
- Lack of proper control and supervision mechanisms, especially at school and regional levels
- Inability of some teachers to understand how CA feedbacks can be used to improve classroom practices better
- Reluctance of learners to simply participate in or do CA tasks
- CA is susceptible to un professional manipulation

- Lack of commitment on the part of teachers and learners regarding CA, which at the end of the day, results in unrealistic or fabricated CA marks.

To conclude, the assessment systems appear to rest on well considered theoretical underpinnings. There seem, however, to be some major short coming at the practical implementation level. As such, the current assessment and monitoring procedures and practices do not seem to contribute to, and inform, classroom practice as optimally as originally intended (Pressis, 2003).

2.13.2. National Research Findings on the Implementation of

Continuous Assessment

From research findings to the Ethiopian context, Birhanu (2004) indicated that proper handling of student assessment in general and continuous assessment in particular at high school level in selected high schools in Arsi Zone is poor and not up to the standard compared to the contemporary assessment system. His findings further indicated that the major problems in implementing continuous assessment include: lack of awareness about the techniques and procedures, lack of guideline/directives in implementing continuous assessment, inadequate preparation of teachers on continuous assessment, lack of technical support, unmanageable large class size, lack of adequate learning materials, lack of adequate supervisors who can guide practitioners, lack of student motivation and learners negative attitude towards project and assignment. According to his study, these were found to be practical problems in implementing continuous assessment in Arsi zone high schools.

Derebsa (2006) also in his research findings on assessment techniques and the implementation of a learner centered approach indicated that with the constant focus on the right answer to an examination question, students commit a large part of their time to memorizing chunks of information, as replied by 90.3% of the sample students because teachers mostly emphasize facts and information in their questions for exams/tests. He further explains his findings by saying

that assessment, particularly in the form of examination, which emphasizes recall of a wide range of very specific information and problem solving by formula does not encourage active learning. As replied by many sample students (66.8%), the assessment system employed by teachers only allows students to pass by replying information from lectures and textbooks. The purpose of evaluation in the learner centered learning approach is not merely to rate the learners' performance and to maintain academic standards, but it should be used instead to encourage independent learning and critical thinking Derebssa (2006).

The above research findings are conducted in primary and secondary school level and clearly show the problem of assessment in general and the poor implementation of continuous assessment in particular. And recommendations were also forwarded for better improvement of the teaching learning process in general and the assessment method in particular. Even though all these efforts were made, the problem seems to be continued at college level where the implementation of CA is a recent phenomenon. Thus, this study tries to investigate if similar or different problems at a collage level may be found in order to cite necessary recommendations for the concerned bodies.

a. Recommendations of TESO for Ethiopian Teacher Education Institution (TEIS) for using Continuous Assessment (CA)

According to Teacher Education System Over hall (TESO) conceptualization of good teaching skills, as a matter of necessity, must be accompanied by CA. Thus, CA is part of the higher diploma program. In this program, teacher educators are expected to assess students appropriately using relevant assessment practices, for example 75% of course grade should result from FCA. In the course, the teacher educator will hence forth:

- 1) Show understanding of the principles of assessment and the varieties that can be used.

- 2) Monitor, assess, and record the aptitudes, abilities, needs and progress of students regularly.
- 3) Provide students regularly with constructive feedback (write and oral) on their progress.
- 4) Assess students' attainments against objectives and targets set for particular groups.
- 5) Use the outcomes of assessment to evaluate, reflect upon and improve teaching in order to improve standards of student attainments.

In addition, TESO mentioned the following reasons for using FCA:

1. Guiding
2. Encouraging
3. Adding variety
4. Motivation
5. Providing feedback
6. Developing self-appraisal skills
7. Self-reflections
8. Setting standards
9. Evaluating

TESO concludes its recommendations for using CA in courses by indicating that CA is linked to teaching and learning in a way that enables the teacher to be more accountable for learner achievement. New pre service students will have mastered the techniques of using CA before graduation. Similarly, the Continuous Professional Development program has developed a series of learning modules based on CA so that serving teachers master the skills of CA as part of one of the requirements for recertification (USAID) Basic Education Program (2006).

CHAPTER THREE

3. Research Design and Methodology

3.1 Design of the study

As indicated under the objective, this study focused on the practices and challenges of continuous assessment at Debre Birhan Teachers Education College in Amhara Region and then revealing the challenges encountered in its application. To this effect, to get reliable information of the current status of the issue under study, descriptive method was employed on the assumption that it could help to get a great variety of data related to the subject under investigation.

3.2 Sources of data

Data were gathered from Participants that are claimed to have adequate proximity to the study area. Accordingly, the participants included teachers, students and deans. Specifically, these respondents of the study were sampled from the total population of teachers and students which were drawn from the college. Besides, the respondents' continuous assessment formats, record sheets and course plan were used as sources of data.

3.3. Sampling Techniques

Currently, there are 85 teachers in Debre Birhan Teachers College. From these teachers, all of them were selected as respondents for questionnaires because their numbers were found to be manageable. For the purpose of observation and interview, 20 teachers from six departments based on their numbers were selected randomly as this sample could represent the population. The observation was done three times on each selected teachers in order to get adequate information. There were 549 2nd year students in the college. That batch was selected because the fresh man students had 2 months experience and 3rd year students were out of the campus for practicum. Thus, 2nd year students were found appropriate for the research. From the above number of

students, 30% of them, i.e., 190 students were selected using random sampling technique from six departments based on their numbers. For the purpose of interview, 20 students were selected randomly from each department.

There were three Deans in the college. All of them were taken using purposeful sampling technique since they were responsible for college activities and their numbers were manageable.

3.4 Data Collection Instruments

Questionnaire, Interview, classroom observation and document analysis were used for the study. Questionnaire was developed for both teachers and students. Interview was used for teachers, students and deans of the college. The instruments were prepared after intensive reading of the literature and research objectives. The instruments were used to know the practice, understanding and challenges of CA. In addition to this, classroom observation using check lists and document analysis were used. Document analysis was used to investigate the appropriate application of CA employed by instructors. Observation check lists were used to investigate whether instructors were using CA in the teaching learning process effectively during the classroom observation.

3.5. Procedure of Data Collection

In this research, the questionnaire and interview were prepared in English for teachers and students. The professionals examined the quality of the instruments adapted from Tamene (2008) and partly from Animaw (2009) in collecting data about the current practices and challenges of continuous assessment at Debre Birhan Teachers College. Using the comments and suggestions of the professionals, corrections were made. For more clarity of the instruments, the thesis advisor was consulted and he suggested comments for it. The instruments were dispatched finally for instructors, students and deans of the college.

After receiving cooperative letter from curriculum and professional development studies, the objective of the study was made clear to college students, instructors and deans. Later on, the questionnaire was administered to the students and instructors and soon collected. And then, interview was conducted to the students, teachers and deans. At last, document analysis was made after collecting the document from each department.

3.6 Methods of Data Analysis

To analyze the data, both quantitative and qualitative techniques were employed. The data which were gathered through interview, open ended questionnaire and document analysis were analyzed through qualitative techniques. The data gathered through closed ended questionnaire, and observation check lists were analyzed through percentage.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. Analysis and Interpretation of the Data

In this section, the results obtained from questionnaire, interview, classroom observation and documents were analyzed. Percentage as a statistical method was employed to present and analyze the structured item of the questionnaire quantitatively. To supplement and enrich the information that was drawn using questionnaire, the data from open ended questions, interview, and documents were analyzed and described in words.

4.1. Background of the participants.

Table 1- Characteristics of instructors by sex, age, qualification, teaching experience and teaching load.

No	Items	Respondents		
		No	%	
1.	Sex	M	76	89.4
		F	9	10.5
2	Age	20-25	5	5.8
		26-30	30	35.2
		31-35	15	29.4
		36-40	15	29.4
		41 and above	20	23.5
3	Qualification	B.A	25	29.1
		M.A	59	69.4
		Diploma	1	1.1
4	Teaching Experience	0-3	16	18.8
		4-7	22	25.8
		8-11	15	17.6
		12-16	12	14.1
		17 and above	20	23.5
5	Teaching load per week	Below 10	15	17.6
		10-15	35	41.1
		16-21	35	41.1
		22 and above	-	-

n=85

As indicated in Table 1, 89% of the instructors were males and 11% of them were females. Clearly, as male instructors outnumbered the numbers of females, it seems that the college did not work much on gender equality in terms of number.

