

**THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTIVE LEARNING AND
CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT IN PENTECOSTAL
THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE**

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**JUNE 2014
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**

**The Implementation of Active Learning and Continuous
Assessment in Pentecostal Theological College**

**A Thesis Submitted To the Department Of Curriculum and
Teachers' Professional Development Studies, Addis Ababa
University College of Education and Behavioral Studies**

**In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements of the Degree of
Master of Arts in Curriculum and Instruction**

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**June 2014
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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore the application of active learning and continuous assessment in Pentecostal Theological College. To this end, a descriptive survey design method was employed. Both primary and secondary sources of data were used. The primary source included deans, instructors and students of Pentecostal Theological College where as the secondary sources were different literature and policy document, and grade reports of Pentecostal Theological College. A total of 64 respondents participated in this case study. Data collection tools were questionnaires, semi-structured interview guide, focus group discussion, and observation checklist.

Based on the data analysis the following major findings were obtained. That study revealed that the majority (83%) instructors of the college had good understanding of active learning and continuous assessment; it was found out that despite of good understanding of the concept of AL and CA, half (50%) of the instructors did not frequently utilize it; instructors provide 2 – 3 tests and one project work for a given course in as semester; instructors equated the provision of a series of test with continuous assessment; large class size, instructors' tight schedule; lack of commitment; and broad course content and teaching load were the major challenges that encountered the instructors in the implementation of active learning and continue assessment. Based on these findings it was safely concluded that active learning and continuous assessment in Pentecostal Theological College were moderately implemented.

Finally, it was recommended that refresher training as part of professional development of the academic staff of the college should be provided for the instructors in the area of active learning and continuous assessment; the top management of the Pentecostal Theological College should regularly evaluate and monitor the implementation of active learning and continuous assessment; The College should consider having small class size so that all instructor would be able to implement AL and CA; and Maximizing student's involvement It is known quality education and success in education comes from the active involvement of student. Therefore, students must be encouraged to engage cognitively, emotionally, and physically with the content.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the contributions of the following people, without their help and guidance this research project would not have reached its completion.

First, I am grateful to my Advisor, Dr. Dessu Weritu whose encouragement, constructive comments and guidance from the beginning to the end have contributed much to every strength of this thesis.

Then, I would like to express my thanks to my wife, children, mother, brothers, and sister in laws, and extended families that have been encouraging and supporting me in all possible ways.

Furthermore, The unreserved and consistent encouragement of my teacher and friend Solomon Telahun has contributed much towards the completion of my study. I am grateful thank you very much.

Finally, I am grateful to all instructors in curriculum department who were the resource persons in the entire educational endeavor that I went through in the last three years.

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

PTC =	Pentecostal Theological College
AC =	Active Learning
CA =	Continuous Assessment
FGD =	Focus Group Discussion
TA =	Traditional Assessment
SPCM =	Swedish Philadelphia Mission
PAOC =	Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada Missions
SBA =	School-based assessment
TA =	Traditional assessment methods
AA =	Authentic assessment

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of The Study

How do students learn best? Each of us favors certain stimuli to help us learn. Some of us depend more on our ears. Some of us rely more on our eyes, and so on. We are all different. We possess different learning styles. In order to help everyone learn, teachers must vary their approaches. Different research reports claim that students learn best when they engage with course material and actively participate in their learning. Yet, the traditional teaching model has positioned students as passive receptors into which teachers deposit concepts and information (Freire, 1970). The model has emphasized the delivery of course material and rewarded students adept at reflecting the course content in assessments. The spoils have tended to go to students with good short-term memories and reading skills. People of any age learn relatively little through passive learning methods. The term "active learning" has been more understood intuitively than defined in commonly accepted terms. As a result many educators say that all learning is active. Research suggests that students must do more than just listen: They must read, write, discuss or be engaged in solving problems (Chickering and Gamson 1987). Further, students must be engaged in such higher-order thinking tasks as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, to be actively involved. Thus strategies promoting activities that involve students in doing things and thinking about what they are doing may be called active learning.

On the other hand, the traditional paper and pencil based tests do not longer cover the variety of activities and tasks in the classroom situation. As a result, the field of

evaluation has witnessed a major shift from strictly summative testing tools and procedures to a more humanistic approach using informal assessment techniques that stress formative evaluation (O'Neil,1992 as cited in flambeau 2007). Unlike terminal assessment which is carried out at the end of a course or a major unit for summative purpose, course or a major unit for summative purpose, continuous assessment is done on an ongoing basis while students are actually working their way through a course . That is, it is the process of gathering appropriate information regularly for making educational decisions (Nitko, 2004 cited in flambeau 2007). Clearly to make such decisions, we need to use high quality information; information that is highly valid and highly reliable for the decisions at hand (Nitko, 2007). In Ethiopia, educational researches in general and curriculum in particular have been made in public and few private schools by graduates of AAU and other universities. In most of the studies, teachers' classroom performances found inefficient. Many teachers were using the traditional methods of talk and chalk and rote memorization of facts, ideas and principles instead of using techniques and strategies suggested in the syllabus. Haile Tefera (2012) in his MA thesis entitled "The practice and challenges of implementing continuous assessment in selected first cycle primary schools of Sinana woreda, Oromiya Region" identified poor infrastructures, very weak document handling and poor record keeping of learner's continuous assessment achievements, weak follow up and so on as the reasons. On the other hand, Lemma Dadi (2006) MA thesis entitled " Application of learner centered methods in government second cycle primary schools of east Shoa zone" and Bekalu Atnafu (2007) in his research entitled "An evaluation of the Implementation of continuous assessment (CA): the case of St. Mary's university college" have identified the reasons high student-teacher ratio, teachers lack of pedagogical capability towards educational innovations, insufficient central support for teachers, lack of awareness by the schools communities

about the new approach of education system, poor school management system, overload of school time table school financial problem and many others. This research is conducted to evaluate how Pentecostal Theological College (PTC) is implementing active learning (AL) and continuous assessment (CA) as the means to increase student's achievement.

Pentecostal Theological College (PTC) is established in 1993 G.C. under the ownership of the Ethiopian Hiwot Berhan church in partnership with the Swedish Philadelphia Mission (SPCM) and the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada Missions (PAOC). PTC is post high school training college. It has a resident school in Addis Ababa that accommodates full time students with an additional evening program. In addition to that, the extension training programs have been opened in different areas with the vision of training key leaders that could not reside in Addis due to work and family responsibilities. PTC's vision is to train highly qualified leaders in all areas of life who can impact both the church and the society in Ethiopia and beyond. In order to achieve its vision the college currently offers different programs of study such as Diploma in Theology and Christian Education and Bachelor of Theology in Leadership, in counseling, in community development and in theology concentrations. This college is an academic institution supposed to use modern teaching methods and principles to accomplish better. The teaching learning process must be scientific that is why this research assessed how the college is implementing active learning and continuous assessment.

1.2. Statement of The Problem

To the knowledge of the researcher, there is no research work done before this study in relation to implementation active learning and continuous assessment activities in

evangelical theological colleges in general and in Pentecostal Theological College in particular. So there is no evidence that indicate the existence or non existence of problems related to AL and CA. Thus, in order to fill the existing research gap this research has aimed in assessing how the Pentecostal Theological College is implementing active learning and continuous assessment.

1.3. Basic Research Question

The major question driving this research is: Does Pentecostal Theological College in Addis Ababa implements active learning and continuous assessment?

This study set out to answer the following Specific research questions:

1. What does the implementation of active learning look like in Pentecostal Theological College?
2. What does the implementation of continuous assessment look like in Pentecostal Theological College?
3. What are the promoting and hindering factors of implementing active learning in Pentecostal Theological Colleges?
4. What are the promoting and hindering factors of implementing continuous assessment in Pentecostal Theological College?
5. What should be done to improve the implementation of active learning and continuous assessment in Pentecostal Theological College so that student's achievements will be higher?

1.4.Objectives of the Study

1.4.1. General objective of the Study

The main purpose of this research project is to assess the implementation of active learning and continuous assessment in Pentecostal Theological College in Addis Ababa and to propose ideas on how to apply it well.

1.4.2. Specific Objectives of the Study

1. To evaluate how Pentecostal Theological College in Addis Ababa is applying active learning and continuous assessment
2. To identify the promoting and hindering factors of implementing active learning and continuous assessment
3. To suggest the need for well-organized application of active learning and continuous assessment in schools.

1.5.Significance of the Study

The researcher believed that this study is significant by indicating how the college applying active learning and continuous assessment and proposing solution to apply in a better way. Hence, this study would have the following specific significances:

- The study may create awareness about the current status of the implementation of active learning and continuous assessment in PTC.
- It may inform the college leadership about the implementation of ALMs and CA.
- It may provide information concerning the implementation of ALMs and CA for stakeholders of the PTC.
- It may help instructors of the college to reflect on their own teaching activities.

1.6. Delimitation of The Study

This scope of this study was delimited to a single organization, namely Pentecostal Theological College. Besides, the study focused on the implementation of active learning and continuous assessment in the above mentioned college. Therefore the study did not explore the other aspects of the activities of the college.

1.7. Organization of The Research Report

The study is organized into five chapters. Chapter one discusses about an introductory part of the research, while chapter two revises the related literature. Chapter three deals with research design and methodology whereas chapter four deals with findings/discussions. Finally chapter five concludes all the study and possible recommendations forwarded by a researcher.

1.8. Definition of Terms

- **Active Learning:** Active learning refers to techniques where students do more than simply listen to a lecture. The students are not passive recipients of knowledge; they are active learners. They not only receive information from teachers and books they also collect information, record it systematically, discuss it, compare it, analyze it, draw conclusions from it and communicate about it.
- Some of the major characteristics associated with active learning strategies include:
 1. Students are involved in more than passive listening
 2. Students are engaged in activities (e.g., reading, discussing, writing)
 3. There is less emphasis placed on information transmission and greater emphasis placed on developing student skills

4. There is greater emphasis placed on the exploration of attitudes and values
 5. Student motivation is increased (especially for adult learners)
 6. Students can receive immediate feedback from their instructor
 7. Students are involved in higher order thinking (analysis, synthesis, evaluation)
- **Continues Assessment:** Assessment refers to the process of collecting, interpreting, and synthesizing information to aid in decision-making. For many people, classroom assessment means using paper, and pencil tests to grade pupils. However, it is more than testing. It includes information gathering on pupils, instruction, and classroom climate by teachers. It includes interpreting and synthesizing these information to help teachers understand their pupils, plan and monitor instruction, and establish a conducive classroom atmosphere (Airasian, 1991).
 - It is an ongoing process of gathering information about student learning progress and it uses a variety of assessment techniques.
 - **Theology:** Theology becomes a systematic analysis of the nature, purpose and activities of God. However, theology embraces the totality of Christian doctrine, not merely the doctrine of God
 - **Theological College:** Theological College is post-secondary education where students get systematic, theoretical and practical education based on religious values. The purpose of theological education is both preparing men and women for religious work and other responsibilities such as social work, counseling, teaching and etc.
 - **Education:** is the process by which people acquire knowledge, skills, habits, values and attitudes to enable and cope with life experiences and challenges.

