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Factors Affecting Implementation of Continuous
Assessment in some Selected Second Cycle Primary
School of Kirkos Sub city, Addis Ababa.

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Addis Ababa University

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Acronyms and Abbreviation

A.A - Addis Ababa

BESO - Basic Education Sector Organization

CA - Continuous Assessment

CPE - cultural policy of Ethiopia

EFDR - Ethiopian Federal Democratic Republic

ETP - Education and Training policy

FCA -Formative Continuous Assessment

ICDR - Institute of Curriculum Development and Research

MoE - Ministry of Education

MoES - Minister of Education and Support

NOE - National Organization for Examination

SA - Summative Assessment

TESO - Teacher Education System Overhaul

USAID - United States Agency for International Development

USAID -AED-United states Agency for International Development Academy for

Education Development

UNESCO - United Nations Education, scientific and cultural Organization

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore understanding of teachers continuous assessment , the practice of implementing Continuous assessment and factors affecting implementation of continuous assessment and about challenges of implementing continuous assessment. To address these objectives, descriptive survey research method was employed. The subjects in this study were teachers and directors in the second cycle primary schools. Using availability sampling techniques for directors and simple random methods for teachers from six second cycle primary schools were taken. To analyze the collected data, both Quantitative and qualitative methods were used. The results revealed that teachers in the sample schools reflected two different perceptions regarding continuous assessment. Moreover, the findings indicated that continuous assessment has not been fully practiced in the second cycle primary schools yet as desired for a number of problems. The study also found that large class size, weak follow up, support and feedback system on the implementation of learners', lack of training opportunity for teachers and supervisors were the major challenges of continuous assessment. To overcome this problem of continuous assessment, on the job training, adequate and updated manuals, advanced follow up, support and immediate feedback on the learners implementation continuous assessment were suggested solutions to the proper implementation of continuous assessment.

CHAPTER ONE

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the study

In today's educational environment, assessment has become a critical component of education reform. Policy makers, education administrators, families and employers often view assessment scores to hold schools accountable for teacher performance. Continuous assessment, an alternative or supplement to high stake testing of learner achievement offers methodology for measuring learner performance and using those findings to improve the success of learners. Continuous assessment is a classroom strategy implemented by teachers to ascertain knowledge ,understanding, skills, and attitude attained by students. In line with the above assertions ,Reece and walker (2003) defined assessment as the process of obtaining information about how much the student knows. This suggests that CA is a process and is much more than an examination of pupil achievement .

Airasian (1991) cited in ICDR(1999) stated that assessments is a process of collecting interpreting and synthesizing information to help teachers understand their pupils, plan and monitor instruction, and establish a conducive classroom atmosphere. Therefore, teachers based on the information they get from the classroom assessment can modify their pedagogical strategies to include the construction of remediation activities for pupils who are not working at the expected grade level and the creation of enrichment activities for pupil who are working at or above the expected grade level.

Hence, the continuous assessment process supports a cycle of self evaluation and pupils specific activities by both pupils and teachers. Assessment can also be used to provide information about the quality of programs, schools and stakeholder that are providing education and training (Okeke,2004). Thus, teachers have assessment results discussed with education stakeholders and community members on how their children are doing in school. Regular reports from the teacher based on the assessment allow the parents to know about their children's progress and with this knowledge at hand, parents can assist and support children.

Anisiobi (2004) stated that continuous assessment is a method of finding out what the learners have gained from learning activities in terms of knowledge, thinking and reasoning, character development and industry, continuous assessment is needed because it is an assessment approach, which involves the use of variety of assessment. It is an approach that assesses various components of learning not only thinking process but including behaviors, personality traits and manual dexterity as continuous assessment takes place over a period of time such an approach around be more comprehensive representing the learner on his or her entity.