Regarding the age of the instructors, 6% were between the age category of 20-25, 35% fall in the age group 26-30, 29% were found between in the age 31-35, 29% fall in the group 36-40 and 24% were found in group 41 and above. This show that the age of most respondents/ instructors were below 41 years which implies an active working age.

Concerning instructors' qualification, 29% of the instructors were B.A degree holders, 69% were M.A degree holders, and only 1% was a diploma graduate. This shows that the majority of the respondents were qualified to teach in the college.

Work experience of the instructors was one of the most important issues that could influence commitment of instructors to their profession. Accordingly, 19% were found in the category of 0-3 years, 26% between 4-7 years of experience, 18% between 8-11 years, 14% between 12-16 years of experience and 24% were found between 17 and above years respectively. Research indicates that years of prior teaching experience is related to the professional development of teachers.

Concerning the teaching loads of the teachers, 18% were found in the category of having below 10 periods per week, 41% were found in between 10-15 periods, 41% also had in between 16-21 periods per week. No one was found to have 22 and above periods per week. This shows that 66% of the instructors were loaded, and this condition could affect their work negatively because they taught more than 12 periods per week.

4.2 Results and Discussions

Here, the data obtained from the different sources were presented and interpreted.

Table 2- In service and pre service background training of instructors on CA

No	Description	Alternatives	Instructors Respondents	
			no	%
1	Training taken on CA through pre-service.	Yes	40	47.05
		No	45	52.9
2	Training taken on CA through in-service	Yes	45	52.9
		No	40	47.5
3	Training days given for CA through in service program	One day	35	77.7
		Three days	5	11.1
		A week	5	11.1
		A month	-	-
		If any other	-	-

n=85

As shown in Table 2, concerning CA training taken in the pre service, 47% of the respondents replied that they took courses, where as 53% indicated that they did not take assessment courses.

The in service training that was given in the college (working place) shows that 54% of them received and 47% replied that they did not take any training.

Regarding the duration of the training, data obtained from instructors indicated, 78% replied that the training was for one day only, 12% responded three days, and 12% replied that they got for a week and no one received training for a month and above or different from the alternatives.

This shows that most of the instructors did not take training on CA in the pre-service and in service training. Even those who received responded on the

contrary during interview. They told that they were in need for more training for effective usage of CA as the training period was very short and not practical and not continuous. In addition to this, they responded that without having appropriate training, CA cannot be effective. Concerning the importance of training for teachers, contrary to this finding, Borich (1988:3) also stressed about the importance of training for CA.

In service training, such as periodic refresher courses, workshops, seminars and conferences are essential parts of the ongoing work and development of teacher training education in order to keep up with current trends in the application of CA. In relation to this, Neaum and Tallack (1997:55) added also the same ideas with the previous educators but opposite from our findings because instructors were not having basic and appropriate training for CA implementation.

Generally, the effective implementation of CA depends on continuous and practical training of teachers and students. If this is so, there will be progress on learning and improvement in instructional process.

Table 3- Integration of assessment methods in course plans.

No	Implementation of CA	Alternatives	Instructors Respondents	
			No	%
1	Using CA plan	Yes	50	58.8
		No	35	41.7
2	Using varieties of CA tools	Yes	50	58.8
		No	35	41.7
3	Frequency of incorporating CA techniques in lesson plans	Always	25	29.4
		Some times	50	58.8
		Rarely	10	11.7
		Not at all	-	-

n=85

As indicated in the above Table, concerning usage of CA plan for lesson 59% reflected that they were using CA plan and 42% responded that they were not using CA plan.

Concerning the varieties CA tools used, 59% instructors replied that they were using different types of CA and 43% of them did not use varieties of CA tools.

Regarding the frequency usage of CA, 29% responded that they always incorporated CA in their lesson, 59% of them replied they sometimes used variety of CA devices, and 12% responded that they rarely used different CA types in their lesson.

From the above table, we can understand that CA planning and using varieties of CA were not the major problems for instructors. However, during classroom observation most teachers did not have CA plan and did not use varieties of CA tools for their lesson. Partially, some of them wrote some tools on their course plan. This shows that their plans were not seen in practice.

Even though they told the researcher for using variety of CA, the duration was not in a continuous manner. As we have seen from their responses above, half of the instructors used CA sometimes in their lesson plan. If they do not plan continuously, there will be a problem in the instructional process and it affects the changes that will be expected from teacher and students. In relation to this, Ellington and Early (1977) stated that unless CA is carefully planned and coordinated, there is a very real danger that students may not show progress in their learning, and they added that if it is not in line with a continuous manner the instruction cannot be developed. This idea is contrary to the findings because as it was said most instructors were not used proper CA plan and was not continuous.

Generally, instructors were not in a position to use CA plan for their lessons and the training that was taken in the college did not bring changes for CA implementation in the classroom. The incorporation of CA is mostly accused some times in the instruction process. These facts have their own effect on CA practices and on students' behavioral change.

Table 4- Frequency of CA used in classroom activities

No	Level of CA implementation	Alternatives	Instructors Respondents	
			No	%
1	Assessment used everyday	Yes	58	68.2
		No	27	31.7
2	Stage of assessment used	At the beginning	8	13.7
		While the lesson is going on	10	14.7
		At the end of/After the lesson	35	60.3
		At each stage (Before, During and After)	5	8.6
3	Time used for tests and exam	Two times	10	11.7
		Three times	24	28.2
		Four times	30	35.2
		More than four	21	24.7
		If any other	-	-

n=85

As shown in Table 4, concerning daily usage of assessment, 68% of the instructors replied by saying yes and 32% responded to No.

Concerning the time when CA is used, 14% of the instructors responded to the beginning of the lesson, 15% during the lesson, 60% after the lesson and 9% in each stage of the lesson.

Regarding the time of the tests and exam provision, 12% of the instructors responded to two times, 28% to three times, 35% to four times and 25% respond to more than four.

From table 4 we can understand that most instructors assessed their students everyday but during the classroom observation most teachers did not do these activities. This shows that their responses to the questionnaire were not supplemented by classroom practices. On the other hand, those who said 'yes' for every day assessment practice, their assessment was not properly implemented because most of them assessed for the sake of grading and for checking. Literature taught us that CA should be practiced in three levels in every lesson i.e. before, during and after the lesson. All of them have their own importance for students' progress as well as for instructional improvement. Concerning the duration of CA, USAID Basic Education Program (2006) as shown in the literature, their ideas and our college practices are quite different because they support the three levels of assessment.

The result of classroom observation shows that most teachers used CA at the end of the lesson partially, so we can say that CA was not fully practiced or not implemented properly. As a result, it was not easy to see progress in teaching and learning.

Concerning the number of tests and exams for learners in one course, most teacher use paper and pencil test four times in one semester specifically they did not use other tools to assess the progress of the learners. This also affects the implementation of CA because the purpose of CA is mostly to focus on formative assessment using a variety of tools. In addition to this, the interview results also showed us that many teachers used this device more than any other tool and even the tests were given on the last day of a semester to complete the 60% of the marks. This has a negative influence on CA implementation. Firstly, it was not practiced in every stage of the lesson, and secondly using these tools repeatedly could contribute little for the desired outcome.

In general, these activities affect the learners' behavior and the instructional process plus it contributes little for students' progress because they were using few tools and with this it will not be easy to develop the potentials of the

learners. More specifically, the use of any specific technique has its own limitation to bring some progress on students and in the improvement of instruction. Hence, varieties of CA techniques practice attribute more for the learning and instructional process.

Table 5 Student involvement on CA

No	Item	Alternatives	Instructors respondents	
			No	%
1.	Frequency of information about objectives	Always	20	23.5
		Some times	50	58.8
		Rarely	10	11.7
		Not at all	5	5.8
2.	Involvement of students in assessment activities	Always	20	23.5
		Some times	45	52.9
		Rarely	10	11.7
		Not at all	10	11.7

n=85

As indicated in Table 5, concerning informing the objectives to students 24% of the instructors responded to always, 59% to some times, 12% to rarely and 6% to not at all.

Regarding the involvement of students in the assessment process, 24% of the instructors responded to always, 53% replied to some times, 13% to rarely and 12% to not at all.