- **Theological Education** is all of the systematic biblical and doctrinal teaching, both theoretical and practical, that has as its purpose the preparation of the believer, especially the leader, for the role of a special ministry in the Church.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. Introduction

The review of related literature is meant to synthesize existing discussions on the pertinent topics for this study while advancing towards the analysis and discussion of the subsequent sections.

Active learning has received considerable attention over the past several years. Often presented or perceived as a radical change from traditional instruction, the topic frequently polarizes instructors. Active learning has attracted strong advocates among instructors looking for alternatives to traditional teaching methods, while skeptical instructors regard active learning as another in a long line of educational fads. For many instructors there remain questions about what active learning is and how it differs from traditional education, since this is already “active” through homework assignments and laboratories.

2.1.1. The Concept of Active Learning

It is not possible to provide universally accepted definitions for all of the vocabulary of active learning since different authors in the field have interpreted some terms differently. However, it is possible to provide some generally accepted definitions and to highlight distinctions in how common terms are used.

What is active learning? Active learning refers to techniques where students do more than simply listen to a lecture. Students are **DOING** something including discovering, processing, and applying information.

Active learning "derives from two basic assumptions:

- (1) That learning is by nature an active endeavor and
- (2) That different people learn in different ways" (Meyers and Jones, 1993).

Active learning is generally defined as any instructional method that engages students in the learning process. In short, active learning requires students to do meaningful learning activities and think about what they are doing (Bonwell and Eison 1991). While this definition could include traditional activities such as homework, in practice active learning refers to activities that are introduced into the classroom. The core elements of active learning are student activity and engagement in the learning process. Active learning is often contrasted to the traditional lecture where students passively receive information from the instructor.

2.2. The Importance of Active Learning

Different research reports claim that students learn best when they engage with course material and actively participate in their learning. Yet, the traditional teaching model has positioned students as passive receptors into which teachers deposit concepts and information. The model has emphasized the delivery of course material and rewarded students adept at reflecting the course content in assessments. The spoils have tended to go to students with good short-term memories and reading skills. The term "active learning" has been more understood intuitively than defined in commonly accepted terms. As a result, many educators say that all learning is active. Research suggests that students must do more than just listen: They must read, write, discuss or be engaged in solving problems (Chickering and Gamson 1987). Further, students must be engaged in such higher-order thinking tasks as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, to be actively involved.

Thus strategies promoting activities that involve students in doing things and thinking about what they are doing may be called active learning.

2.2.1 Active Learning Continuums

One method of selecting appropriate activities is to categorize them using a series of continuums. The Active Learning Continuum framework was developed by Tracy Sutherland and Charles Bonwell and they detail the use of four continuums to measure variables associated with the process of selecting an appropriate activity (Bonwell & Sutherland, 1996). The continuums are:

- a. Task Complexity Continuum
- b. Course Objectives Continuum
- c. Classroom Interaction Continuum
- d. Continuum of Student Experiences

a. Task Complexity Continuum

The Task Complexity Continuum examines a particular active learning strategy to determine its complexity. The continuum ranges from simple to complex. Activities that take a short amount of time require minimal instructions and are considered by students as being easy would lie on the Simple side of the continuum. Activities that contain many steps, take a great deal of time, and require detailed instructions lie on the Complex side of the continuum.

b. Course Objective Continuum

The Course Objective Continuum places knowledge and skill/attitudes at opposite ends of the continuum. Bonwell and Sutherland consider the question of whether the outcome sought is for the student to acquire knowledge, a skill, attitude, or some combination, to be the most important question that must be answered before the selection of an active

learning strategy (1996). The answer to this question determines where on the continuum the course goals or objectives lay.

c. Classroom Interaction Continuum

This reflects the overall level of interaction that an instructor prefers or is comfortable with. The two extremes are Limited Interaction on the left side of the continuum and Extensive Interaction on the right side of the continuum. An instructor's teaching style, willingness to change, and personality characteristics all impact his/her comfort level with using interactive strategies. This continuum helps instructors match an active learning strategy with the appropriate level of interaction. Instructors that are uncomfortable with extensive interaction might select activities where the interaction is limited. Conversely, instructors who are very comfortable can select activities that incorporate extensive interaction. In addition, instructors who possess extroverted or outgoing personalities may prefer more interactively than an instructor with a more introverted personality.

d. Student Experience Continuum

The last continuum measures the learners' experience with the teaching style, content, or skills needed to successfully participate in the active learning strategy. For example, students who are very familiar with the course content of third year French would be able to participate in activities that require an extensive French vocabulary while first year students would not be able to participate in the same activity.

According to Bonwell and Sutherland, the four active learning continuums are intended to generate questions that stimulate instructors to select the types of active learning strategies that match their teaching styles, course goals, and student characteristics. Once these questions are answered the instructor then selects an activity that best fits the responses to these questions.

2.3. Active Learning Methodologies

2.3.1. The scope of Active learning methods

The aim of active learning is empowerment of the learner in such a way that he or she is confident and able to function in many contexts. In the middle school years - (classes 6-8) such learning can be blended into the curriculum of any school easily. It includes:

- learning to affirm oneself and one's learning style
- Learning to be healthy and safe ---Biology curriculum enrichment
- learning to think skilfully, recognize and deal with one's feelings and be resourceful in a variety of situations - Learning for Life Units
- learning to live in social systems - living and working together with other people, good citizenship skills, being able to participate in the debate of our times--- (Civics curriculum enrichment)
- learning to live in and interact with a physical environment – finding environmentally viable responses in terms of lifestyle and choices (Environmental Education and Biology curriculum enrichment) Above all the Active Learning Skills will help students negotiate the world of knowledge with skill and enthusiasm, confident of their own abilities and opening widening newer avenues to learning.

2.3.2. The elements of active learning methodologies in the classroom

Active learning methodologies require that the student must find opportunities to meaningfully talk and listen, write, read, and reflect on the content, ideas, issues, and concerns of an academic subject (Meyers & Jones,1993).

Bonwell and Eison (1991) state that some merits of active learning are:

- Students are involved in more than listening,
- Less emphasis is placed on transmitting information and

- Greater emphasis on developing students' skills,
- Students are involved in higher-order thinking (analysis, synthesis, evaluation),
- Students are engaged in activities (e.g., reading discussing, writing), and
- Greater emphasis is placed on students' exploration of their own attitudes and values.

Active learning shifts the focus from the teacher to the student and from delivery of subject content by teacher to active engagement with the material by the student. Through appropriate inputs from the teacher, students learn and practice how to apprehend knowledge and use them meaningfully.

2.3.3. Unique advantages of the active learning methodologies

Active engagement on the child's part; (Learn to play the cello by playing it- John Holt)

- Provides a template for learning, and learning to learn
- The child is not subjected to endless passivity
- Applicable in large classrooms and schools with few teachers
- Requires no special aids or special equipment
- Children can be resources for each other through paired and group activity
- The teacher can devote some time to children who need special help
- Allow the child to check her/his work against the teacher's and thus save the teacher endless corrections while ensuring accuracy in child's learning
- Works at child friendly and realistic assessment formats
- The beauty of the process is its simplicity
- Allows room for all children's voices to be heard through discussions and Presentations

2.4. Teaching and Learning in an active Classroom

In a learning space, students have a right to learn in an atmosphere free from fear. Often teaching and learning are linked logically in the educator's mind. The two processes are

not linearly linked. Good teaching does not automatically lead to good learning. This is evidenced by the fact of disinterested, disengaged children in classrooms.

- No direct transferences are possible. Learning is a process and builds on prior knowledge and learning experiences. The sensible curriculum must start with the student—student engagement with the content is the crucial first step.
- The teacher is a facilitator in the process who will widen, deepen and contextualize the learning.
- The classroom is a microcosm of the world. The learner must find opportunities to participate in constructing knowledge. For this process to be effective it must have relevance not only in the classroom but also in the larger world.
- A child centered classroom shifts the emphasis from teaching to learning.

Table 1: Comparison between active and passive learning

Passive Learning	Active Learning
Students are assumed to have minds like empty vessels or like sponges to be filled with knowledge	The educator strives to create "a learning environment in which the student can learn to restructure the new information and their prior knowledge into new knowledge about the content and to practice using it"
"traditional class": lecturing instructor verbalizing information to passive note taking students	student is assumed to be an intelligent participant in knowledge creation who
students remember only approx. 10%of the content of each class session	can look up definitions and vocabulary before

	and after class independently
mostly verbal lectures instructor is "verbal" textbook instructor reads definitions to the class	can develop skills in constructing and using knowledge with the educator's guidance, alone and also with others in small and large groups
the educator explains concepts, principles and methods	the educator may explain concepts, principles and methods
visual aids, demonstrations, etc. are additions to the main lecture mode	visual aids, demonstrations, etc., integrated into class presentations
student is an "empty" vessel to be filled with knowledge a passive "tape recorder"	students have the opportunity to remember up to 50% of the content of each class session
on exams, students regurgitate what the instructor tells them	"cares deeply about own education"
•Educator • a general expectation that the educator will have total mastery of the discipline and that any such expert can teach.	"learn to monitor and discuss their own learning"
	collaborate with "other students to discover and construct a framework of knowledge that can be applied to new situations
	• Educator

	is current in knowledge of content and attempts to master the content
	develops, learns and employs pedagogical content knowledge (has thought about HOW to teach each topic)
	learns how to teach reflects more on teaching sets explicit norms for learning and classroom environment facilitates and guides (does not provide all answers) is a facilitator (not verbal textbook or answer giver) "mentoring means turning students into lifelong learners"

2.5. Concepts and mis-concepts of learner-centered methods

The role of the teacher in using active learning methods is often misunderstood. It would be inaccurate to say that trainees/students are simply handed a problem and allowed to use their own devices to solve it. This is not so, nor would it be desirable. Students cannot discover things unless they have the skills and knowledge necessary to do so.

In other words, one common mistake made by teachers and students using active learning methods is to assume that no direction is required. Instead, every step of the students' performance may require supportive instruction from the instructor. In addition, even after students are ready for the discovery experience they may need help formulating questions, or

require guidance in some form or another. This makes the teacher's job very challenging. In fact, it is more difficult to use discovery than teacher-centered instruction as a method, perhaps because we ourselves are more likely to have been exposed to a teacher-centered method as students (Inomack, 1989 ass cited in Kaplan 1990).

2.6. Some of the ways active learning method is used in the classroom

We will now focus on investigating in more in more detail some of the ways learner-centered method is used in the classroom

2.6.1. Inquiry Learning

The inquiry method places a great emphasis on the process of learning; students learn by conducting an investigation. The experience itself is important rather than the answers that are found. Inquiry experiences can take place in the classroom, the library, or outside on a field trip. But just going on a trip is not sufficient for a true inquiry-based learning experience to take place. Taking learners to the zoo and letting them run around is not inquiry. There must be a problem to solve, questions to ask, and data to collect. This does not mean that a trip does not have value for its own sake. However, for an experience to be considered inquiry or discovery, there must be a focus on some problem (Kaplan, 1990), one of the great strengths of inquiry is its emphasis on experience.