Alausha (1991) contends that continuous assessment begins with the decisions that the teachers perform on the first day of school and ends with the decisions that the teachers and administrators make on the learners regarding end of year grading and promotion. Continuous assessment should be systematic, comprehensive, and cumulative and guidance oriented model. Hence, the implementation of continuous assessment means more work and teachers commitment. To this end, Fulman and Malen (1991) stated that successful implementation of continuous assessment approach means more marking. Teachers need to evaluated the effectiveness of their teaching strategies as dictated by the need of their pupils, evaluate the curriculum as implemented in the classroom, and observe the learners more to assess their effective outcomes and there

by keep more records on learners. Based on the above scholars' suggestion on the merit of employing continuous assessment, Mulu (2005) remarks that a onetime final examination or test does not bring a complete or true picture of students performance including the higher order thinking skills. That is to say examinations cannot measure all that the student learns because their effectiveness is limited to assess the entire complex learning outcome. To overcome this, it will be much more helpful if the assessment is employed on a continuous basis using different strategies. Apparently continuous assessment is getting momentum. It is believed to be more valid, reliable and motivating than the traditional one –off examinations (Mulu,2005). These days advanced nations such as America, Spain , England, Australia and others are applying continuous assessment partially or wholly in their educational system (Heation,1990).

Similarly, in line with the new education and training policy, the practical task of implementing the new curriculum at school level requires CA as part of the curriculum in general and the instructional process in particular (MoE,1994). This shows that enough attention is given towards the implementation of CA in Ethiopia too .However, there are only quite few researches done at primary and secondary level, this inspired the researcher to look in to the issue at kirkos sub city primary schools in Addis Ababa to find out if there are problems in the implementation and conceptualization of continuous assessment.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Traditionally in Ethiopia continuous assessment is understood as testing and measuring of the outcome of learning. It is conducted during the course of instruction in the form of a series of tests, quizzes, and assignments in which grades or numerical scores are assigned to students. At the end of the course, a summative or final course grade is the sum of tests, quizzes, assignments and final test or examination (Yesitila, 2005).

But, this trend is changing as emphasis shifts towards how well are students learning and attaining the goals of education. According to Mkhonta (2003), continuous assessment is an essential component of the instructional process which enables the teacher to better use the “assessment feedback correction” learning cycle that is missing from the time limited examinations. Therefore, to make benefit out of continuous assessment, the role of a teacher is indispensable. Teacher’s understanding of the concept, and applying it in classroom situation, determines the extent to which teaching and learning process is improved through continuous assessment. This has been described by Livingston (2001:129-130)

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

Taking all of these into account, the Ministry of Education (MOE) 1994) in our country introduced continuous assessment at different levels of the educational institution .As stated in Education and Training Policy (TGE), (1994) ,the practical task of implementing the new curriculum in educational institution requires continuous assessment as part of the curriculum in general and the instructional process in particular.

Moreover, the researcher’s experience show that teachers rarely use different types or methods of assessment. The class tests are mainly paper and pencil tests, thus allowing a very small share to continuous assessment. Additionally, Falayalo (1986) stated in Alausa (1999) “Continuous assessment of learners” progress could be defined as a mechanism whereby the final grading of learners in the cognitive, affective and psycho motor domains of learning systematically takes account of all their performances during a given period at schooling similarly, Ellington and Earl, (1979) in Muluken

(2006, P.20) Similarly, suggested that “ Continuous assessment is carried out on going bases while students are actually working their way through course.”

Many researchers conducted different studies related to validity, reliability and feasibility of CA e.g.

Bogale (1994), teachers perceptions in implementing CA, Muluken (2006) and status of CA and factors affecting its implementation and Getachewu (2008). However, non of them addressed issues related to the existing practices and challenges of CA in the context of first cycle primary schools. Then, the researcher’s attention was to fill this gap of the study. Thus, the importance of this study is un questionable, by examining practice gaps related to the implementation of students CA, the study could suggest alternative solutions to improve the existing practice gaps and challenges of implementation.

Therefore, in this study the researcher wants to investigate the present status and some of the problems in assessing and evaluating students in kirkos sub city primary schools in Addis Ababa. Based on this statement of the problem, the following basic questions are set to guide the study.

Basic Questions

1. To what extent do Kirkos sub-city primary school teachers understand continuous assessment as a method of evaluation?
2. What is the common practice of continuous assessment in these schools looks like?
3. What are the major factors that influence existing teachers’ practices in relation to continuous assessment?