From Table 5, we can understand that students are sometimes informed the objectives of the lesson. If this is done, students could not understand the aim and process of the lesson. Then it becomes a challenge for the implementation of CA. If teachers always inform students about the objectives of the lesson, students can follow and become active in the classroom activities. During interviews some of them informed the researcher that they did not inform the

objectives for their students. They added that the reason for not doing was that they did not give more attention, and lack of awareness of the necessity of informing the objectives. In relation to students involvement in assessment, as we have seen most students did not have the chance to participate in the assessment process. To make CA more effective, students should assess their own work and their peer work in the classroom activities. From the findings based on the data obtained through classroom observation, it was shown that the observed teachers were judged very low in encouraging students to assess their classmates.

Provision of feedback to students

Feedback has been considered as a basic thing for learning (Rowntree, 1987). Moreover, it is a crucial feature of the teaching learning process for it contributes directly to the progress in learning through the process of formative assessment and indirectly through the development of pupils' academic self esteem

In relation to this, using the questions given to the students and instructors, their responses are summarized in Table 6 below.

Table 6 Response of instructors and students on the provision of feedback on CA

No	Item	Alternatives	Respondents			
			Student		Instructors	
			No	%	No	%
1.	Feedback used timely	Yes	30	15.7	50	58.8
		No	160	84.2	35	41.1
2	The frequency of feedback	In each CA Tasks	2	6.6	25	29.4
		When test papers returned to the trainee	20	66.6	50	58.8
		At the end of the semester	8	26.6	10	11.7
		If any other	-	-	-	-
3.	Reasons for not using feedback	Lack of time to cover the topic	-	-	20	57.1
		No need for feedback	-	-	5	14.2
		Students are not interested when you told their weakness	-	-	10	26.5
		If any	-	-	-	-

n=85

As indicated in table 6, concerning the provision of feedback timely, 16% of the students responded to yes and 59% of the teachers responded to yes and 84% of the students responded to No and 41% of the teachers responded to NO.

Regarding the frequency of feedback, 7% of the student responded to each CA tasks. 29% of the instructors responded to each tasks, 67% of the students responded to alternative when test papers returned and 59% of the instructors responded to when test papers returned, 27% responded to alternative at the end of the semester and 12% of the instructors responded to the end of semester. Regarding the reasons for choosing alternative 'No', 57% of the instructors responded to the lack of time, 14% to for not need of feedback and 29% to alternative students' lack of interest in feedback.

From Table 6, we can understand that students' response and instructors' response are opposite concerning feedback used timely. But from the students' interview and classroom observation, it was checked that students did not get feedback for every CA activity. On the contrary, students and instructors had similar responses to the frequency of feedback because both of them responded that feedback is mostly used after test and exam are taken place. This practice makes certain that CA timely feedback for student was very poor.

On the other hand, instructors tried to reason out for not using feedback i.e. they lack time and students are not highly interested, especially when you tell them their weakness they feel ashamed. But the teaching learning process always needs feedback to bring a change in the instructional process.

Concerning this, Air Asian (1997) cited by Birhanu (2004) also shows opposite idea to this finding because they stated that students learn more in classes where assessment is an integral part of instruction and which provides feedback about learning progress. In addition to this, the aim of CA is to provide feedback. In the light of this, Brooks (2002) also put the same idea that was shown in the literature i.e. giving and receiving feedback are central skills of CA and purpose of feedback is to help students improve their learning for

them, it should also be specific, accurate, timely, clear, focused upon the attainable and expressed in a way which will encourage students to think and change their mind. But based on the above data, most of the time, feedback was not given timely. This does not bring a lot of changes for improvement if learning and teaching. As a result, it affected the educational objectives of the college.

Table 7 Instructor CA Document

No	Items	Alternatives	Instructors respondents	
			No	%
1	Type of document used for CA	Only assessment format given from college	10	11.7
		Assessment guide line developed at college level	10	11.7
		Assessment guide line developed at stream department level	55	64.7
		I have got full professional development through past experience, so I don't want	10	11.7
2	Guideline supplied by college	Yes	30	35.2
		No	55	64.7

n=85

As indicated in table 7, concerning the type of CA document used 12% of the instructors responded that only assessment form is given, 12% of them also responded that they received from the college developed by the institution, 65% replied that they were using from their own department and 12% replied from their own.

Regarding the existence of CA guiding principle, 35% of the instructors replied to 'yes' and 65% of them responded to 'No'.

From Table 7 we can understand that assessment guideline was not common for teachers in the college. There is an evidence that shows that every department they do have their own CA guide for themselves. This has a

negative influence on CA implementation because the aim of the college is to produce an all rounded personality from cooperative work of teachers but if teachers use different assessment guide line, they cannot come to the common aim of teaching and learning. Above all, the guide that is developed at the department level is only a guide that shows the marks for different tasks.

Regarding guide lines, most teachers responded that they did not get any specific guide line that shows how to implement CA from the college. This shows that if there is no such a kind of guideline, the work of the institution is not well organized, systematic and coherent. This, in turn, affects the progress of the learners and negatively influences the development of instruction because teachers were not guided and supported by the necessary ways and means of teaching activities.

Table 8 support of college administrators on CA

No	Item	Alternatives	Instructors respondents	
			No	%
1	Support of college administrators of CA	Very high	5	5.8
		High	5	5.8
		Average	25	29.4
		Low	50	58.8
		Very low	-	-

As shown in Table 8, regarding the extent of the support of college administration for teachers, 6% of the instructors responded by saying very high, 6% replied to high, 29% replied to average and 59% responded to below average.

From table 8, we can understand that the CA support from administrators was below average. However, it is true that the college administration is there for facilitating things for teachers and students in the day-to-day effort of the

teaching and learning process. On the contrary, from the interview data gathered from the three college academic deans, they all responded that they did everything possible in supplying materials, facilitating classrooms and programs when every instructor is in need of those things.

Moreover, the three deans added that it is up to the teachers to follow the MOE guidelines supplied in the form of jobs, duties and tasks. In addition to this, the results of the instructors' interview ascertain that administrators were not in a position to guide and support instructors. Therefore, there is a difference in teachers and deans regarding the issue. But this fact is also checked by another interview question from the managers. They replied that they were not able to fulfill every support because the office work could not allow them to do so.

Generally, if there is no common guidelines of what, how and when, etc., for their assessment, the overall objectives of the institution will not be achieved as assessment and instruction must be done cooperatively and collectively rather than individually. If they were using their own guides at department level, there would be some confusion on students and the collective nature of teaching learning could not be practiced effectively.

Table 9 Instructors' practice of CA Tools (as reported by students)

No	Item	Student Alternatives and respondents							
		<i>Use always</i>		<i>Some times</i>		<i>When necessary</i>		<i>Do not use</i>	
		<i>No</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>%</i>
1	Project work	29	15.2	78	41.05	66	34.7	17	8.9
2	Home work	26	13.6	92	48.4	64	33.7	8	4.2
3	Observation	40	21.05	83	43.6	52	27.3	15	7.9
4	Oral questions	89	46.8	56	29.4	45	23.6	-	-
5	Group Discussion	112	58.9	48	25.2	30	15.7	-	-
6	Presentation	89	46.8	74	38.9	27	14.2	-	-
7	Reflection	78	41.05	64	33.7	48	25.2	-	-
8	Peer assessment	25	13.1	35	18.4	30	15.7	100	52.6
9	Self assessment	30	15.7	35	18.4	35	18.4	90	47.3
10	Class work	89	46.8	74	38.9	27	14.2	-	-
11	Quizzes	10	5.2	80	42.1	90	47.3	10	5.2
12	Test (paper and pencil)	2	1.05	46	24.2	140	73.6	2	1.05
13	Interview	-	-	-	-	10	5.2	180	94.7
14	Exams	-	-	30	15.7	160	84.2	-	-
15	Others	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

n= 190 students

As shown in table 9, regarding the instructors' practice of CA tools seen by students, 59% of them responded that group discussion is always used, 47% replied that oral question is always used, 59% said class work is always used.

On the other hand, concerning peer assessment, 53% of the students responded that they did not use self assessment, and 43% of the students responded that instructors did not use.

Concerning interview, 95% of the students responded that instructors did not use this tool in the classroom.

Regarding presentation, 47% of the students responded they were always used by instructors and concerning reflection also 41% of the students responded to always.