The model of inquiry training was developed by Richard Suchman to stimulate and direct the natural exploratory instincts of children so that they can investigate new areas more forcefully to generate knowledge. The basic idea behind inquiry learning method is that all people, and certainly children, have a natural instinct for curiosity when we come across any problem or puzzling idea or event. Our mind questions, demands more details. This natural curiosity is exploited to motivate learners and encourage love of learning.”

2.6.2. Discovery

“Let him [her] not be taught science; let him [her] discover it.” (Rousseau, 1873) Discovery learning is another kind of active-learning method. Jerome Bruner (1960 and 1970), the best known advocate of discovery learning, (as cited in Kaplan, 1991) argued that education should emphasize the structure of a particular discipline and important cases rather than facts. If instead of just memorizing certain facts, we discover them for ourselves, we will be interested, the information will stay with us always, and most importantly, we will know how to learn more information. We will learn how to learn.

Concepts of Discovery Learning

- Different scholars define discovery learning as follows, Discovery learning is the opposite of “reception” or “being told” to “being passive.” (Schullma and Tamir, 1973).
- Discovery learning is commonly equated with inductive learning when the subject proceeds from the specific to the general. (Wittrock, 1996)
- “Discovery is something that the student does beyond merely sitting in his [her] seat and paying attention”
- “Discovery is a process of search and selection.” “What is sought for and selected varies with the kind of learning that is taking place.” (Gagne, 1966).

As far as teaching is concerned “the discovery method of teaching is a frequent description of modes of instruction that are contrasted with other forms of instruction called “traditional”, “expository”, ‘guided’, ‘didactic’, “teacher’ centered’, ‘deductive’, or ‘dogmatic’, ‘teacher’ centered’, ‘deductive’, or ‘dogmatic’”. (Shulman and Tamir, 1973).

2.6.3. The Problem-Solving Approach

The problem-Solving approach is not a single strategy; rather it is a general strategy in which many different techniques are found. Many educators and theorists feel that the problem-solving approach is one of the most effective of all instructional strategies. It can be used for both group as well as individual learning. Clark and Starr (1986) have said that “whether a problem is solved by an individual or a group learners, the general techniques of problem-solving strategy are about the same . . . It seems to be a natural way to learn.”

2.6.4. The Project Method

A project is a natural, lifelike learning activity involving the investigation and solving of problems by individuals or a group of trainees. Ideally, project work should consist of a task in which a trainee sets out to achieve some definite goal of real personal value.”

2.6.5. Role Playing Technique

Role playing is all unrehearsed dramatization. Players try to act out what they would do and how they would feel in a certain situation (Clark and Starr, 1986). Role playing is also called “socio-drama” and “psychological drama.” It is particularly useful for motivating and developing learners’ feelings and attitudes.”

2.6.6. Group Work

One of the characteristic techniques used in active learning classroom is group work. It is also one of the most difficult to organize effectively. The organization of effective group work requires careful planning on the part of the teacher. Just putting students in groups does not in and of itself ensure that effective, active learning is going on. If the students

are not engaged in meaningful learning, using higher thinking skills, then the benefits of working in groups is lost.

2.7. Active learning in the college classrooms

Charles C. Bonwell in his unpublished article discussed the major characteristics of active learning in college classrooms. Some of the major characteristics associated with active learning strategies include:

1. Students are involved in more than passive listening
2. Students are engaged in activities (e.g., reading, discussing, and writing)
3. There is less emphasis placed on information transmission and greater emphasis placed on developing student skills
4. There is greater emphasis placed on the exploration of attitudes and values
5. Student motivation is increased (especially for adult learners)
6. Students can receive immediate feedback from their instructor
7. Students are involved in higher order thinking (analysis, synthesis, and evaluation)

In summary, in the context of the college classroom, active learning involves students in doing things and thinking about the things they are doing.

2.8. Obstacles or barriers prevent faculty from using active learning strategies

In addition, Charles C. Bonwell mentioned in his article six common obstacles for using active learning strategies include:

- A. You cannot cover as much course content in the time available;
- B. Devising active learning strategies takes too much pre-class preparation;
- C. Large class sizes prevent implementation of active learning strategies;
- D. Most instructors think of themselves as being good lecturers;

- E. There is a lack of materials or equipment needed to support active learning approaches;
- F. Students resist non-lecture approaches.

2.8.1. How can these barriers be overcome?

There are two primary sets of obstacles that prevent faculty from using active learning strategies in the classroom: (1) the six potential obstacles noted above, and (2) the fact that using active learning strategies involves risk.

With respect to the six commonly reported obstacles, Bonwell suggested that intervention should be noted:

First, Admittedly, the use of active learning strategies reduces the amount of available lecture time that can be devoted to content coverage. Faculty who regularly use active learning strategies typically find other ways to ensure that students learn assigned course content (e.g., using reading and writing assignments, through their classroom examinations, etc.)

Second, The amount of pre-class preparation time needed to implement active learning strategies will be greater than that needed to "recycle old lectures;" it will not necessarily take any more time than that needed to create thorough and thoughtful new lectures.

Third, Large class size may restrict the use of certain active learning strategies (e.g., it is difficult to involve all students in discussion in groups larger than 40) but certainly not all. For example, large classes can be divided into small groups for discussion activities, writing assignments can be read and critiqued by students instead of the

instructor, etc.. See Weimer (1987) for several excellent articles on how this can be done.

Fourth, Most instructors see themselves as good lecturers and therefore see no reason to change. Though lecturing is potentially a useful means of transmitting information, teaching does not equal learning; this can be seen clearly in the painful disparity between what we think we have effectively taught, and what students indicate they have learned on the examination papers that we grade.

Fifth, the lack of materials or equipment needed to support active learning can be a barrier to the use of some active learning strategies but certainly not all. For example, asking students to summarize in writing the material they have read or to form pairs to evaluate statements or assertions does not require any equipment.

Sixth, Students resist non-lecturing approaches because active learning alternatives provide a sharp contrast to the very familiar passive listening role to which they have become accustomed. With explicit instruction in how to actively participate and learn in less-traditional modes, students soon come to favor the new approaches.

B. A second set of potentially more difficult obstacles to overcome involves increasing one's willingness to face two types of risks.

There are risks that students will not:

- participate actively
- learn sufficient course content
- use higher order thinking skills
- enjoy the experience

2. There are risks that you as a faculty member will not:

- feel in control of the class
- feel self-confident
- possess the needed skills
- be viewed by others as teaching in an established fashion

Summary of Active Learning

In the new approach to education, often called active learning, the students are not passive recipients of knowledge; they are active learners. They not only receive information from teachers and books they also collect information, record it systematically, discuss it, compare it, analyze it, draw conclusions from it and communicate about it. When they are given information and facts from their teacher or their textbooks, they are asked to do something active and creative with the information-analyze it, think about it, discuss it, make charts or pictures which show the information in different ways, make reports on it. In the learner-centered classroom, the teacher is not less important. In fact, the teacher is much more important. She or he has even greater responsibilities and the role of the teacher is somewhat different. It is her or his role to organize the activities through which students will gather or use information, guide the students through these activities, help them find additional sources of information, make sure they are really thinking and analyzing, and check their process to make sure that all students are learning.

Active Learning is a process wherein students are actively engaged in building understanding of facts, ideas, and skills through the completion of instructor directed tasks and activities. It is any type of activity that gets students involved in the learning process.

2.9. Continuous Assessment

Assessment refers to the process of collecting, interpreting, and synthesizing information to aid in decision-making. For many people, classroom assessment means using paper, and pencil tests to grade pupils. However, it is more than testing. It includes information gathering on pupils, instruction, and classroom climate by teachers. It includes interpreting and synthesizing these information to help teachers understand their pupils, plan and monitor instruction, and establish a conducive classroom atmosphere (Airasian, 1991).

Madaus and Kellaghan (1993) stated that assessment in the classroom is highly based on teachers' observation of students as they go about their normal learning activities. It implies more than quantifying test results of pupils. It is a systematic development of tests and/or examinations, recording and interpreting. It involves observational techniques other than testing to collect information on overall pupil's performance. Thus, assessment appears to be broader and inclusive term than measurement. There are different ways to assess learners. But the concern of this paper is on one way of assessing learners by teachers, in the classroom on what has been taught. This is called continuous assessment. Continuous assessment tells teachers if they need to research, and what the students need to do in order to improve their learning.

According to Farrant (1980), assessment is the process by which the quality of individuals' work or performance is judged. In schools, assessment of learning is usually carried out by teachers on the basis of impressions gained as they observe their pupils at work or by various kinds of tests given periodically. When practiced as an ongoing process or on a day-to-day basis such assessment is known as **continuous assessment**. It

is an assessment system aimed at deriving a student's final examination marks and based upon a number of previous assessments on selected syllabus objectives.

Continuous assessment is being used increasingly as an alternative to terminal examinations, because it provides more reliable information than examinations. It builds up a picture of a pupil's performance over a prolonged and representative period". Today schools and universities are turning to continuous assessment whereby records of the student's performance in nearly everything he/she does during his/her course are kept. These records build up into a much more complete and reliable assessment of the student than is possible by a single examination (Farrant, 1980).

2.9.1. Formative assessment

It is a continuous assessment that focuses on monitoring learning progress and diagnosing learning difficulties while a teaching-learning process is being undertaken. It ensures a healthy acquisition and development of knowledge and skills by learners. It helps to identify learners' needs and problems in order to take appropriate remedial measures in the learning process (Thorndike, et al., 1977; Ebel, 1979; Gronlund, 1981; Ogunniy, 1984).

2.9.2. Summative Assessment

It is given especially at the end of a course or semester of instruction. It is designed to determine the extent to which instructional objectives have been achieved. Furthermore, it deals with the purposes, and outcomes of the teaching-learning process. Summative assessment, as the name suggests, is a final summing up and judgmental which is commonly made on the basis of written examinations, tests, ratings on different kinds of performance (e.g. reading, writing, listening, speaking, laboratory work, etc), and assessment of products (e.g drawing, research report). It is used for grading, promoting,

and certifying purposes. It is also useful for providing information based on the assessment of the effectiveness of a program of instruction (Gronlund, 1981; Ogunniyi, 1984; Harding and Beech, 1991; Airasian,).

2.10. Purpose of Continuous Assessment

According to the guidelines on continuous assessment prepared by ICDR (1994), the purpose of continuous assessment at school should focus on learners' overall performance and the teaching-learning process.

Concerning the learner, the specific role of assessment is to:

- Investigate the participation of pupils in the learning conditions,
- Analyze the level of knowledge, skill and ability of pupils in the different subjects,
- Examine the improvement of pupils in their classroom performance over a period of time,
- Accumulate records of progress for the pupils.
- Determine pupils' strengths and weaknesses,
- Gather information about a wide range of the pupils' characteristics (habits or attitudes) as a feedback for making decisions, and
- Identify the extent to which pupils have overcome any social, psychological or learning difficulties.

As to the instruction process, continuous assessment helps to:

- Determine the extent to which the school is working towards achieving its set objectives,
- Provide information from which teachers can find insights into their own effectiveness in teaching,

- Find out the degree to which the methods of instruction and materials employed are up-to-date and effective, and
- Give incentives in the learning process.