1.3 Objectives of the study

1.3.1 General objective

The general objective of the study was to investigate the implementation of continuous assessment in the second cycle primary schools of kirkos sub city in Addis Ababa.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

The specific objective that guides this study include

1. To identify teachers' understanding about continuous assessment in relation to the policy.
2. To describe existing school practice of continuous assessment by teachers.
3. To identify factors that affects the implementation of continuous assessment in see schools.

1.4. Significance of the Study

The findings of the study were significant in identifying the problems encountered in the implementation process and as a result makes the policy makers and practitioners to be aware of the problems teacher are facing in implementing CA at a classroom level. It will indicate the extent to which CA is used, and the prevailing attitude and awareness of teachers and directors towards CA. Finally, it may also serve for future researchers interested in classroom assessment as a starting point.

1.5 Delimitation of the study

It could have been useful to investigate the implementation process of continuous assessment, at national level or in different parts of the country, because the most reliable and valid information may be found if the research study includes a country

context rather than a specific one. Accordingly it is restricted to identifying the extent to which the continuous assessment is applied in the implementation processes of selected kirkos sub city second cycle primary school in Addis Ababa.

1.6 Limitation of the study

The study was not free of limitations. There were different factors that contributed to the limitations of the study. These includes: lack of cooperation of respondents in filling questionnaire. Some teachers refused to return the questionnaire while some filled the questionnaire and carelessly. Even though, the researcher tolerated the problems and gathered all necessary information for the success of the study.

1.7 Operational Definition of key terms

Continuous assessment periodic observations of learners to find out what a student knows and can do. It is usually done when teachers ask students to perform activities that have been drawn from the curriculum. The teacher uses assessment to adapt instruction to the learner's needs (Joy dupelessies; et al,2003).

Challenge:- difficulty in a job or undertaking that is stimulating to one engaged in it.

Evaluation is an over all judgment of students learning based on continuous assessment usually coming at the end of a semester (Chilora 2003, cited in Desalegn,2004)

Feed back giving information about learners' performance or products back to the learners .Telling a learner how he or she is progressing (Bol, et al, 1988).

Formative assessment is a type of continuous assessment that focuses on providing information to monitor and guide teaching and learning while learning is still in progress. A teacher mostly uses informal assessment methods for formative.

Implementing: - putting in to effect by a means of definite plan or procedure

Performance Assessment- An assessment where a learner has to show or demonstrate an understanding or skill (Gray, c. et al,2004).

Practice:- regular acting in the use of continuous assessment

Perception is the view, opinion or understanding of teachers towards continuous assessment.

Summative assessment is an assessment made at the end of a unit of instruction a semester based on the cumulative progress and achievement of the learners.

1.8 Organization of the study

This study is organized in to five chapters. The first chapter deals with the introduction which includes statement of the study, research questions, significance and definition of terms. The second chapter of the study presents a review of related literature on which the study's theoretical framework is based. The third chapter introduces the research methodology, instruments of data collection employed, procedure of data analysis.

Chapter five is the final section of the research report which presents summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations of some basic points. Reference materials and appendices are attached at the end.

CHAPTER TWO

2. Review of related literature

In this chapter all, the necessary reference materials were systematically organized and used further to strengthen the study

The materials used here include books, journals unpublished materials and internet sources. The major topics include definition of continuous assessment, challenges of implementing of CA, in the context of Ethiopia and experiences of other countries in implementation of CA etc, were incorporated in this section

2.1 The concept of assessment, measurement and evaluation

2.1.1 Assessment

Many scholars wrote about what we mean assessment and how it could be implemented.

Continuous assessment has been defined in a variety of ways by different authors (Crowthe;1995; Nitko,1994,Mckay,1998, Le Grange and Reddy 1998; Njabili, 1999), But , they all agree on the following: continuous assessment occurs on regular and continuous basis ,it is an ongoing process, involves the monitoring of pupils, is integrated with teaching involves a systematic collection of works or grades in to a final score ,may be used to determine the candidates final grades, reflects students abilities over a period of time ,allows for improvement and it is a cumulative process. According to Njabilis (1999:p114) definition of continuous assessment appears to embody most of the identified features. She defines continuous assessment as follows:

A Continuous assessment scheme is one that involves a systematic collection of marks or grades in to a final score taken in to a account in deciding the candidate's final grades. The most distinctive feature of continuous assessment, in general, is that it is cumulative process, developing as the pupil develops and reflecting his/her changes in response to the course.