From the above explanation we can understand that most instructors focused on those tools that bring knowledge and give little attention for affective and psychomotor domain. So this affects the implementation of CA. Specially, if instructors use only few CA devices, they cannot improve the most important elements of personality of the students. If this is so then first it will be a challenge to see progress on learners because what they have received by few tools will be limited for their development, and secondly, it will be difficult to improve the instructional process because the process will be changed when there is full active activities on the part of the learner potentials and instructors skill of teaching.

Regarding the use of limited CA tools, Nitko (2005) stated opposite ideas to this finding because he stated that different tools help instructors to find out what students already know and can do, which part of the lessons are difficult for the students already know and can do, which part of the lessons are difficult to students, which students are lagging behind, and strength and weakness of students.

Generally, the use of few CA tools for students progress and for instructional improvement will contribute less, so the more we use effectively, the more the potentials of the learners will be developed and the instructional process will also be improved.

Table 10 Instructors' practice of CA tools

No	Item	Instructors Alternatives and respondents							
		<i>Use always</i>		<i>Some times</i>		<i>When necessary</i>		<i>Do not use</i>	
		<i>No</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>%</i>
1	Project work	19	22.3	31	36.4	35	41.1	-	-
2	Home work	26	30.5	20	23.5	28	32.9	21	24.7
3	Observation	25	29.4	26	30.5	34	40	-	-
4	Oral questions	49	57.6	26	30.5	10	11.7	-	-
5	Group Discussion	49	57.6	26	30.5	10	11.7	-	-
6	Presentation	36	42.3	34	40	15	17.6	-	-
7	Reflection	15	15.7	40	47.05	30	35.2	-	-
8	Peer assessment	7	7.3	10	11.7	15	17.6	53	62.3
9	Self assessment	6	7.05	10	11.7	17	20	52	61.1
10	Class work	20	23.5	35	41.1	25	29.4	5	5.8
11	Quizzes	20	23.5	25	29.4	30	35.2	10	11.7
12	Test (paper and pencil)	10	11.7	20	23.5	40	47.05	15	17.6
13	Interview	3	3.5	5	5.8	10	11.7	57	67.05
14	Exams	10	11.7	10	11.7	55	64.7	-	-
15	Others	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

n=85 Instructors

As shown in Table 10, instructors responded that for oral questions 58% used always, for group discussion 58% responded to always, for presentation 42% responded to always. On the other hand, for peer assessment 7% responded to always, for self assessment 7% responded to always, for interview 4% of the instructors responded to always. Thus, from Table 10 we can understand that instructors focused on those CA tools that help for simple knowledge or for recalling things. On the contrary, as we have seen they did not give more attention for attitude and skill development. This will have its own effect on students' personality development because their potentials will develop when instructors use different CA tools that initiate them to act in some way.

In addition to this, if students' progresses are limited, the instructional improvement could not be visible. So the use of different CA tools effectively should be practiced now and then to see the learners' progress and instructional improvement.

Table 11 Classroom observation results

No	Items	Alternatives and respondents			
		Yes		No	
		No	%	No	%
1	Used Appropriate CA planning	20	33.3	40	66.6
2	Used variety of CA	20	33.3	40	66.6
3	CA related to lesson objectives	20	33.3	40	66.6
4	Communicated instructional Activities to students	30	50	30	50
5	Give information about Assessment	22	36	38	63.3
6	Used Appropriate time process for Assessment activities	25	41.6	35	58.3
7	Giving feedback following levels of Assessment	10	16.6	50	83.3
8	Encouraged students to assess their own works	10	16.6	50	83.3
9	Encouraged students to assess their classmates	20	33.3	40	66.6
10	Record the assessment results of the lesson	40	66.6	20	33.3
11	Assessing the students	20	33.3	40	66.6
	• Before Instruction				
	• During instruction	15	25	45	75
	• After instruction	25	14.6	35	58.3
12	Informal assessment tools Employed	15	25	45	75
13	Formal assessment tools Employed	35	58.5	25	41.6
14	Classroom environment suitable for CA	25	41.6	35	58.3
	• Arrangement of desks				
	• Student teacher ratio	25	41.6	35	58.3
	• Module ratio	20	33.3	40	66.6
	• Prevalence of Active learning methods	20	33.3	40	66.6
	• Motivation to teaching	25	41.6	35	58.3
	• Motivation for learning	25	41.6	35	58.3
15	Use of Instructional Media	15	25	45	75

Total observed n=60

Classroom observation helps us to see the various interpersonal interactions between the instructors and instructional aid if any and students' interactions among themselves in the classroom. Thus, classroom observation is a valuable tool in providing information that cannot be obtained in other ways.

Classroom observation was conducted with the help of check lists which included 15 categories of assessment instruction and use of instructional media

As shown in Table 11, the observed 20 teachers did not have CA plans. 33% of the observed instructors had a course outline on which students would be inclusion of CA in a lesson plan. Paris, et al., (1991) stated that assessment and instruction are inseparable and are supports each other. Moreover, he added that instructors are expected to incorporate assessment into the larger learning framework for their plan. This is contrary or different from this study.

Concerning CA tools, during observation, only 33% of the instructors used different devices for their lesson, and 66% of them did not use varieties of CA tools. During observation, most teachers used CA tools that are common for many teachers i.e. the tools were repeatedly used by many instructors like oral questions, group discussion, and class work. The use of these few and limited types affect the learners and instruction because it could bring a limited change of behavior and as a result the overall changes will not come.

Regarding whether CA is related to the objectives of the lesson, only five observed instructors were able to inform about the objectives of their lesson to their students. This is very important for learners if they are informed before they tried to see other elements of the lesson because assessment is a means to check the desired objectives.

Concerning the assessment to be informative for learners, 36% of them tried to inform about assessment during the lesson, and the rest 63% did not inform about the assessment process. This also has a negative impact on students' learning and instructional activities.

Regarding the provision of feedback, in most cases it was very poor because only 17% use feedback for students' activities, and the rest 83% did not use. The discussion for this is done on Table 6.

Concerning peer assessment and self assessment, the practice is also very weak because 17% have used self assessment and 33% have used peer assessment. The remaining 83% and 66% did not use self and peer assessment. The discussion is done in Table 11.

Regarding the record of assessment results, 58% recorded results and 33% did not do, and this shows they were highly concentrated on recording rather than giving feedback.

Concerning time for assessing, most observed instructors were trying to focus on assessment after the instruction. On the other hand, most instructors were not in a position to use the three levels in every day teaching-learning activities, and informal assessment was not exercised by the majority of the instructors. This shows that CA was not practiced fully by most instructors. On the contrary, the formal assessment aimed at collecting marks or grading was highly used by most instructors, which is 59%.

Regarding the classroom conditions, most classes were not good in line with the number of students, number of modules, chairs and hospitability for learning and teaching.

Finally, most teachers during observation did not use instructional media for their lesson. As we have seen from the table, only 25% of the observed instructors tried to use, the rest 75% did not. Media is very crucial for instruction because it facilitates both teaching and learning, and the literature also supplemented this idea, but our finding is different or opposite.

From the above information, we can conclude that the implementation of CA was very poor in the following points: most instructors did not prepare CA plan, and did not use variety of CA tools, their feedback was very limited and informal assessment did not get attention, instructors followed the traditional

assessment techniques even the assessment was not continuous, and instructional medias were not used by instructors for many lessons during the classroom observation.

Above all, if the above points are not practiced, CA could not be effective and progress in learning will be invisible and no improvement in instruction. The classroom observation result is generally very weak for the desired out comes. This simply shows that the instructors are working for the purpose of fulfilling their own need not for educational need, and mostly they assess for collecting marks, for grading just to pass/fail. The relationship between students and instructors to meet the objectives of CA was very poor. During interview, most instructors replied that it was very hard to make CA effective because there were a lot of constraints that make them unable to do this program like teaching load, large class and negative attitude from students and instructors so it needs more effort to make it effective in educational activities.

Table 12. Students' response on CA (used by their instructors)

<i>No</i>	<i>Items</i>	<i>Student respondents</i>		
		<i>Alternatives</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>%</i>
1.	Variety of CA tools used by instructors	Yes	80	42.1
		No	110	57.8
2	CA tools used repeatedly	Oral questions	110	52.6
		Group Discussion	70	36.8
		Project work	10	5.2
		Presentation	5	2.6
		Any other like Interview, portfolio	5	2.6

n=190

As indicated in table 11, regarding the use of different CA tools, 42% replied yes and 58% responded by saying no.