Capper (1996) also explained that continuous assessment is a student evaluation system that operates at the classroom level and is integrated with the instructional process. It includes a variety of measures (i.e. daily assessing students using observation, oral questions, tests or quizzes etc.) and procedures that a teacher can use to tell whether his or her instruction has been effective to target those students who have and have not mastered particular skills. It serves as the foundation for improved instruction in the classroom.

Badmus (2004) pointed out that literatures identified six categories of classroom assessment methods. These are objective paper and pencil test, essay test, standardized tests, performance test, informal observation and portfolios. Of the six methods of assessments, performance tests are particularly useful to technical/vocational education teacher since most technical/vocational curricula are modular and competency based in nature (Badmus, 1986). Informal observation has been found useful when grouping students for instructional activities while objective paper and pencil test is well suited for assessing students' recall of factual knowledge. Information from portfolios is not much of use in generating information in decision making in the classroom. As Gordon quoted by Badmus, due to lack of proficiency in interpreting the use of information generated from standardized tests and as well as how to construct essay questions for assessment, the use of standardized tests and essay questions are not popular with technical/vocational teachers

Assessments of students' progress, should provide feedback and be integrated into instruction, should help students to stimulate growth and form new habits. Classroom

assessments are valuable when students and teachers use them to clarify achievement, interest, and aptitude for the purpose of stimulating new learning. They should be authentic to life experiences and encourage integration of technical/vocational and general education. Assessments should have what is known as “consequential validity” i.e. when they promotes positive consequences for students, thus helping them to form new and meaningful habits. Assessment should expand opportunities for students (Ibid). The use of School-based assessment (SBA) has created controversy in the education community. The teaching profession generally agrees in principle that a combination of SBA and external examinations is good. However, it has been difficult to gain public confidence in teachers’ assessment, particularly from employers (Aina and Badmus, 1996).

Granted that teacher assessment is not as reliable as external examination results, the usefulness of an assessment is directly related to its validity provided its reliability is not too low as to question its validity. Basis of assessment must broaden to prevent the narrowing of learning. In quality assessment validity should take precedence over reliability though the latter must be reasonably high. Examination policies and practices must be viewed as compromises between competing values.

Badmus asserted that apart from teachers improving their image with reference to practice of SBA, the traditional assessment methods (TA) should be complimented with what is now known as authentic assessment (AA). In authentic assessment students are asked to perform real world tasks that demonstrate meaningful application of essential knowledge and skills. AA usually includes a task and a rubric by which performances on the task will be evaluated.

TA is knowledge and skill-based while AA is performance-based. Definitely in quality assessment, TA should be complemented with AA, especially in the assessment of

students in theological schools now that such programmes have integrated academic and practical ministry curricula. This should be the case for assessment of students in classrooms.

AA is necessarily criterion-referenced based. This is clear from the fact that four essential steps are involved in the creation of AA. They are:

- Standards should be identified
- Authentic task should be developed for a particular standard or set of standards.
- Criteria i.e. characteristics of good performance on/of that task should be identified/started.
- Rubric for the task (assessment) which is a combination the criteria and the level of performance for each criterion should be created.

Information generated from application of the rubrics will give students feedback and allow the teacher to adjust instruction accordingly. AA in the classroom provides a criterion-referenced assessment which has been found to provide guidance to learning (Badmus, 1986, Green, 2002)

2.11. Assessment and Learning

2.11.1. Approaches to Learning

Teaching and learning are reciprocal processes that depend on and affect one another. Thus, the assessment component deals with how well the students are learning and how well the teacher is teaching. (Kellough and Kellough, 1999).

Mc Donald and his colleagues (2008) argued that assessment is the most significant prompt for learning: every act of assessment gives a message to students about what they

should be learning and how they should go about it. The message is often not explicit, is not easily understood and often it is read differently and is often given a different emphasis by teachers and by students. They pointed out that there are always unintended consequences in assessment. Students will learn to adopt “surface” approaches (such as those relying on memorization) to study in some circumstances, and will adopt “deep” (meaning-seeking) approaches in others. In so doing, they will be prompted partly by the forms and nature of assessment tasks. They will learn that, in order to maximize their marks, they should use rote learning in many circumstances, even when the teacher might believe that this would distract them from the most important aspects of the course. This response—and other undesirable ones—will be a function not only of the assessment tasks set, but also of all the experiences of assessment students have had in the past. As to them if, for example, students get the idea that memorization works for multiple-choice tests, they will persist in that strategy even when assured that it will not help. Students are not simply responding to the given subject—they carry with them the totality of their experiences of learning and being assessed and this certainly extends far beyond concurrent and immediate preceding subjects (McDonald et al, 2008).

All of this means that the way a student approaches the task of learning will depend on:

- the intrinsic qualities of the form of assessment being used;
- the ways in which the assessor translates the material to be assessed into the given format, and selects assessment tasks appropriate for the subject and the specific learning goals; and
- (most importantly) how the student *interprets* the task at hand and the context of the assessment (McDonald et al, 2008).

Deborah Wills (1993) reasoned in a similar fashion that assessment methods have been shown to shape the learning approach of even the most academically able students. She

added that assessment that is based on rote memorization is likely to encourage a narrow and superficial form of learning.

Thus, assessment plays an active role in the teaching/learning process (Crooks, 1988). Therefore, before any discussion of assessment reform is begun, consideration should be confined to technical matters but should take account of the socio-political implications of assessment and their effect on learning (Popkewitz et al., 1986)

Researchers support for the view that high order learning is more likely to be retained long term than the reproductive learning of factual material (Crooks, 1988; Wolf *et al.*, 1991). In addition it seems likely that high level learning is associated with the development of intrinsic motivation and positive attitudes to continued learning. Students who lack the necessary motivation to undertake long hours of study find learning 'boring and irrelevant, and hence the pattern of declining effort and increased incidence of examination failure is understandable' (Svensson, 1977, p. 242). It is therefore important to look for ways of developing an alternative approach to assessment that will have more positive consequences for long-term learning.

Marton & Saljo again in Deborah (1993) based their findings on interviews with Swedish tertiary students. In this research, two approaches to learning were identified, and termed deep and surface. In the former approach, the student was concerned with identifying meaning and seeking out relationships both within the material itself and with prior learning and experience. A student using a surface approach looked at the superficial features of a text with the intention of rote learning the content.

Significantly, Marton & Saljo were able to demonstrate that students who used a deep approach were more likely to achieve understanding and retain details than those using a

surface approach to learning, thus linking level of processing with level of outcome. The link between perception and action is an important feature of the work in this area.

In addition to the deep and surface approaches Biggs (1987) argues for a third approach- achieving. He describes three approaches and their derivatives as follows:

surface	where the motive is to meet institutional requirements minimally, and the congruent strategy is limiting the target to essentials that may be reproduced through rote learning;
deep	where the motive is intrinsic interest in the content learned, and the congruent strategy is discovering meaning and acquiring competence by reading widely, interrelating with existing knowledge, etc.;
achieving	where the motive is ego enhancement through high grades, and the congruent strategy is organising time, working space and syllabus coverage in the most efficient way;
surface-achieving	where the motive is to achieve but where the student conceives the accurate reproduction of much detail as the way to do so;
deep-achieving	where the student is motivated both by intrinsic interest and high grades and so approaches work through an organized and strategic search for meaning. (1987, p. 129).

2.11.2 Concepts of Learning

In a study that explored tertiary students' conceptions of a range of educational concepts such as understanding, learning and teaching, van Rossum *et al.* (1985) emphasised the centrality of the concept of learning arguing that:

it seems to be possible to use it (learning conception) as the key concept: the learning conception gives us a clear picture of qualitatively different views on learning and moreover seems to be strongly connected with qualitatively different ways of thinking and acting, e.g. different study strategies. (p. 618).

In response to the question 'What do you actually mean by learning?' Saljo (1978) identified five qualitatively different concepts. There is some evidence to support a sixth conception (van Rossum & Deijkers, 1984; Beaty et al., 1990) where changes to the person are a central part of learning.

Beaty and her colleagues extended Saljo's earlier work to describe in greater detail the parameters and defining characteristics of students' concepts of learning.

For all the students in their study, learning implied a sense of permanence. The authors noted 'the point of time for acquisition and the point of time for application (that is for using what is learned) form the temporal axis of learning' (p. 5). Beaty et al. (1990) discuss each concept in great detail outlining defining characteristics. The following is but a brief summary of their extensive work.

- A. Increasing one's knowledge. Learning is viewed as a simple process of increasing the amount of information one possesses. No reference is made of a later purpose.
- B. Learning as memorizing and reproducing. Learning is viewed as the storage of 'stuff that will be memorized and later applied-probably in a test, thus limiting the external horizon to the school. As with the previous conception knowledge is quantitative and pre-determined.
- C. Learning as applying. Application extends beyond the classroom to the 'life world' of the person. Although there are clear differences between these first three concepts in all 'the knowledge that is acquired by learning is seen as something ready-made, given, something that exists "out there", waiting to be picked up, taken in and stored' (Beaty et al., 1990, p. 10).

- D. Learning as understanding. Learning is described as understanding or gaining insight (i.e. looking into) from the learning material. As an activity, learning is centered around the learner who examines the material thus extracting meaning from it and/or relates new concepts to those already known. This view of learning appears to be consistent with learning for its own sake.
- E. Learning as an interpretive process aimed at understanding reality. Rather than simply seeing something in a different way-a characteristic of the previous conception, 'learning is changing his or her way of thinking about something' (Beaty et al., 1990,p. 12)
- F. Learning as changing as a person. This is an extension of coming to see things in a different way, where the student changes as a person and moves towards a sense of self-realization.

2.12. The Role of Assessment with Respect to Quality

While assessment of school learning provides information to all parts of stakeholders of the sector, the scope which this study limits itself is assessment that assists and promotes quality of learning in the classroom context. Effective teachers use assessment of students learning to inform day-to-day and month-to-month decisions about next steps for instruction, to give students feedback about their progress, and to motivate students. Such assessment is usually referred as assessment to assist learning, or formative assessment.

2.12.1 Quality Learning

In a paper that examines the dynamic interaction between teachers and learners, Bowden as quoted by Deborah (1993) articulates his view of quality learning:

quality in learning is best described by contrasting preferred forms of learning with inferior ones. It is not simply increasing the store of knowledge, taking in and retaining (or not) more and more information. It is about searching for meaning, developing understanding and relating that understanding to the world around. As a consequence, the world is

seen differently and student conceptions have undergone change. Quality learning is about conceptual change-seeing the world differently is an essential outcome. (p. 4)

Such quality learning seems likely to encourage students to be active participants in their current and future lives.

2.12.2 Feedback and Formative Assessment towards Quality of Learning

Feedback in any discipline is necessary for student learning to take place, whether that feedback is as simple as a checkmark beside a correct answer or as complex as a one-on-one consult to discuss student progress. In theological courses, feedback on student performance is essential to helping students improve as they develop their skill in the training. While short-cuts and time-savers have their appeal, theory dictates that feedback is a crucial element in the learning process. One purpose of this review, then, is to determine whether or not feedback does contribute significantly and measurably to student learning, in particular in the General Mechanics discipline and related fields.