The history of assessment shows a long line of structure changes designed to inject quality control in to education. It uses a testing system which is designed to measure students performance and hold school accountability in line with this argument. Rink (2006:57) asserted "one of the recent direction of educational reform has been the emphasis of assessment in the teaching learning process. Again, Kellagham and Greeny (2004) reviewed" education for all declaration " give not only fresh imputes to issues related to assessment but also made clear that there has to be a new mode of assessment in order to determine whether student are acquiring the essential knowledge reasoning ability, skills and values that schools have promised to deliver. However plessis (2003) as cited in Muluken (2006) pointed out that assessment as a system appears to rest on a well-considered theoretical under pinning and there are major short coming at the practical implementation level. As such, the current assessment and monitoring procedures and practice do not seem to contribute and inform classroom practices as optimal as originally intended. There are a lot of terms that can be used to describe CA. In some countries people refer CA as teacher grading. Sometimes, it referred as running records, or curriculum based assessment.

In all cases, teacher are given the responsibility to find out what students in their classes know understand and are able to do .When this is done is a variety of ways over time and used to improve instruction ,and then it is considered to be CA(Joy ,2003 as cited in Tamene 2007).

According to institute of Curriculum development and research (ICDR) of Ethiopia (1999) is quoted as saying in particular to assessment and evaluation. Indeed in schools

assessment of learning is usually carried out by teacher on the basis of impressions gained as they observe their pupils at work or by various kinds of tests given periodically. When this practiced as an ongoing process or on a day –to – day basis such assessment is known as CA.

Another definition by Curzon (1990:135) also describes CA is a comprehensive term which refers particularly to enquiring into the learner's competence, knowledge, attitude and skill through various student profit using different assessment methods to improve learning.

In of course, teachers face challenges while they assess student's work in an education setting where they have not enough access to the type of assessment information that will enable them to carry out the assessment accurately and fairly. In conformity to this, Fradd and Lee (2001) in pierce (2002) disclosed that most teachers feel unprepared to assess in the way the institution or the department requires them to do. They further continued, for instance on to argue. Most teacher use the same type of assessment techniques especially, their teachers used while they were at school “ Beside this. Most teacher tend to focus their assessment strategies on what is easy to measure rather than on what is important.

The above statement is also strengthened by other educators such as (Wuest and Lombordo 1998 : Ariasian 1997: kellaghan et.al ... 2004 and other), traditional assessment instrument and techniques tend to measure narrowly defined characteristics, do not facilitate integration of skills or processes and are frequently, artificial in their nature that does not give the trust possible picture of each student's knowledge, Attitude and skill (KAS).

As indicated at the very outset, probably no other activity which takes place in education brings with it so many challenges as assessment. In relation to this issue I

fully concur with Ellindation and Earl Suggestion (1997 :97) that is forwarded in the implementation of assessment, which reads as:

...Successful implementation of assessment demands more work, time and responsibility on the part of teacher. If the teacher is not adequately prepared for operating the system. It may lead to a tendency to cook up scores in the name of assessment.

So it would not be too much of an exaggeration to say that teacher are asked more often than before to increase their use of assessment as part of instruction and to determine the extent to which student have learned in their program. To this effect, this has resulted in an emerging shift to increase the use of alternative from of assessment which compasses great significance from different vantage points.