Concerning the types of assessment mostly used, 42% of the instructors responded to oral questions, 37% to group Discussion, 5% responded to project work and 3% respond to individual work, where as 3% responded to other devices

From the above data, we can understand that the most commonly used assessment techniques were oral questions, group discussion, project work, and presentation. This finding indicates that instruments for assessing the cognitive domain were highly used by the college teachers and the instruments for assessing the affective and skill domains were less used or neglected in the college under study.

The use of CA as a major technique of assessment in active learning at a college level is a policy considered since 1994 in Ethiopia. Therefore, students are supposed to present many things to teach themselves. In such activities, the teacher is a coach and a helper to guide the process and to give regular and timely assessment in order to evaluate trainees' progress in learning. Hence, depending on the nature of the subject, the assessment techniques to be used vary from one subject to the other even in the same subject between different contents (units).

In support of this, Gary, et al (2004) on their part argue that there are a number of types of assessment which can be appropriate for different assessment purposes. These assessment techniques include class assignments, interviews, peer reviews, portfolios, speaking test, survey of student services, focus groups, case study, term test and final exam in a course.

On the other hand, the table shows that most teachers used few CA techniques which are related to recall activities. Even most teachers when they used those techniques they were not properly using the techniques. For example, during the classroom observation most teachers used group discussion activities after completing the task they assessed using one individual when he/she presented

his/her peers tasks. In addition to this, oral questions were also limited to a few students.

Generally, only few students' works were assessed by teachers because they did and practice those few students in the classroom and outside the class. This was checked by students' interview and classroom observation. What they told about most activities were done by few active students in and out of the classroom and seen during observation.

Table 13. Students response on CA information process (provided by instructors)

No	Items	Students respondents		
		Alternatives	No	%
1	Instructor's provision of information about assessment. ?	Yes	70	36.8
		No	120	63.1
2.	possibility to assess peers	Yes	30	15.7
		No	160	84.2

n=190

As shown in table 12, regarding whether teachers informed students about assessment process, 37% responded to 'yes' and 63% responded to 'No' respectively

Concerning the possibilities assessment, 18% replied to yes and 84% to 'No'. From the above data, we can understand that most instructors did not provide any information about CA process or they did not inform them for students. This shows that instructors were not on the right track about CA process because the issue need that learners should get information about assessment process in advance if not the learners may not be active to participate in the instructional process and this by in turn affects students' progress and instructional improvement.

Concerning peer assessment, we can conclude that if learners do not get chance to assess their friends they will not learn and they will not share ideas. As a result, the nature of instruction will be affected since the teaching learning processes need collective activity. If students do not learn from their friends, the one side information (from the teacher) will not be complete enough for the overall development of the learners.

However, various scholars have asserted that self and peer assessment help students to develop higher level skills. For instance, Halm (2001) stated similar idea as that peer and self assessment are crucial for students in the classroom to share their experience and develop their higher thinking.

Generally, peer and self assessment are very useful for students to learn and to share many things in their learning process and this gradually helps for their own progress and for instructional activities.

4.3 Results of interview and open ended questions

4.3.1 Continuous assessment as perceived and practiced by teachers

It is assumed that one's belief greatly affects one's action. Put it differently, there is a close tie between perceptions and actual practices. Thus, it is worthwhile to know the perceptions of teachers towards CA and the general practices in college context.

More specifically, the result in this sub section revealed that two different views were reflected regarding teachers' perception of CA. These include:

- Conception of CA as simply giving series of written tests
- Viewing CA more than tests i.e. CA is seen as beyond testing.

Surprisingly, most of the respondents felt that CA is simply administering series of paper and pencil tests to their students. In connection with this, most instructors on open ended questions and interviews responded that they gave series of paper and pencil tests continuously, even this activity was provided

almost at the end of the semester and some teachers were seen checking exercise books out of 10% and most probably they tried to give one project. All these make 100% for the semester.

However, this conception does not give a clear meaning of the term CA in its true aim and objectives. As to Puhl (1997), tests, quizzes and exams are only few devices of CA, other aspects other than these should be considered to speak of the right meaning of CA. This idea is directly opposite to the practice of the college instructors. On the other hand, some of the respondents had the idea that CA is beyond testing, for them CA is wide in concept including tests (oral and written), project work, group work, individual work assignment aside from predominant use of written tests through the actual practice is something different. Supporting this idea, some of the instructors responded during the interview by stating that CA demands keeping record of pupils' performance using varied strategies as often as possible. We, however, did not do that, thus, we do not dare to say that we are fully practicing CA as it requires of us and as we conceptualize it.

All in all, the research participants suggested that the practice of CA in their college context is unmanageable for a number of reasons. Because of these, they added that administering paper and pencil tests as a means of students performance was given focus. This practice, however, is highly criticized by educators. Black and William (1998) commented that teachers' heavy use of tests as a means of student performance encourage rote and superficial learning. Similarly, Papworth (2005) stated that teachers' reliance on testing denies many learners the opportunity to demonstrate their true potentials.

All these imply that instructors did not have a full understanding of the concept of CA and this partly contributes to the poor practice in college.

In addition to the above practice of CA results by instructors, from the findings of interview most of them explained that after collecting and recording the CA results they give grade or marks for students. Even though grading is one of

the purposes of CA, the other purpose, such as using CA results for diagnosing the areas in which students have difficulty, instructors to monitor the impact of their lesson on students understanding did not get attention and instructors use of it to modify their pedagogical strategies seemed forgotten. In line with this, in USAID (2003) it is stated that CA is much more than examination of students' achievement and the purpose of CA is beyond recording the grade, and it includes feedback, guidance and modifying the instructional activities.

In addition to these, the purpose of CA is not only recording but also helping particularly those students who performed below average using different means such as retraining or re examining, giving tutorial, etc.

On the other hand, in many activities, such as in group discussion, presentation, oral questioning, assignment and others, instructors always collect mark for those activities. But assessment for feedback or diagnosis, checking progress or how much they have changed did not get attention. From this we can understand that the results of CA were not practiced properly or it was practiced for grading or product rather than for the process. As a result, it could not improve both the learning and teaching activities and also put negative impact on the quality of our education.

4.3.2 Results from the Documents

There was no CA guideline except the assessment recording format which was provided from the college. This format is directly similar with the recommendation of TESO, which indicated the application of CA as a matter of necessity and argued that instructors must assess the performance of student teachers on weekly or monthly basis and correct their weakness by CA.

Recently, what they did in our region is that the assessment percent i.e. from 75% formative evaluation to 60% and the 25% of summative evaluation to 40%. Here, what they did not give attention was the formative continuous assessment i.e. CA for feedback and usage of informal assessment. This shows

that they are still far from the major purpose of CA, specifically CA for learning progress and instructional improvement did not get attention

In addition, from the document we can understand that they did not use CA tools properly, and in some course plans, there is no assessment in their plan (see appendix 7, 8, 9). Even those who tried to use some CA devices for their courses they repeatedly used common tools of CA like oral questions, observation, and group discussion.

In general, the documents like course plan and lesson plan were not prepared properly, and this also affects the learning activities and instructional process because without having proper plan of CA devices it will not be easy to bring changes in teaching learning process. Besides, it affects the quality of education; on the other hand, the change of behavior in the teaching learning process will be checked only by means of assessment. When it is not used properly, the learning and teaching process will not show any improvement.

4.3.3 Summary of students' responses to open ended questionnaire and interview

Regarding the strengths of the instructors, the students reported that their instructors encouraged them to participate in the classroom activities especially in group discussion and presentation. This also indicated their teachers' implementation of CA devices other than quiz and tests had given them chances to improve social relations and some skills.

On the other hand, students raised a number of weaknesses about their instructors' practice of CA in both the open ended questionnaires and interview. They reported that their instructors did not give them comprehensive feedback that could improve their skills. They also indicated that the teachers were not well planned and they did not keep their records properly. As to this, most students stated that instructors did not collect, make, and give feedback to their project work activities even they did not record their marks properly. As

they did not give them complete feedback to their work, they did not get the advantages they should have got from the process of CA.

Moreover, the students pointed out that some teachers made unfair discrimination among student, and they also stressed that their teachers' infrequent use of CA devices did not benefit them much.

4.3.4 Results of Interview with College Deans

In response to the mechanisms which the college deans used for checking whether instructors implement assessment continuously, the deans responded that they did not have any ways of checking and they had not attempted to do so. One of the interviewed deans said, "Let alone checking the implementation of CA, I have found it very difficult to keep instructors in their allotted classrooms according the program they are given."