Black and Wiliam (1998) conducted an extensive literature review, covering more than 500 publications on the subject of formative assessment. The authors make it clear that “the two concepts of formative assessment and of feedback overlap strongly” (Black and Wiliam, 1998, p. 47).

Naturally, any discussion of feedback necessitates a definition of the term itself; as several studies have indicated, however, feedback is a relatively open-ended concept. Theoretically, feedback can be defined narrowly or broadly; for the purposes of this review, feedback should be considered any communication between the instructor and the student that provides information about the student’s performance of an assessment task. Most of the publications reviewed here discuss feedback in the larger context of formative assessment; as such, a definition of formative assessment is also required. As with much of the literature in this area, Black and Wiliam begin with a definition of

formative assessment; for the purposes of their review, formative assessment includes any activities from which students receive feedback which in turn modifies subsequent activities. According to this definition, then, feedback does not merely “overlap” with formative assessment, it is an integral component. Based on several quantitative studies, Black and Wiliam make several generalizations regarding formative assessment and feedback:

- all formative assessment by definition involves feedback between student and teacher;
- the success of this interaction directly affects the learning process;
- it is difficult to analyse the contribution of the feedback alone or, conversely, the assessment technique without the impact of the feedback;
- feedback must be applied in order for the assessment to be truly formative;
- feedback is most effective when it is objective (i.e., relevant to the task) rather than subjective (i.e., relevant to peer performance) (pp. 16-17).

While Black and Wiliam conclude from this section of their review that further investment in formative assessment should produce “significant learning gains” (p. 17), they also find that in general, teachers do not really understand formative assessment, which means that the application of formative assessment techniques is weak or simply neglected altogether (p. 20). Part of the problem lies in what appears to be a misalignment between the application of formative assessment practices and curricular requirements, leading Black and Wiliam to conclude that formative assessment can only really be implemented through radical changes in teaching practices, teacher philosophies, curricular requirements and institutional support of all of these elements.

2.13. Formative Assessment in a Summative World

Radical change is a key point for several proponents of formative assessment, including Yorke (2003), who echoes Black and Wiliam's conclusion that formative assessment is universally lauded but generally misunderstood, or at least insufficiently supported. Yorke, among others, argues that assessments can – and often must – be both summative, providing a quantitative measure that contributes to the student's grade, and formative, providing feedback that contributes to the student's learning. In fact, according to Yorke, there is a definite place within constructivist teaching for summative assessment, in that it can be a “test of independence” (p. 497) that counters the potential pitfalls of student overconfidence from success that is really attributable to “the work the teacher” (p. 481). Similarly, Taras (2002) sees no conflict between summative and formative assessments, and in fact argues that “since the grade is linked to ideas of standards, it is also of great importance for formative work” (p. 507).

In contrast, Butler (2004) advocates “comments-only” marking (p. 37), based on his interpretations of Clarke (2001), who claims that “grades freeze [students] into ‘ego-related’ mode rather than ‘task-related’ mode” (as cited in Butler, 2004, p. 37). Based on a trial of the “comments-only” approach, Butler concludes that both teachers and students benefit from purely qualitative feedback, especially when coupled with self-reflection.

Bangert-Drowns, Kulik, Kulik and Morgan (1991) were also surprised to discover potentially negative effects from feedback provided in test situations. Using very specific definitions of feedback under specific conditions, the authors found that “a full third” of their findings were negative, that is, the feedback provided did not increase student success in tests, and in some cases, decreased success. However, Bangert-Drowns et al attribute the negative effects to “presearch availability” and the type of feedback provided. As other studies have shown, task-oriented, instructional feedback that “in

some way informed the learner” (p. 232) was significantly, and positively, effective, while feedback that simply indicated that the learner had responded correctly or incorrectly did not effectively contribute to learning.

2.14. The Role of Feedback

The fundamental role of feedback in the formative assessment process remains undisputed, however. Hounsell (1995), for instance, tells new colleagues that feedback “helps students to focus their intellectual energies in the most productive way” (p. 51). More to the point, then, is the nature of feedback itself. Black and Wiliam identify four elements essential to effective feedback: a recognized, measurable standard; a means of identifying student performance in relation to that standard; a means of comparing the two levels; and a way to apply this information to alter the gap. The most crucial inference to be drawn here is that feedback must be used by the student to change the gap between student performance and stated objective. Some of the studies reviewed by Black and Wiliam, as seen in the previously-discussed findings of Bangert-Drowns et al, noted a negative effect of feedback, typically as a result of one of three misapplications of the provided feedback. The first of these is to reject the stated objective as too difficult; the second is to change the objective to meet performance; and the last is to deny any discrepancy between performance and objective (pp. 48-49). These studies suggest that feedback is most effective when it focuses on the task rather than the student; which, as Black and Wiliam point out, explains why research shows that praise frequently has a negative effect on performance. Comments that focus instead on the objectives, and the gap between performance and the standard, are more likely to produce learning gains. Furthermore, scaffolded responses, which provide as much or as little information as individual students need to accomplish the task, produce greater overall learning as well as better performance on individual tasks. Black and Wiliam conclude their review with

several recommendations, not least of which is further research into the nature of feedback.

Like Black and Wiliam, Hattie and Jaeger (1998) recognize the importance of feedback in the assessment process. Their definition of feedback, however, differs from the one given by Black and Wiliam, which Hattie and Jaeger see as too narrow. Feedback, for their purposes, is “polymorphous” (p. 113) and refers to any information subsequent to performance, which means that feedback goes beyond external sources to include self-assessment. Furthermore, Hattie and Jaeger emphasize the duality of feedback, that is, that the teacher must provide opportunities for feedback on the one hand, and on the other, that students must be trained to receive feedback. Like Black and Wiliam, Hattie and Jaeger conclude that assessment must emphasize feedback and subsequent action, that testing should be a learning tool rather than a learning measuring stick. In a more focused response to Black and Wiliam, Sebatane (1998) discusses the implications of their findings in the specific context of “the so-called developing countries” (p. 123). As Sebatane argues, despite the overwhelming research that underlines the importance and benefit of formative assessment, reforming pedagogical practice is a slow process, because to date no one “optimum model” of a formative assessment-based system has been proposed, and because all the studies to date have concluded that such reform requires substantial, radical changes in classroom practices and institutional standards (p. 124).

2.14.1. Making Feedback Effective

Thus far, the studies seem to show overwhelmingly positive response to the general idea of formative assessment and feedback; however, to some extent or another, many researchers address the importance of how feedback is provided, how it is received, and how it is applied. In short, for feedback to be truly effective as a formative learning tool,

both the instructor and the student need to understand what to do with it. Nichol and Macfarlane-Dick (2006) reviewed recent research on formative assessment and postulate that such assessment can be used to help students become independent, self-regulated learners. Based on their findings, the authors propose seven principles of effective feedback: clarifying goals, developing reflection, delivering information about student learning, encouraging dialogue, encouraging motivation and self-esteem, helping students move from current performance to desired performance, and providing information to the teacher to shape the teaching (Macfarlane, 2006). As in other publications, Nichol and Macfarlane-Dick conclude that task-oriented feedback, as opposed to simple praise or encouragement, is more effective and better appreciated by students, since it is more relevant and therefore, more in keeping with the formative assessment system. Nichol and Macfarlane-Dick posit that since such feedback must be interpreted by the student, effective feedback can become a vital part of the self-regulatory process.

Whether or not that feedback is indeed interpreted, and correctly, by the student is obviously a concern. Wiltse (2002) begins with the premise that feedback is effective in promoting student learning and improvement, but that the feedback itself must be examined in terms of ease of interpretation and application. Gibbs and Simpson (2002) support this latter idea, stating specifically that “feedback has to be quite specific to be useful”, and that the feedback must focus on learning and on process, rather than on the students themselves. Furthermore, Gibbs and Simpson advocate timely feedback that is relevant to the assessment and the related criteria. Finally, as other proponents of formative feedback have shown, Gibbs and Simpson reiterate the importance of subsequent action on the part of the student, which they argue can be encouraged by the instructor through a

variety of strategies. Similarly, Hounsell (1995) advocates feedback that shows students how and why corrections must be made, and suggests that comments phrased as questions, rather than directions, will be better received and thus acted upon by students. Hounsell cautions, however, that tutors should not be discouraged if comments are disregarded by students (p. 56).

Summary of Continuous Assessment

As it is believed by all educators the traditional paper and pencil based tests do not longer cover the variety of activities and tasks in the classroom situation. As the result, the field of evaluation has witnessed a major shift from strictly summative testing tools and procedures to a more humanistic approach using informal assessment techniques that stress formative evaluation (O'Neil,1992 as cited in flambeau 2007 unlike terminal assessment which is carried out at the end of a course or a major unit for summative purpose , Course or a major unit for summative purpose , continuous assessment is done on an ongoing basis while students are actually working their way through a course . That is it is the process of gathering appropriate information regularly for making educational decisions (Nitko, 2004 cited in flambeau 2007) 06 wously to make such decisions , we need to use high – quality information ; information that is highly valid and highly reliable for the decisions at hand (Nitko,2007)

To conduct an effective and appropriate continuous assessment the following conditions are mandatory (Shepard, 2000 cited in Hamlue Jun 2007)

- The teacher must be equipped with as adequate knowledge and capability about different assessment techniques .
- The assessment activity should be planned
- The assessment procedure should be based on the actual conditions, social factors of the class, and pupil's level of knowledge and the nature of instruction.

- Variety of assessment techniques should be selected and applied and

The followings are an advantages of continues assessment

- Provides an ongoing picture of how individual students develop and mature as they work their work through a course ;
- Places less emphasis on pare memory than terminal assessment.
- Encourages regular, systematic study and discourages last minute cramming.
- Provide ally warnings of which students having problem with the course.
- It can provide early indicators of the likely performance of students
- Renders warning of any problems or weaknesses thus enabling them to take appropriate measures to improve matters.
- It reduces the intense stress that many students experience when preparing for and sitting terminal examinations
- It provides a more natural assessment environment that is better matched to the situations in which students will find themselves working in later life
- Hence continuous assessment is required in the educational sifting it preludes regular information about the teaching process and is vital to judge the quality of individuals work.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Introduction to Methodology

“Methodology is the philosophy or the general principle which will guide your research” (Dawson, 2002, p.14). It was the overall approach to studying the topic and it included issues the researcher needed to think about such as the constraints, dilemmas and ethical choices within the research. In this section, the researcher discussed research strategy, different research methods, and techniques, as well as ways of collecting and analyzing data.

3.1.2. Method

As indicated in the objective, the study focuses on assessment on implementation of active learning and continuous assessment in Pentecostal Theological College. To achieve this, **descriptive survey design** was used because it enables the researcher to generate ideas, opinions and beliefs of relatively large number of respondents and diverse groups (Creswell, 2003). Both quantitative and qualitative data were gathered from diverse survey and methodological triangulation was used to assess the implementation of active learning and continues assessment in Pentecostal Theological College.

3.2. Source of Data

Primary and secondary sources of data were employed in this study. The primary sources of data were collected from deans, instructors, and students. Secondary source of data was obtained from books, policy handbook, and grade report sheets.