The same vein Desalegn (2004:2) briefly defined CA as making observation periodically to find out what a student knows understands and can do". From Desalegn 's definition above one can be safe to say that CA is the records of the student's performance in nearly everything a student does throughout the course study that the three interrelated categories of Educational domains of learning. Characterized particular objective are assessed. In view of these, Desalegn (2004) further affirmed CA is mechanism whereby the final grading of learners in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor (*Mind-Heart-Hand*)

Domains of learning are given due emphasis "in fact , the cognitive domain relates to the capacity to think or one's mental skills. As originally defined by Bloom (1956) and revised by Anderson (2001) the affective domain as krathwohl (1964) is all about emotions and feelings especially in relationship to a set of values the psychomotor domain on the other hand is concerned with the mastery of physical skills ranging from reflexive movement to exhibiting appropriate, body language (Harrow.1972)

However, most of the tests which are prepared in schools /universities are intended to measure cognitive behaviors and also the affective domain are not as such commonly tested. Still, the psychomotor is highly emphasized in the lower grade, being an important component as other domains associated with intelligence.

Along with the above definition ICDR (1999:205) pointed out that CA is being used increasing as an alternative to terminal examinations, because it provides more reliable information than examination. It builds up a picture of a pupil's performance over a prolonged and representative period. Hence, schools and universities, in these days, are turning to CA so as to build up a record that is much more complete and reliable.

Generally, from the above definition one can infer that assessment and evaluation are interrelated as a part of CA but do not stand-in as CA. CA is seen as an assessment approach conducted as ongoing process which involves the use of variety of assessment instruments where the overall grading of learners performance is determined from cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains. To this effect .Its aim is directed in identifying those students who have and haven't mastered a particular knowledge and skills and respond quickly to students' real or perceived learning problems and then improve their learning.

Continuous assessment therefore, Can be seen as a means of carrying an assessment formally and informally within the classroom, yet at the same time make valid judgment about a given students progress within a particular subject area. To this end, it may be safe if one considers Desalegn's (2004:21) concern, which reads:

Continuous assessment is not continuous testing Giving test every month and accumulating pupils marks for final grading is an insignificant aspect of the assessment package .CA is a demanding task that requires the use of various assessment tools in order to assure the achievement of curricular objectives by each and every student.

2.1.2 Measurement

According to Crow; Kaminski and Podel (1997:309) they defined measurement, "as it is a process of gathering information and expressing it in numerical terms." Similarly, P.LAL (2006:28) on his side stated that as " measurement is the process of assigning symbols to dimensions of phenomena in order to characterize the status of that phenomena as precisely as possible ."Additionally, measurement is defined, as it is a process of quantification or precision of phenomena or variables" Rani, Priyadarsaini and Rao (2007: 119). Mule and Daniel (2005:7) added as measurement is" a condition when numerical values in the form of scores are attached to the task or when test items are used to quantify student's performance " Linn and Miller (2005:26) mentioned that " measurement is the assessing of numbers to the result of a test or other type of assessment according to specific rule (E.g. counting correct answers or awarding points for particular aspect of an essay" As Jaro Limek and Foster (1997: 337)" measurement is more specific concept and has to do with the use of objective tests and procedures whose results whose results can be converted into quantitative data.

2.1.3 Evaluation

According to Field and Muradock in LAL (2006,p29) these are many scholarly views about evaluation the first one is that " evaluation is the assignment of symbols to phenomena in order to characterize the worth or value of phenomena usually with reference to some social, cultural or scientific standards" Crow, Kaminsky and Podel (1997,p.310) on the other hand defined evaluation as" it is a process of making a value judgment' Mulu and Daniel (200,p,7)suggested the following regarding evaluation.

Evaluation is concerned with making judgment about the relative or absolute worth of entities as varied as an essay, advance performance, a class project, a specific curriculum, a new teaching method or a state wide school system or evaluation is the

process of making value judgment about a relative or absolute worth. Similarly, Wrightstone in Lan (2007,p.26) stated the following.

“Evaluation is a relatively new technical term introduced to design a more comprehensive concept of measurement that is implied in conventional tests and examinations. In examination and measurement the emphasis is up on academic subjects only, where as, evaluation includes all the changes that take place in the development of a balanced personality and measures qualities of head, hand , healthy and heart of an individual in the same way, Arends (1997 ,p-48) on his side added the following. Evaluation usually refers to the process of making judgments, assigning value, or deciding worth. A test for example, is an assessment technique used to collect information about how much students know about a particular topic. Assigning a grade, however ,is an evaluative act, because, the teacher is placing a value on the information gathered on the test. Jarolimek and Foster,(1997,p.337) also added, “ evaluation is a generic term having to do with determining the extent to which the goals and objectives of teaching and learning have been attained.