Regarding material support, they all responded that they give stationary materials like pen, pencil and paper, etc., on semester basis for instructors. As far as teaching materials for the students and instructors are concerned, the college always attempts to supply as far as the college budget allows. However, one of the deans said, "The purchasing of material has to pass through a long process and the budget also comes after half of the New Year and takes time, and this in turn has an impact on the teaching and learning process".

When asked what challenges were faced by instructors in the implementation of CA, what they commonly stressed was not different from what instructors on the open questions and interviews responded as challenges. However, they further said that most of the instructors are young and they need more experience as well as practical training on CA.

Concerning guidelines and formats, all expressed that they do not have a guideline and assessment format prepared by their respective college but all departments are issued the guidelines prepared by MOE and the assessment formats are usually done by departments.

In conclusion, the deans were asked what they would recommend for successful implementation of CA. The researcher found nothing new but there is a great need to give practical and extensive continuous training to change the attitude, ability and skill of instructors on CA implementation.

4.3.5 Major problems faced in implementing CA

As the evidences from open ended questionnaires and interview, almost all of the respondents indicated the following major points:

1. Large class size was the first issue which the respondents underlined. They indicated that attempting to practice CA with large number of students is a big challenge. Emphasizing this issue, most teachers said that it is difficult to handle 40-45 students in the classrooms and to come up with an effective implementation of CA. Had there been less number of students, it would have been manageable for CA to be practiced, otherwise, it is a challenge.

In conformity with this, Hayes (1977) underlined the problem of large class size for teachers in terms of classroom management and assessment of students work. Of course, the optimal class size which is targeted by MOE is 30-35 for most institutions. Despite this, the actual situation is far from what was targeted.

Contrary to the findings of this study, Wright, cited in Hayes (1997) and Castro (2001) asserted that large class size might not be a problem for students' achievements if instructors use a variety of learning strategies.

2. Misconceptions of the overall concepts of CA by teachers. As mentioned earlier, instructors wrongly conceptualize CA equating it with continuous testing and this, in turn, has an impact on the practices. Here, the respondents attributed their misconception of CA to lack of sufficient knowledge in the area. On the basis of most instructors' view, it can be noted that instructors should be equipped with basic skills and knowledge pertaining to CA before they start to implement.

3. Time constraints: As the findings of this study indicated, instructors reported that shortage of time is a challenge for them to effectively handle CA. More specifically, the respondents justified that working under high work load with subjects and additional tasks contributed to the poor assessment practice in their college context. As we have seen in Table 1, most instructors have high teaching load. So this problem could be observed on the part of teachers.
4. Lack of administrative support: the participants stressed the support of administrators, specifically the college deans. They have in part attributed their failure to the properly practice of CA. In addition to this, college deans were also blamed by some of the descants for not giving sound support to implement CA. They were considerate the college deans and related officials in the college did not frequently inform students about the rights they have to enjoy and the responsibility they should discharge in the college environment. Consequently, students consider submitting or not submitting CA task as their own in alienable rights.
5. The availability of few or no instructional media: the result from the interview further revealed that lack of adequate instructional materials is a challenge for instructors to implement CA in their college. To integrate CA with instruction the respondent added that instructional materials are indispensable and the scarcity affect the practice of CA. In relation to this, Teshome (2001) and Mkhonta (2003) mentioned lack of adequate materials in college as encountered difficulty in implementing CA. It is evident from the above description that instructional materials are important aspects for CA as a component of the instruction to be handed effectively.

In addition to the above problems, respondents during the interview responded the following major problems:

- Lack of uniform and consistent recording habits among instructors
- Lack of awareness and readiness to implement CA

- Commitments of instructors
- Lack of receptiveness by students who feel that they are constantly being tested.
- A change from one system to another suddenly in relation to assessment
- Over assessment students and teachers will suffer and resent CA if it appears that the assessment does not have a meaningful function
- Subjectivity of instructors' assessment
E.g. for project, group discussion, reflection and others
- The belief of instructors on summative evaluation
- In appropriate skill for preparing paper and pencil test.
- In sufficient module and references, lack of supervision, etc., hindered CA implementation.

From the instructors' responses during interview, it can be noted that CA requires cooperation and coordination of the concerned bodies at different levels for its effectiveness. But this was not seen in practice and failing to do so, however, becomes a challenge for CA implementation.

Finally, students suggest some solutions, for instance, teachers to be well planned and organized in their use of CA and they should have time to give feedback and they have to give clear information about how they collect and give marks or grades.

As can be seen from table 6, about 2/3(66.6%) of the students reported that they did not make self assessment and did not receive any feedback. On the other hand, most students suggested that their instructors' assessment focused on the products rather than on the process. The students' response stressed that their instructors used CA not to see the students' progress, but to label or grade them. Moreover, the majority of the respondents reported that CA did not help them in understanding what they should improve next.

As it can be seen from the above discussion, students did not as such get a chance to assess their friends and their own work. However, various scholars

have asserted that self and peer assessment help students to develop higher level skills, for instance, John D. van (1977) as indicated in the literature his idea is opposite to our findings. Even though the purpose of incorporating CA in the instructional system is mainly to improve teaching and learning, instructors have used CA to judge the achievement of the students. Furthermore, the students report shows that CA did not help them to improve their activities, and the instructors focus more on the outcome than the process of the instructional system.

4.3.6 Solutions of respondents on CA problems

Respondents were asked to suggest possible solutions for the stated problems, and they forwarded the following:

- Reduction of teachers' work load by hiring additional teachers
- Minimizing the number of students in a class or allocation of teacher trainee ratio
- Writing projects to get fund from NGOS for instructional materials
- Improve teachers' and students' attitude towards CA through awareness creation programs, such as conducting workshops and seminars, arranging regular experience, and sharing program.
- Motivating instructors by giving moral incentives, such as further training in their field, and materials incentives, such as salary increment, career structure, etc.
- The administrators should give enough budget for instructional materials
- Practical and intensive training for teachers continuously.
- Discussion with students and improving the relationship between students and instructors
- Provision of guidance and counseling
- Improving the students' attitude and participation in CA activities
- Using different active learning methods
- Giving feedback for learners

- Using varieties of CA devices
- Awareness training for students on CA
- Giving ample time for CA activities
- Preparing a program for sharing experience.

Based on the respondents' solution towards CA problems, the researcher arranged the responses into five categories. The first one is training on CA implementation. Therefore, as they put it directly, both teachers and students have to get practice based training on continuous assessment. Moreover, the teachers' load and the large class size also affect CA implementation. Teachers need motivation from the college and have to share experiences among other teachers and other colleges. Lastly, enough budgets should be allocated for instructional materials and supervision programs need to be practiced in order to make CA implementation more effective.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Summary

The main purpose of this study was to assess the practice and challenges of CA at Debre Birhan Teachers College. For the achievement of this objective, the following basic questions were raised:

1. What are the perceptions of instructors about CA?
2. What types of CA techniques do instructors use during lessons?
3. What do instructors do with the results of CA?
4. What are the major factors that influence instructors' practices related to CA?

In order to answer the above questions, descriptive research method was employed. The data relevant to the study were collected through questionnaire, interview, classroom observation checklist and document analysis.

In analyzing the collected data, quantitative method (percentage) was employed to analyze the data collected by questionnaire, and qualitative method was employed for interview, open ended questions, observation and document analysis.

Based on the analyzed data, the following major findings were obtained:

Findings of the study

- Most participants had incomplete understanding about CA in that they concentrated on summative components of assessment
- Most instructors did not include a variety of CA tools in their plan and did not use in the classroom activities. As a result, the status of CA implementation was far from the standard, and they concentrated on few tools like oral questions, group work, presentation, etc.

- It was also found out that most of the students considered CA as a series of paper and pencil activities to measure students' performance.
- Most instructors did not take assessment courses during their college days (pre-service). Besides, they received training for a short period of time during the in-service program for CA practice.
- Most instructors considered CA as a tiresome and more time consuming.
- The study indicated that more than half of the instructors, almost 66% were recording all CA results for promotion purposes, which excludes the major aim of CA.
- The study also revealed that there is shortage of materials for instructors and students to implement CA.
- The study indicated that inadequate guidance and supervision mechanisms were employed to make the necessary follow up on whether the instructors implement CA techniques in the instructional process or not.
- 66% of the instructors reflected that there was integration between yearly course plan and CA methods, but it was disproved through classroom observation.
- 75% of the instructors were rated as low or they were poor concerning the provision of timely feedback for students.
- Most of the instructors and students responded that there was not time or any opportunity for peer and self assessment for learners or little attention was given for these tools.
- Almost the majority of instructors replied that there was no CA guide to measure practical skills except the format with different assessment points in it. In addition to this, absence of ground rules that are standard to measure group and individual tasks in practical and skill task lead to bias and unfair grading system which in turn develop negative attitude towards CA on students
- There was a great difference among departments in using CA from planning up to implementation.