3.3. Sample Population and Sample Techniques

The target population that is represented in the study is the whole Pentecostal Theological College. The participants of the study were deans, instructors, and students. The researcher has limited the number of participants to a more manageable number of people. Sixty four people have participated during the time of the study. The number of deans was 2. The number of participating instructors was 12. The number of students sampled was 50. The sampling method used in the study was both purposive and random sampling. Since the sample included deans, it was a purposive plan to use these people as participants. The researcher believed that the people in such positions of leadership were in a better position to provide all the necessary data. However, the rest of the participants, who were instructors, and students were selected by using simple randomly sampling technique. The researcher believed that the randomly selected participants represented the majority. Stratified sampling technique was used to select students from 3rd and 4th year. Other than the respondents, the source of data was documents. This includes grade reports and policy papers with respect to the assessment exercise in college.

3.4. Instruments of Data Collection

Different types of data gathering instruments were employed for the study to combine the strength and amend some of the inadequacies anyone of the sources of the data. Accordingly, five complementary techniques of data collections namely, questionnaire, interview, focus-group discussions, observation and document analysis were used to acquire relevant data for the study. Accordingly:

a) Questionnaire

First, both close and open-ended type of questionnaire was prepared in English language. This questionnaire administered to instructors and student.

The questionnaire basically had three sections. The first part was designed to collect personal and organizational information of respondents. The second part, which consists of 17 items, was developed by the researcher in order to find out the instructors perception on active learning and how they are implementing both active learning and continuous assessment. The questionnaire has five response options ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

Furthermore, the questionnaire has four main parts. The first part of the questionnaire deals with the perception and implementation of active learning the second part evaluates the hindering factors of active learning. The third part is about implementation of continuous assessment. The last one is about hindering factor of continuous assessment. The third part was for additional comments.

b) Interview

This technique was employed to acquire qualitative data and data that were not handled in by questionnaires. Thus, interviewees included in this study were deans of the college. The purpose of the interview was to generate in-depth information about the practice of teachers and promoting and hindering factors to implement active learning and continuous assessment. The interview was based on the semi-structured methods of interviewing. To make the communication mote effective the interviews were made both in Amharic and English language. The interviews were recorded using field notes. Finally the responses of the interviews were analyzed and incorporated in the analysis.

c) Focus group discussion

The focus group discussion was held with a group of participants among the students in order to extract the data on the exercise of active learning and continuous assessment from the students' side. In addition some remedy for improving the implementation of active learning and continuous assessment was discovered. The discussions with all the groups were held in Amharic for ease of communication and clarity of ideas. The responses were collected using short notes. Finally the discussion were summarized and analyzed.

d) Document Analysis

Different types of documents both published and unpublished were also reviewed to obtain, background information on the study and relevant literature has also been consulted to learn experiences of other developing countries which succeeded in the implementation of active learning in continuous assessment. In addition data was collected through closer scrutiny of grade reports and assessment policy of the college.

e) Observation

This was another complementary technique employed during the research to collect data. A checklist of activities was developed and results were recorded based on the stated indicators.

3.5 Data Collection Procedures

3.5.1 Procedure

All the questionnaires were distributed to the participants and were put in envelopes. The participants responded to all the questions privately and put them in a sealed envelope before they returned them to the researcher.

3.5.2 Tape recording

When both the interview and the Focus Group Discussion were conducted at the selected participants recording was made through the use of tape recorder.

3.6 Methods of Data Analysis

Both the quantitative and qualitative research methods have been employed to analyze and interpret the data gathered from the different sources. Therefore, descriptive survey method was used. The answer for the questionnaires, which were tailed and frequency counted, were converted were converted in to percentages to analyze the data that is qualitatively. On the other hand, the information obtained through open ended question, document analysis and interview items supplemented the data through narrative description that qualitatively

With respect to qualitative aspect several efforts are made to analyze the data. The data collected through interview are transcribed, translated, categorized and coded into recognizable themes. Similarly, the data collected from Focused Group Discussion is also transcribed, translated, categorized. Furthermore, the tests and examination papers were also analyzed in terms of their content.

3.7 Ethics

Ethical issues were taken care of by the verbal consent of the participants and the researcher. For the purpose of anonymity, I did not attribute quotations to individuals. Furthermore, the researcher assured all the respondents of anonymity prior to the collection of data. They were also informed that the data that was generated through the questionnaires, interviews, and group discussion were to be used only for the purpose of research and the participants were at liberty to ask any questions about the study before as well as during the data collection.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This chapter of the study deals with presenting and analyzing the data collected through questionnaires, interview, focused group discussion, observation and document review including policy paper and grade reports. The discussion is presented in two parts. The first part deals with the implementation of active learning in Pentecostal Theological College. The second part discusses the data collected on the implementation of continuous assessment. In all section the quantitative data collected through the questionnaire and the descriptive data collected through the interview and Focused group Discussion are presented and discussed.

4.1. Personal Details of Respondents

While a total of 63 questionnaires were distributed to the teachers and students at PTC containing closed ended questions, most of the participants (62 respondents) responded. The teacher respondents were 13. Out of thirteen teachers the 2 were female and 11 were male. Out of 50 student respondents 35(70%) were male and the others 15 were female. In addition to this, interview was conducted with two deans. Therefore, the analysis was made on the data collected from 64 (98.5 %) respondents.

Table 3. Characteristics of the Instructors and Deans

		Male		Female		Total	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1	Age						
	31-35	3	21.43	—	—	3	21.43
	36-40	3	21.43	1	7.14	4	28.6
	41-45	5	35.71	1	7.14	6	42.9
	Above 46	1	7.14	—	—	1	7.14
	Education						
	BTh/BA/BSC	6	42.9	1	7.14	7	50
	MTh/ MA/MSc	6	42.9	1	7.14	7	50
2	Years of Service						
	1-4	5	35.71	—	—	5	35.71
	5-8	3	21.43	1	7.14	4	28.6
	9-12	3	21.43	—	—	3	21.43
	Above 13	1	7.14	1	7.14	2	14.3

4.1.1. Characteristics of teachers

A total of 13 instructors were included in the study. As shown in table 2, 11(84.51%) of the instructors respondents were male and the remaining 2 (15.49%) instructors were female. This shows that the number of male instructors in the college were exceeding than female instructors.

Concerning the age of instructors, the majority 42.9% are in the range of 41-45 years. The other 28.6 % are in the range of 36-40. The next 21.43% were in the range of 31-35.the last 7.14 was in the range above 41. This shows that the majority instructors are in mature or adult age category.

With respect to the educational background of the instructors 50 % of them are BA and B.Th. holders and the other 50% are master's degree holders. Even though the 50% instructors are master's degree holders half of the instructors are first degree holders. If they are teaching the first degree student at the college it may affect the teaching learning process.

As to the experience of the instructors in teaching 5 (35.71) have 1-4 years. The remaining others 4 (28.6) have from 5-8, 3 (21.43) instructors have from 9-12 and 2 (14.3) instructors have above 13 years services. This reveals that the majority of instructors do not have long years teaching experience. May be because of the presence of the mature one, the youngers will be benefited to get mentor.

Table 4. Characteristics of the Students

		Male		Female		Total	
	Age	No	%	No	%	No	%
1	18-23	12	24	6	12	18	36
2	24-29	11	22	5	10	16	32
3	30-35	6	12	3	6	9	18
4	36-40	5	10	1	2	6	12
5	41-45	1	2	–	–	1	2
	Program						
8	BTh/BA	35	70	15	30	50	100
	Year of study						
11	3 rd year	15	30	9	18	24	48
12	4 th year	20	40	6	12	26	52

4.1.2. Characteristics of Students

A total of 50 students were included in the study. As it shown in table 4, 35 (70%) of the student respondents were male and the remaining 15 (30%) students were female. This shows male students in college exceeding higher than female students.

Concerning the age of respondents, the majority 18 (36%) fall within the range of 18-23 years. The remaining 16 (32%) students are in the range of 24-29 years, 9 (12%) students are in the range of 30-35 and 1 (2%) student is in the range of 36-40 years. This shows the majority of students are in the youth category.

With respect to the study of program, all participants 100% are in first degree program. As to the college experience half (50%) of the participants were third year students and half 50% of the participants were fourth year students. This indicates all the participants are age wise matured enough to respond. They are not fresh for the college education.

4.2. Active Learning Implementation

All the 17 questions appeared in the questionnaire are organized into two major categories namely active learning and continuous assessment, In addition to this, the first categories has three sections: Teacher's perception of active learning, , implementation of active learning, and Promoting and hindering factors of implementing active learning. The following data has been obtained and analyzed.

Table 5. Teacher's perception and application of active learning

No.	Teacher's perception	Number of respondents and percentage				
		Strongly agree	Agree	Have no idea	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	Students have a chance to reflect in the teaching and learning process	10 (83.3%)	2 (16.7%)	-	-	-
2	Students get paper practice as opportunities to develop their skill of discovering	11 (91.7%)		-	1(8.3%)	-
3	Teachers use group work to encourage students to work in team	5 (41.7%)	2 (16.7%)	-	5 (41.7%)	-
4	Teachers encourage students to participate actively in the teaching learning process	5 (41.7%)	4 (33.3%)	-	3 (25%)	-
5	The teaching learning process is involving		6 (50%)		5 (41.7%)	1 (8.33%)

4.2.1. Teachers perception and Implementation of active learning

All of the questions appeared in the first part of the questionnaire examine the instructors perception towards active learning. As it is shown in table 5 most instructors (83.3%) strongly believe that students got a chance to reflect on what they are learning. In the same way (91.7%) instructors strongly agree that that their students are getting practical opportunities to develop their skill of discovering. For the question the participant asked

as to how often they use group work (41.7%) of instructors use group work against (41.7%) who do not frequently use group work. The remaining respondents (16.7%) use group work but not more often.

The finding indicated that most of the instructors have a good understanding of active learning. They are also trying their best in practicing active learning.

The Interview report has also its own feedback on the use of active learning.

Accordingly my interviewee, by the Ato Tegene Gizaw dean of the college has responded by saying:

The College has organized different seminars for senior instructors on active learning and in general teaching methods and principles. The objective of the seminars was to raise the awareness of instructors understanding on active learning. (Tegene, May 2014).

This response is also cross checked and approved in our focus group discussion. The participants in focus group discussion believed that almost all senior instructors have got an opportunity to attend seminars and workshop on active learning. However, it is discovered that there are some junior instructors who did not attend the concerned seminars. These instructors are more traditional / teacher centered/ in their teaching and learning approach. Based on this it can be said some of the instructors have good understanding of active learning and some do not have good knowledge of it.

4.1.3. Implementation of active learning and the hindering factors

The second part of the questionnaire was to examine the how the college is implementing active learning. Participants were asked if the teaching is involving, arousing and active enough to make an impact. Half of the respondents (50%) not strongly but agree and said the teaching in involving and active. When the other (41.7%) responded in disagreement,

(8.33%) respondents strongly believed that the teaching is not participatory and active as such.