2.2 The purpose of Assessments

Assessment has to be very comprehensive in a system of education, which aims at the many sided development of personality of the child. According to Airasian (1997,p.24) “ there are many purposes for class room assessment diagnosing pupil problems, judging pupils’ academic performance, providing feed back to pupil of placing pupils, planning and conducting instruction ,and establishing the classroom society” similarly, Aggrawal (1994) identified six important purposes of assessment of personality. These include .To appraise the status and changes in pupils personality development ,to find out pupil needs and possibilities of development ,to find out pupils needs and possibilities of development to aid student teacher planning ,to familiarize the teacher

with the nature of pupil learning. Additionally, it helps to assess development and progress, to serve as a means of improving school – community relations, to facilitate the selection and improvement of assessment instruments ,to appraise the teacher’s competence, and to serve as a guiding principle for selection ,and application of supervisory techniques

1. Student Learning: Assessment is a way for educators to measure progress strengths and areas of growth .Many teachers assess their students using a pre-test mid-term, and posttest to gauge student learning. This may take place throughout a unit or the entire school year.
2. Improvement of teaching: Teachers use assessment to determine what is effective in their teaching practices: what is working and needs improvement. A variety of assessment tools may be used in order to determine what types of instruction are most beneficial in meeting the needs of students.
3. Communication: Assessment should serve as a means of communication between educators students. Administrators and parents, Parents and students often look at assessment to see WHAT is being learned. HOW progress is being measured and the type of instruction being received. Educations and administrators use assessment to evaluate teaching practices and to determine if there are gaps in the curriculum.
4. Program Evaluation: Assessment can prove a good measure of one’s program reveling evidence of the effectiveness of that program. Throughout the year assessment can offer direction to the program and modifications can be made to increase both student and instructional success.

5. Program support: consistent can be used to validate one 's program data gained is objective and can show evidence of goals and objectives being met by both student and teacher. With clear data presented, a strong measure of program support may follow.
6. Motivation : Assessment shows progress. when improvement is show, student feel positive about their learning environment .Documented assessment can offer proof of growth thus enhancing students' motivation to perform to the best of their ability.

2.2.1 Purposes of assessment in the context of group work

Group working provides us with some additional purposes of assessment. This practice has become more widely used in recent years, and its assessment has often given rise to problems, most notably the difficulty of assigning individual grades of for group efforts (e.g. Magin,2001b) Taken into account in the design, use and interpretation of assessments carried out in collaborative small groups. In her discussion of some of the reasons given to justify the use of group work, she noted that the most often cited reasons did not always coincide with the purposes of assessment. Webb observed that the purposes sometimes represent competing goals of group work .For example, group productivity often competes with learning from group work. She also argued that group processes may be different in the two context 'Behavior that is conducive to producing a high-quality group product may not always be conducive to individual learning, and vice versa'(webb,1995:241)

2.3 Main types of Assessment and procedure

There are a number of assessment types and procedures, which are appropriate for different purposes and goals nevertheless the basic assessment procedures and types

that are found to be most useful in the teaching learning process according to Struven, Duchy and Janssen (2002). Gronlund (1981), Fisher (1996) fall in to one of the following types.

2.3.1 Placement Assessment

This focuses on investigating learner entry performance it is concerned mainly with assessing pupil's entry behavior or performance and focuses on giving appropriate responses to the following question.

Do pupils possess the knowledge and skills required to begin the planned instructions?

To what extent are pupils ready to master the objectives of the planned instruction?