- In general, the study indicated that lack of instructional materials for instructors and students, lack of commitment, instructors' inadequate knowledge of the ways and techniques of CA implementation, lack of interest on instructors and students to CA, poor administrative support, time constraints, large class size, absence of CA guidance and teaching more than one course were the major factors that hindered the proper implementation of CA in the college.

4.2. Conclusions

The following conclusions were made based on the major findings of the study:

1. The collected data show that the majority of the instructors did not take basic assessment courses in pre service program. The training that was provided during the in service program was very short and not sufficient for successful CA activities. More specifically, it is very difficult to say that instructors have adequate and complete understanding about CA points. They perceived that the main focus of CA was on products of the instructional system. They also understand that the emphasis of feedback in CA was on what students could not do rather than on what they could do.
2. Even though CA is taken as an integral part of the instructional activities in primary and college education as shown in MOE (2002) policy document, some instructors and students still have negative attitude towards CA application. This has negative impacts on CA implementation in the college under study.
3. Instructors perceived that students should not be involved in deciding the assessment criteria of various assessment activities. They also believed that students were not able to make an assessment of their own progress in CA. The instructors misunderstand that CA encouraged students to be dependent on the work of others. Moreover, they gave little values for aligning assessment with instructional objectives and students were not having a chance to practice peer and self assessment.

In addition to these, students pointed out that their instructors did not involve students to know how their assessments were going to be scored or graded. This in turn made students conclude that their instructors were unfair about marking and did not use CA for guiding their learning.

4. They also did not make a comprehensive plan of assessment in the instructional system. Furthermore, there are few instructors who did not incorporate assessment in the course plan
5. During the interview, students revealed that their instructors were not well planned and organized in the process of implementing CA. They also pointed out that the instructors were not supportive and initiative as such.
6. From the findings, it can be concluded that the majority of the instructors used similar assessment techniques like oral question, group discussion, tests and exam repeatedly more than assessment tools that help to bring practical skills.
7. Students also indicated that CA did not help them to be autonomous and confident learners as their teachers did not monitor students' learning in the assessment process. For example, in group assignments. This made students be dependent on the work of others.
8. The study indicated that the provision of timely feedback and continuously was very poor on the observed instructors.
9. There were no common CA guidelines and ground rules for instructional activities to assess learners' theoretical concepts and practical skills.
10. As indicated in the study, most instructors focused on summative CA than formative. In other words, they focused on checking not on learning progress and instructional improvement. In addition to this, there was a trend of using paper and pencil tests for students more than the valid form of assessment like practical skills and problem solving skills. This implies that instructors were not giving attention for students' progress and for the improvement of the instruction. Besides, instructors were not using a

variety of CA devices to assess the affective and psychomotor aspects of the students.

11. As the study indicated, there was a lack of proper follow up and supervision from the administration, and curriculum experts which affect CA implementation negatively in the college.

12. Many challenges were found to hinder instructors from using CA approach to assess students' learning progress, specifically large class size, teaching load and teaching more than one course in a semester, lack of module and reference, unfavorable conditions of the college like lack of chairs, rooms, laboratory, the beliefs of instructors for traditional assessment, etc.

13. The differences in preparing CA plan and in using or applying CA techniques as well as the differences within departments in preparing guide line and differences in CA format. These disparities affect the general and common objectives of the college.

14. The module preparation lacks activities that promote CA objectives and there is a limited library and laboratory work activities for different skills development.

15. Instructors were using CA (Summative) results not to see the students' improvement in their learning rather for grading system.

16. A lot of challenges were found to prohibit teachers from using the CA approach to assess students' learning progress. Specifically, problems related with the college context, such as large class size, lack of textbooks and supplementary reading materials, and lack of instructional materials affect the effort of teachers' CA implementation

In addition, teachers' misconceptions on formative components of CA, and their traditional beliefs on some aspects of CA were the constraints identified in the study.

17. Based on the collected and analyzed data, CA in the college was not implemented scientifically and effectively. In other words, instructors, most of the time, use traditional assessment techniques, such as quiz, test, and oral questions regularly. As a result of this, the instructional activities did not bring the intended teaching learning outcome.

4.3. Recommendations

Based on the above findings, the following recommendations were forwarded:

1. Practical and intensive training for both instructors and students should be provided to change their knowledge, attitude and skills of CA. Specifically the training should focus on:
 - Selected and challenged topics from each courses that were not easy for CA implementation.
 - How and when to provide feedback for students
 - How and when to practice self and peer assessment
 - How and when to use informal assessment
 - How to improve instructional activities using CA and how to integrate CA with instruction.

This could be done by model instructors and invited guests from REB (Regional Education Bureau).

2. CA task force should be formed to follow and supervise CA activities, to facilitate and prepare a forum in every semester concerning the strength and weakness of CA activities, and to collect some mechanisms for CA improvement. In addition to this, to facilitate experience sharing among departments and with other colleges. This could be done by college deans.
3. Modules should be revised in line with the objectives of CA implementation and there should be more library works (activities) in every course for the development of different skills like writing, studying,

preparing, organizing, selecting and thinking. This could be done by instructors and college deans.

4. ✓ Motivating instructors by providing further education and material incentives. In addition to this, by hiring adequate number of instructors and by giving more academic freedom i.e. avoiding unnecessary interference on their professional activities. This could be done by college deans and regional bureau.
5. Students should be involved more than the present practice in the process of CA to enhance the effective implementation of CA. Involving students in CA process helps students to develop responsibility, confidence, to develop their knowledge, attitude and skills and to know that the assessment is not the duty of the instructors only. In addition to this, involving students in CA implementation helps instructors to alleviate some of the problems they faced in their performance. For instance, instructors can reduce their workload by allowing students to participate in self and peer assessment. This could be done by students and instructors.
6. In order to overcome the problems of large class size, the college and REB should recruit students based on the capacity of the college for effective implementation of CA.
7. Finally, the researcher would like to recommend others to conduct further research on CA to improve the quality of education.

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Appendix 1

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

School of graduate studies

College of Education

Department of curriculum and Teachers professional Development studies

Questionnaire for Teachers

The purpose of this questionnaire is to obtain information about the practice and challenges of CA implementation in Debre Birhan Teachers Education College. The researcher asked you to cooperate in giving your response towards the stated questions

Thank you very much

Part I

General Information

1. Name of the college _____
2. Sex _____
3. Age _____
 - i. 20-25 years
 - ii. 26-30 years
 - iii. 31-35 years
 - iv. 36-40 years
 - v. 41 years and above
4. Your qualification
 - A. BA/B,Ed/BSC Area of study _____
 - B. MA i/n area of study _____
 - C. Please indicate if other than the above _____

5. Teaching Experience in the college
 - a) 0-3 years
 - b) 4-7 years
 - c) 8-11 years
 - d) 12-16 years
 - e) 17 and above years
6. Teaching load per week
 - a) Below 10
 - b) 16-21
 - b) 10-15
 - d) 22 and above
7. Subject you taught _____
8. Other responsibilities _____

Part II The main data information

1. Have you taken a course in Assessment particularly on CA in pre-service programme?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
2. Did you take any training on the implementation of CA in your in service programme?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
3. If your answer for question No – 2 is ‘Yes’ for how many days did you take?
 - a) One day
 - b) Three days
 - c) a week
 - d) a month
 - e) If any other specify _____
4. Do you use CA plan for your lesson?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No
5. If your response for question No 4 is ‘Yes’ why? _____

6. If your response for question No 4 is ‘No’ why? _____

15. Do you provide feedback to your students?

- a) Yes b) No

16. If your response for question No 14 is "yes" what was it frequency?

- a) In each CA tasks b) when tests papers returned to the trainees
c) At the end of the semester /course
d) If any other _____