Table 6. Factors Promoting and hindering the implementing of active learning in Pentecostal Theological College

No	Promoting and hindering factors	Strongly agree	Agree	Have no idea	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	Lack of understanding how to implement	1(8.33%)	9 (75%)	–	2 (16.7)	–
2.	Shortage of well qualified teachers	–	6 (50%)	–	5 (41.7%)	1(8.33%)
3.	Lack of commitment	–	4(33.33%)	–	7(58.33%)	1(8.33%)
4	Lack of coordination both vertically and horizontally	1(8.33%)	9 (75%)	–	2 (16.7)	–
5	Large class size	9 (75%)	2 (16.7)	–	–	–

As indicated in table 6 above, 10 (83.33%) of the teacher respondents generally expressed lack of understanding how to implement as hindering factor of implementing active learning. The remaining expressed their disagreement on lack of understanding how to implement. In Item 2 of table 11 respondents were asked to see if shortage of well qualified teachers was a hindering factor for implementing active learning; Thus 50 % of the respondents expressed their agreement and the remaining 50% expressed their disagreements.

As it's shown in table 6 items 3 lack of commitment is one of the hindering factors for implementing active learning. More than 60% expressed their agreement.

Likewise, under item 4 of the table 6, a total of 10 (83.33%) respondents agreed that lack of coordination both vertically and horizontally is one of the factors of hindering active learning implication. The last item was about large size class as hindering factor for active learning implementation. Almost all respondents indicated large class size as one of the factors.

Ato Temesgen Gizaw is one of the deans whom I have interviewed. Concerning the hindering and promoting factors of active learning he said the following:

The application of active learning is not satisfactory in our college because of many reasons. Among many reasons, lack of trained and experienced teachers is the major ones. Our college has some newly deployed instructors who did not take training on active learning. However, there are improvement from time to time (Temesgen, 2014).

As it is indicated in the interview the prevailing problems encountered are lack of trained and qualified teachers.

Likewise the FGD held with a group of instructors, and the researcher observation indicated that application of active learning is not satisfactory in the college because of many factors.

The following are the list of hindering factors identified from all the data gathered

- Lack of understanding how to implement.
- Shortage of well qualified teachers.
- Negative attitude of teachers and administrations to ward active learning and continuous assessment.

- Shortage of budget to provide sufficient support.
- Lack of coordination both vertically and horizontally.
- Teaching tradition and preparation curriculum materials.
- Teachers' devotion to cover the portion.
- Students learning tradition and expectation.
- Follow up is not well coordinated and well-organized.
- Shortage of instructional materials.
- Overloading teachers by non-academic activities.

The above listed factors that are hindering implementation of active learning are also mentioned and considered as common hindering factors in many places by some scholars such as Charles C. Bonwell. He has mentioned in his article six common obstacles for using active learning strategies which are the same with what is found in PTC.

However, as it's mentioned in the literature review part of this study, different research suggested that, no matter what students must do more than just listen: They must read, write, discuss or be engaged in solving problems (Chickering and Gamson 1987). Further, students must be engaged in such higher-order thinking tasks as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, to be actively involved. Thus strategies promoting activities that involve students in doing things and thinking about what they are doing may be called active learning.

Table 7. Students Perception of Active Learning

No	Students Perception Of Active Learning	Number of respondents and percentage				
		Strongly agree	Agree	Have no idea	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	Students have a chance to reflect in the teaching and learning process	5(10%)	15(30%)	15(30%)	13(26%)	2(4%)
2	Students get paper practice and opportunities to develop their skill of independent discovering	11(22%)	24(48%)	10(20%)	5(10%)	-
3	Teachers use group work to encourage students to work in team	6(12%)	5(10%)	6(12%)	30(60%)	5(10%)
4	Teachers encourage students to participate actively in the teaching learning process	5(10%)	10(20%)	6(12%)	25(50%)	4(8%)
5	The teaching learning process is involving, arousing and active	3(6%)	14(28%)	6(12%)	25(50%)	2(4%)

As indicated in table 7 in the above, 20 of the students expressed their agreement for the question whether the Students have a chance to reflect in the teaching and learning process. The other 15 students respond as they have no idea about it. The remaining 15 students expressed their disagreement. The researcher found the teacher's response is different from student's one.

For item no 2, Students get paper practice and opportunities to develop their skill of independent discovering as 35 students (70%) expressed their agreement. The remaining respondents 10 students they do not have idea whether students get a paper practice and 5 students expressed their disagreement.

For item no 3 ‘‘Teachers use group work to encourage students to work in team, 35(70%)of students expressed their disagreement. On the other hand, 11 of the respondents expressed their agreement. For item no 4 when 15 of students expressed their agreement, 25(50%) +4(8%) of the students expressed their disagreement. On the other hand 6 of participants replied by saying we have no idea whether the teachers are encouraging students. Likewise item 5 of table 4 indicated that 17 of the students agree with that the teaching learning process is involving, arousing and active. On the other hand 27 of the students expressed their disagreement. The remaining 6 of the students replied that they do not have any idea.

The findings show most students do not believe that the method of teaching and learning process is active learning. According to the response of the participants active leaning is not implemented properly in the college.

Accordingly, focus group discussion has been conducted to examine the students’ perception of active learning. Three major questions were raised in the discussion. The first question was about students taking responsibility for their own learning. The participant responded that most of them do not take responsibility for their own learning. They said ‘‘we depend on our instructors’’. They feel their instructors are the best source for their learning. If something is not raised in the class they do not put a lot of efforts in

discovering the truth. This indicated almost all students are highly influenced by the traditional teaching and learning process. The second question was about active learning itself. Some of the participants do not have any idea about it. It was totally new concept for them. On the other hand, the other focus group discussion participants responded that they have heard about it but do not know much about it. The last question was about using various active methods. They said even though some of the methods such as student's presentation are not comfortable the instructors use different methods to teach.

Form the focus group discussion and the data collected, the researcher learned that student's consciousness about active learning is very low. Some of them did not even heard the word before the discussion. This actually can be taken as one hindering factor for implementing active learning in the teaching learning process. Student's awareness and participation in the process is essential. The value of student's perception cannot be undermined. Active participation of the student is one of the factors for the success of education.

The above data shows that the college is not at the level of applying active learning in the way it facilitates for the students achievements. Having good understanding for something in this case towards active learning is not enough. There should be commitment both from instructors and administration of the college. As we have seen in literature part good teaching does not automatically lead to good learning. This is evidenced by the fact of disinterested, disengaged students in classrooms. Students participation in the learning process cannot be replace by any other things.

4.3. Continuous Assessment (CA)

Table 8. Instructor's perceptions about CA

4.3.1. Instructors Perception about Continuous Assessment

No		Number of respondents and percentage				
		Strongly agree	Agree	Have no idea	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	I believe continuous assessment is beyond giving test	6 (50%)	4 (33.33%)	1 (8.33 %)	1 (8.33 %)	–
2	I believe continuous assessment is giving tests	2 (16.7%)	1 (8.33 %)	3 (25%)	5 (41.7%)	1 (8.33 %)
3	Continuous assessment is only for primary and secondary students	–	2 (16.7%)	1 (8.33 %)	7 (58.33%)	1 (8.33 %)

As shown in the table most of the respondents (83.33%) believed that continuous assessment is beyond testing. And the majorities (50.3%) of respondents do not believe that continuous assessment is giving test. This showed that the majority of instructors have good understanding of continues assessment. They do not consider it as a mere testing. For the third question (66.66 %) respondents which are the majority again said continuous assessment is not only for grades students. Of course there are few participants who believed that continuous assessment is for lower grade students.

Ato Tegene Yimer is among the deans who responded to the interview. Concerning continuous assessment he says the following:

Our college and I personally believe continuous assessment can be used in the college level education. It's part of the teaching and learning process. After all as a college we have a policy how students should be evaluated. Every teacher is

aware of the policy. He continued and said that generally speaking they are assessed in two major ways. The theoretical aspect of the course is assessed through quizzes and exams. They are given quizzes at the end of every duty or chapters and the final exams are given for many of the major courses. He also indicated that exams and quizzes on the theoretical part of the course usually have 25 to 30 % of the total share of the course assessment. (Tegene, 2014).

As the data from the interview and the discussion indicate that participants are happy with the continuous assessment and indicated that it stimulate them to work hard and improve their performance. Some remarked that as a result the continuous assessment promote their learning.

Generally, from the interview and focus group discussion the researcher finds that most teachers believe that continuous assessment is beyond giving grades to the students. They said it is part of the teaching and learning process. They majority of participants believed that CA improves students learning. According to the participants it also motivates the students. It was said repeatedly continuous assessment encourages students to do more.

As mentioned earlier, unlike some popular misconceptions about continuous assessment Pentecostal Theological College instructors and deans have an understanding. They believed continuous assessment should be applied in all subjects because it motivates and encourages students to achieve more.

Table 9. Student's perceptions about continuous assessment

No	Students perceptions about CA	Number of respondents and percentage				
		Strongly agree	Agree	Have no idea	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	I believe continuous assessment is beyond giving test	5(10%)	10(20%)	30(60%)	5(10%)	–
2	I believe continuous assessment is giving tests	–	1(2%)	30(60%)	10(20%)	5(10%)
3	Continuous assessment is only for primary and secondary school students	–	10(20%)	16(32%)	20(40%)	4(8%)

4.3.2. Student's Perceptions About continues assessment

As indicated in table 9 above when 15 of the students expressed their agreement concerning whether continuous assessment is beyond giving test, 5 of the students expressed their disagreement. In addition to this more than half of the participants 30(60%) replied that they do not have any idea whether continuous assessment is beyond giving test.

Likewise, item 2 of the table indicated that only 1of the participants agreed on that continuous assessment as giving test. About 30(60%) of the students replied that the do not have any idea about it..

As shown in table 10 (20%) of the student respondents revealed continuous assessment is only for primary and secondary school students. On the other hand 16(32%) of the

students said we have no idea whether continuous assessment is for only primary and secondary school students. But 20(40%) + 4(8%) respondents expressed their disagreement on continuous assessment is only for primary and secondary students.

The above data shows that the many students do not have understanding about continuous assessment.

The researcher found out that instructors and student's perception of both active learning and continuous assessment is different. When the instructors are informed about the ALMs and CA, the students are not familiar with the concept. This may create gap between the two. Thus it can be said this by itself might contribute for lack of involvement by the student in the teaching and learning process.

Table 10. The Frequency of Periodic Assessments and the Number of Tools Used In Continuous Assessment

No	Periodic assessments	Number of respondents and percentage				
		Strongly agree	Agree	Have no idea	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	Instructors frequently measure the work of their students	2 (16.7%)	7 (58.33%)	1 (8.33%)	2 (16.7%)	–
2	Instructors use different techniques of CA	5 (41.7%)	4 (33.33%)		3 (25%)	–

4.3.3 Frequency of Periodic Assessment

As it can be observed from the table (75.3%) of instructors does believe that instructors have been using frequently measuring their students. However, as I discover from focus group discussion and interview the respondent's response does not show the fact. Most of

the time number of assessments or test given for a course in a semester does not match with the claim of the instructors. The result shows most of the time two or three course assessments are given. This is clear contradiction with the response in the above table. This finding is consistent with the result obtained from some documents analysis. The submitted mark list and grade report show that instructors in average did provide two or three tests. Regardless of this practice the deans have spoken that in the assessment guideline, instructors are expected to give at least six tests or assignments. After all for major course instructors supposed to give up to ten tests.