17. If your response for question No 16 is 'No' what was your reasons?

- a) lack of time to cover the topic b) No need for feedback
c) students are not interested when you told their weakness
d) If any other _____

18. What is the document you use to manage and implement CA in your college?

- a) Only assessment format given from the college
b) Assessment guide line developed at college level
c) Assessment guide line developed at stream department level
d) No, because, I have got full professional development through past training

19. In assessing your student's performance is there any guiding principles supplied by the college?

- a) Yes b) No

20. To what Extent the school administration help teachers in implementing CA?
a) very high b) high c) Average d) Below average

- e) Never

21. What are the major problems have you faced in using CA to assess your students learning?

22. What are the impact of those problems on teaching and learning process?

23. What should be done for those problems to make CA more effective?

24. What is the role of CA for Instructional Improvement?

Part III. Indicate by “√” tick the assessment method you use for teaching in the space provided

No	Assessment methods	Use always	Some times	when necessary	Don't use
1.	Class work				
2.	Home work				
3.	Observation				
4.	Oral question				
5.	Group Discussion				
6.	Presentation				
7.	Reflection				
8.	Peer assessment				
9.	Self assessment				
10.	Project work				
11.	Quizzes				
12.	Test (paper & pencil)				
13.	Interviews				
14.	Exam				
15.	Others				

Appendix 2

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

School of graduate studies

College of Education

Department of curriculum and teachers professional Development studies

Questionnaire for students

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect information about the practice and challenges of CA in Debre Birhan teacher Education college your genuine response contribute much to the success of the research to be under taken. Hence, you are kindly requested to fill the questionnaire.

Thank you very much

Part I. General Information

1. Name of the college _____
2. Sex _____
3. Age A) 16-19 B) 20-23 C) 24-27 D) more than 28 _____
4. Grade level _____
5. Area of training
 - A. Major _____
 - B. Minor _____
 - C. Cluster _____

Part II- Main data Information

1. Are you willing to do Assessment activities?
 - a) Yes
 - b) No

2. If you are not willing to do Assessment activities what is your reasons?
 - a) CA is time consuming
 - b) No effective way to measure different assessment methods in it
 - c) All group members did not provide equal contribution in different group works
 - d) Tests and final exams are better than CA to measure individual progress in learning
3. If your response to question No 1 is 'Yes' what is your reason?
 - a) Because it motivates slow learners to learn from active learners
 - b) It gives time to correct mistakes and to improve academic performance
 - c) It provides practice to apply knowledge and skills
 - d) It provides opportunity to change learning and Teaching methods
 - e) All
4. Do your teachers use different types of CA like (Individual work, presentation, peer assessment, projected etc) in their lesson?
 - a) Yes b) No
5. Do teachers inform you about the assessment process?
 - a) Yes b) No
6. Which Assessment do most teachers use regularly?
 - a) Oral questions c) Group work
 - b) Project d) individual work
 - e) If any other _____
7. Are there opportunities given for student teachers to evaluate their peer assessment tasks?
 - a) Yes b) No
8. If your answer for question No 7 is 'Yes' Please indicate the assessment tasks and the condition under which it was done? _____
9. Is there timely feedback for trainees in relation to their CA results?
 - a) Yes b) No

10. If your response for question No 9 is 'Yes' what was its frequency?

a) In each CA tasks b) when test papers returned to the trainees

c) at the end of the semester

d) If any other _____

Part III.

11. In your teaching learning experience in the college what factors do you think can hinder the implementation of CA?

12. What are the impacts of those factors on teaching and learning ?

13. What are the possible meanses to Minimize the factors that affect the implementation of CA?

Part IV. Indicate by “√” tick the assessment method used by your teachers for teaching in the space provided.

No	Assessment Methods	use always	Sometimes	When necessary	Do not use
1	Class work				
2	Home work				
3	Observation				
4	Oral questions				
5	Group Discussion				
6	Presentation				
7	Reflection				
8	Peer assessment				
9	Self assessment				
10	Project work				
11	Quizzes				
12	Tests (paper & pencil)				
13.	Interviews				
14.	Exam				
15.	Others				

Part V – Give your response for the following questions

1. What major strength and weakness Have you observed in your teacher use of CA?

A. Strengths _____

B. Weakness _____

2. If you have anything to say about the CA practices of your teachers in college write briefly _____

Appendix 3

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

School of graduate studies

College of Education

Department of curriculum and teachers professional Development studies

Interview (Teacher)

1. How do you see CA in implementing your pupils performance? How do you perceive it?
2. Some people say CA enables learners simply to pass from grade to grade as they are not properly assessed. How do you react this?
3. How do students react when they are being assessed continuously?
4. Which CA devices do you frequently use to assess your students? What problems did you face that inhabit your use of other CA devices?
5. Do you feel your college Environment is conducive to implement CA? Are there enough instructional materials? Are there well trained teachers? If not, would you Explain?
6. Do you have something to say about the relationship between CA and Instructional Improvement
7. Would you suggest possible solutions that help to minimize the problems behind CA?
8. Is there any point that you would like to raise in relation to the assessment of students in the college?

Appendix 4

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

School of graduate studies

College of Education

Department of curriculum and teachers professional Development studies

Students Interview

1. How do you understand CA? and why?
2. What assessment tools does your teachers use in order to assess your learning
3. How do instructors tell student teachers about their CA results?
4. What mechanisms do instructors use to assess student teachers?
5. What major strength and weakness have you observed in your teachers use of CA?
6. In what ways do you think the different assignment given by your teachers help you?
7. What teachers do when they assess you at different times? Are they using CA for grading or for the improvement of the instruction process?
8. What are the challenge in using CA in the classroom?
9. What should be done for the improvement of CA Implementation in your college?
10. For what purpose instructors use your CA results?

Appendix 5

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

School of graduate studies

College of Education

Department of curriculum and teachers professional Development studies

Semi structured Interview with college deans

1. Sex _____ Qualification _____
2. Age _____ Years of service _____

1. As you already know it is clearly stated in the MOE (1994) that CA should be practiced in colleges
 - a) In relation to this, what mechanisms you have to check it if teachers are implementation the CA or not?
 - b) What support do you provide them to encourage implementation?
2. What do you think are the attitude of most of the college teachers towards CA implementing?
3. What are the major barriers for full implementation of CA in the college?
4. Does the college provide guide lines, formats and the necessary material to facilitate CA implementation?
5. What do you recommend should be done for the successful Implementation of CA in your college?
6. What do you say about the contribution of CA for instructional improvement?

Appendix 6

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

School of graduate studies

College of Education

Department of curriculum and Teachers professional Development studies

Class room observation

Class room observation check list for the implementation of CA

Part I- General information

1. Name of the college _____
2. Observers name _____
3. Date _____
4. Subject observed _____
5. Year/Grade _____

Part II – Teachers Information

- 2.1. Sex _____
- 2.2. Age _____
- 2.3. Qualification _____
- 2.4. Area of study Major _____ Minor _____
- 2.5. Subject he/she teachers _____
- 2.6. Years of Experience _____

Part III - Class room observation check list put '√' mark on the space provided for your response y(yes) NS (Not sure) N(No)

No	Item observation	Y	NS	N
1.	Teachers used appropriate CA planning			
2	Teacher used variety of CA			
3	CA are related to the lesson objectives			
4	Teacher communicated instructional activities to students			
5	Teacher gave information about the assessment			
6	Teacher used appropriate time process for assessment activities			
7	Giving feedback following levels of assessment			
8	Encouraged student to assess their own work			
9	Encouraged students to assess their class mates.			
10	Record the assessment results of the lesson			
11	Assessing the students at deferent levels 11.1. assessing before instruction 11.2. assessing during instruction 11.3. assessing after instruction			
12.	Informal assessment tools Employed			
13	Formal assessment tools Employed			
14	Classroom Environment is suitable for CA			
	14.1. Appropriate arrangement of desks 14.2. Reasonable student teacher ration 14.3. Reasonable module ratio 14.4. Prevalence of active learning methods 14.5. motivation for teaching 14.6. motivation for learning			
15	Use of instructional Media.			

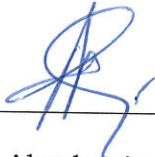
Declaration

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that this thesis is my original work done under the guidance of Ato Abreha Asfaw

All source of material used for the thesis shave been duly acknowledged

Selamael Zewde

This thesis has been submitted for the examination with my approval as a university advisor



Ato Abreha Asfaw