Based on the finding it can be said instructors have failed to meet at least the minimum requirements of course assessment. This being the case two or three number of assessments might not be seen into continuous assessment. It should be understood that continuous assessment is an integral part of the learning process. The conceptual definition of continuous assessment is not well practiced. Therefore, it might not be correct to say that instructors have a clear understanding of continuous assessment.

4.3.4 The Number of Tools Used In Continuous Assessment

Participants were asked about the number of techniques used in continuous assessment and (75.03%) respondents believe that instructors use different techniques of continuous assessment. 25% of participants said instructors do not use different techniques of continuous assessment. On the other hand from interview and FGD findings instructors use only few types five or six tools of continuous assessment. The researcher has got contradiction between what the instructors respond and others. The mark list and grade report showed that instructors used two or three tests or two or three assignments so as to evaluate students' performance. Besides, usually when the course material is very short

students are given only final exam and the assessment in such cases is not continuous one. Students' achievement is evaluated with a single exam. However it all depends on the preferences of the individual teachers.

The interview result showed that instructors used tests, assignments, projects and presentations. The remaining tools of assessments were hardly used by instructors. It can be concluded that tests assignments, examinations quizzes project presentations and questioning were the most widely used technics of continuous assessment. On the other hand, participation in the class, group reflections, discussions, portfolio assessment and term paper were rarely used tools of continuous assessment. Besides, self-assessment observation interview, peer assessment, attendance, role playing, field work, homework, have never used as tools of continuous assessment. this is one of the indication for there is not continues assessment in PTC. If the teachers frequently used only one or two methods of assessment it can be proved the existence of continuous assessment. This is also clearly indicate the existence of mis-conception about continuous assessments.

Table 11. The frequency of periodic assessments and number of tools used in continuous assessment

No	tools used in continuous assessment	Number of respondents and percentage				
		Strongly agree	Agree	Have no idea	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	Instructors frequently measure the work of their students	–	2 (4%)	8(16%)	35(70%)	5(10%)
2	Instructors use different techniques of CA	2 (4%)	15 (30%)	8(16%)	25(50%)	–

As indicated in table 6 above, when 2% students agree that instructors frequently measure students work, the majority of the respondents expressed their disagreement. It means the teachers do not often measure the work of the students.

Likewise, item 2 of the table indicated 2 (4%) + 15 (30%) of the students respondents agreed that instructors use various techniques of Continuous Assessment. On the other side 25(50%) of student participants expressed their disagreement on the issue that the instructors using different methods of continuous assessment. The researcher has found clear differences between the students and teachers responses. As it is mentioned above, further investigations have to be done to find out what is going on. Hence, it's discovered continuous assessment is not implemented in complete sense. The researcher himself observed this from different documents.

Besides, the researcher has observed the students grade report sheet from the registrar office. The grade report sheet helps to know what actually the instructors have been doing.

4.3.5. Hindering factors of implementing continuous assessment in Pentecostal Theological college

Most of the participant and interviewee reported that the following are the factors hindering the implementation of continuous assessment

- Large class size. According to the key respondents the large class size is one of the hindering factors in implementation of CA. The respondents said that some time the number of students in one class would be around 50. 50 might not be big

size by itself but theological education requires more interaction between different voices coming from different parts.

- Shortage of time: the semester hour is not enough to cover the subject by using various methods. Therefore, they will be forced to use only one traditional lecture method because we will give them adequate time to finish the lessons
- Lack of commitment: even though they know the importance AC and CA some instructors lack the courage to do his/her business.
- Tight schedule: Besides the teaching commitment, many instructors do have administrative responsibilities. This keeps them busy and they do not go to class well prepared
- Broad course content: because of the nature of the subjects many courses text books are bulky and the teachers are always behind from the schedule.
- Teaching load: the college is small college because of this few instructors are responsible to teach and involve in admin

From all data gathered the listed factors are proven to be hindering factors for implementation of continuous assessment

Therefore from the above discussion it is possible to conclude the majority of instructors at Pentecostal Theological College had clear understanding about the concepts of active learning and continuous assessment. However, due to work overload, students' traditional expectation, large class size and the like, the implementation of ALMs and CA at PTC was not satisfactory.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1. SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to explore the application of active learning and continuous assessment in Pentecostal Theological College. In order to achieve this objective of the study attempted to answer the following basic research questions or to this end the study was made to answer the following basic research questions.

6. What does the implementation of active learning looks like in Pentecostal Theological College?
7. What does the implementation of continuous assessment looks like in Pentecostal Theological College?
8. What are the promoting and hindering factors of implementing active learning in Pentecostal Theological colleges?
9. What are the promoting and hindering factors of implementing continuous assessment in Pentecostal Theological College?
10. What should be done to improve the implementation of active learning and continuous assessment in Pentecostal Theological College?

To answer these basic research questions, a descriptive survey design and case study method were employed. Both primary and secondary sources of data were used. The primary source included deans, instructors and students of Pentecostal Theological College where as the secondary sources were different literature and policy document, and grade reports of Pentecostal Theological College. A total of 64 respondents participated in this case study. Data collection tools were questionnaires, semi structured interview, focus group discussion and observation checklist. Finally based on the review

of literature and the analyzed data, the following major findings were obtained from the study.

Major findings of the study:

The data analyses led to the following major findings

- It was found that most of the instructors (83%) have good understanding of active learning but they do not practice it. In line with the mentioned finding, the interview made with college deans showed that application of active learning is not satisfactory when it compared with the expectation in Pentecostal Theological College.
- The study revealed that training will promote the implementation of active learning and continuous assessment
- It was found more than 50% of instructors are not practiced CA purposely and intentionally. It all depends on the choice of individual instructors, since some used continuous assessment to some extent and others do not have the notion at all. It is also difficult to figure out what proportion of assessment is done in continuous assessment. It seems some instructors done assessment for the purpose of giving score to the students in comparison to the other students. But as the researcher mentioned in the above continuous assessment should be part of the teaching learning process.
- Even though the 75% instructor respondents claimed that they used different techniques of continuous assessment, the data collected from focus group discussion with students, interview with deans, and grade report sheet showed that the only employed methods are traditional ones. Almost all educators agree that it is not easy to assess by a single form of assessment. In addition to this it is

discovered that there are certain assessment tools which have never been used by the participants.

- It is also observed in the study that the evaluation of the practical skill of the student and the teaching–learning process itself is also highly affected by the larger size of the class. This is one of the directions that needs further study in both the teaching–learning process of theological education including assessment mechanism.
- The interview result showed that instructors use tests, assignments, projects and presentations. The remaining tools of assessments were hardly used by instructors. It can be concluding that tests assignments, examinations quizzes project presentations and questioning were the most widely used techniques of continuous assessment. On the other hand participation in the class, group reflections, discussions, portfolio assessment and term paper were rarely used tools of continuous assessment.
- The study disclosed that the majority of the instructors gave more weight to the utilization of summative assessment instead of formative one.
- It was found out during a focus group discussion with the students that some instructors didn't provide feedback on time for the students.
- The finding revealed the following as factors that hindered the implementation of active learning and continuous assessment :
 - Shortage of well qualified teachers,
 - Teachers' belief that the implementation of ALMs and CA require much effort and deliberately ignoring the utilization of active learning and continuous assessment,

- Students learning tradition and expectation,
- Shortage of budget to provide sufficient support,
- Lack of coordination both vertically and horizontally,
- Teaching tradition and preparation curriculum materials,
- Teachers' devotion only to cover the portion;
- Overloading teachers by non-academic activities, and the large class size

5.2 CONCLUSION

On the basis of data collected and analyzed, the following conclusions were drawn

- As indicated in the findings, the majority of instructors at Pentecostal Theological College had clear understanding about the concepts of active learning and continuous assessment. However, due to work overload, students' traditional expectation, large class size and the like, the implementation of ALMs and CA at PTC was not satisfactory.
- Although participants of the study reported that they frequently evaluated the students' performance. It was discovered that instructors gave only two or three tests for a course in a semester. Accordingly, it appeared reasonable to conclude that participants of the study did not practice continuous assessment though they were aware of its importance. Along with this the participants of the study listed down the potential factors that hinder the implementation of continuous assessment. There are large class size, shortage of time, lack of commitment, tight schedule, broad course content and teaching load. This is one of the directions that needs further study in the teaching–learning process.
- From the finding it can be concluded that the college is not at the level of applying active learning in the way it facilitates for the students achievements. Having good understanding for something in this case towards active learning is not enough.

- The finding indicated the assessments undertaken at the colleges are not promoting quality learning meaningfully.
- From the finding it can be concluded that there is no meaningful involvement of learners in the learning.
- Pentecostal Theological College students do not have adequate information about active learning. Because of this reason they are not in the position to tell whether active learning is implemented or not.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

The other important question of the study is to present recommendations how to improve the implementation of the active learning and continuous assessment. The research has shown the gap and there are some important responsibilities that theological colleges and churches should consider in order to intensify their impact and continue equipping students for meaningful results. In other words to assure theological education quality the college needs to consider the following service improvement activities.

Based on the major findings and conclusions drawn the following recommendations were forwarded to improve the implementation of active learning and continuous assessment.

Professional Development

It's commonly understood students cannot achieve high levels of learning and performance unless teachers, principals, and other school employees are continuously learning. Faculty development strategy must be planned so that all faculty members will be equipped with all current scientific methods of teachings. Theological educators should not be behind from other educators. The other purpose of this professional

development might be enhancing teacher confidence in use of technology for improving their active learning method and continuous assessment practices.

Awareness Rising

Instructors, students, and other staff of the college must be aware of active learning and continuous assessment. This is to ensure that teachers fully understand the purpose of active learning method and continuous assessment and to integrate the regular teaching activities. Hence, refresher training on areas of ALMs and CA should be provided for instructors.

Maximizing Student's Involvement

“Maximum learning is always the result of maximum involvement” (anonymous author) here it is not just a mere involvement but the involvement must be meaning full. It is known that quality education and success in education comes from the active involvement of student. Therefore students must be engaged cognitively, emotionally, and physically with the content. If the practice to be used effectively, before the activity students must have adequate introduction to the activity. This is to help them to understand the aim of the work. The activities must be at the right level for all students.

Evaluation and Monitoring

Continuous evaluation and monitoring is important task that the college leadership can play in order to make sure the application of active learning and continuous assessment. Hence, the leadership of PTC should strengthen its monitoring and evaluation of the teaching and learning process so that instructors couldn't ignore the implementation of the desired ALMs and CA.

Assessment with Purpose

Assessments need to be done continuously with clear purpose and intention so that instructors understand the strength and the weaknesses of their students and adjust their teaching accordingly. Hence, PTC has to organize a short-term training for its instructors on the nature and implementation of CA.

Small Class Size

The small class size is also another important factor that has indirect and positive effect the way the instructor deals with the student in the whole teaching learning process particularly in applying active learning and continuous assessment. It is only when the class size is small that the instructor inspects the achievement and the progress of the students. Hence, PTC should hire more qualified instructors and reduce the class size so that the implementation of ALMs and CA would be more facilitated.

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