Answers to questions like these require the use of variety of techniques, readiness tests, aptitude tests, pre-tests course objectives. Besides, school teachers need to learn about their pupils in the first few days of school they make sizing-up assessment to get a clear picture of their pupils. Information for sizing –up pupils comes from a variety of sources comments of other teachers, classroom observations pupils, comments, test performances much of the sizing up assessment is based on informal observations of pupils. They are subjective descriptive and covert. Informal observations should be supplanted with formal and structured activates (Eurasian) 1997). Generally, placement assessment of learners mostly takes place earlier to the presentation of instruction and it provides information useful to plan learner activity's (Nitko,1996,Capper 1996, Eurasian 1997)

2.3.2 Formative Assessments

Formative assessments is most useful partway through a course or module, and involves giving the students feedback based on the on –going observations' which teachers make use of regarding the student progress. Such kind of assessment provided

vital feedback for the student, which they can use to, improves their future performance . It also gives information on pupils strengths and weaknesses to teacher's parents and students themselves.

2.3.3 Summative Assessment

Brook hart (1999:7-8) explaining summative assessment via analogy, stated" when the cook tastes the soup, that is for motive assessment , when the customer tastes the soup, that is summative assessment .This type of assessment occurs at the end of a unit of instruction, at term or at the end of a year to evaluate students achievement of the curriculum objectives (Nitko,2004) on the other hand, Capper (1996) argues that summative assessment has two aspects. The first takes place at the end of a unit chapter, or semester exams to measure progress during a given time span , However, it is primarily used for grading or certifying students for the completion of the set course or year. Summative assessment is used, for grading promoting, and certifying purposes, it is also helpful for providing information based on the assessment of the effectiveness of a program of instruction (ICDR, 2004).

2.3.4. Diagnostic Assessment

As Striuven, Ducny and Janssen (2002) view the aim of diagnostic assessment is to determine the causes of persistent or recurring learning difficulties that are left unresolved by the standard corrective prescription of formative assessment and to formulate plan for remedial actions.

2.3.5 Assessment Methods

Different scholars briefly elaborated methods and different techniques used in assessment .From these scholars Arends (1977.p.18) clearly discussed the following.

There is a general belief that assessment practices keyed to minimal competencies and measured with standardized, objective type tests have failed to promote and measure the higher level of thinking and problems solving skills required in to day's world. Many educators, citizens, and measurement experts believe that this situation can be corrected by introducing such new approaches to student assessment as performance assessment authentic assessment student portfolios and grading for team effort Essentially, these assessment procedures allow students to show what they can do when comforted with authentic problem situations that do not lend themselves to assessment by paper-pencil tests. Similarly, Burden (2003,p157) elaborated about different assessment methods and different techniques of assessment as follow:

Some students demonstrate their learning better through certain type of assessment since there are many types of students in classroom, a variety of methods for evaluating student learning should be used using a variety of approaches such as written or oral tests, reports or projects interviews ,portfolios, writing samples and observation will circumvent bias. In addition, evaluation of student learning should be at several levels recall, comprehension, application analysis, synthesis and evaluation.

2.3.6 Assessment strategies

A variety of methods have been used to assess group work. Some of these focus on the product, others on the process. Given that group projects typically extended over a period of weeks, emphasis on the process seems particularly appropriate. Some methods result in quantitative scores or measurements, while others are qualitative and primarily used for developmental evaluative purpose a few focus on the group as an holistic entity. Boud et al. (1999: 421) argued that, if student are expected to cooperate and work together ,the notion of assessing the min terms of group rather than individual outcomes can appear attractive ;however, the authors concluded that

,without sufficient opportunity for developing group planning and group accountability skills, the use of group assessments is premature they recommended schemes which contain a mix of individual and group assessment for common tasks.

2.4 Assessment and Evaluation strategies

There are many assessment and evaluation strategies discussed by different scholars and organizations. From these, the following were cited in RMC research corporation (2000) as important assessment and evaluation strategies.

a. Book response journals

Similar to a learning log ,the book response journal is a place for students to express personal reactions and to wonder about events, themes, and ideas in a book children are encouraged to react to everything they read. Teachers may use these journals to respond to each child individually sharing their questions, feeling, and ideas about literature and making suggestions for further reading or related activities. Some teachers hold individuals reading conferences with their students and use these book response journals as part conferences.

b. Comparison charts

Comparison charts are one of a number of graphic organizers. They involve the examinations of similarities and differences among idea, vents, characteristics, etc. Comparison charts may take a number of forms and are on excellent way to engage student individually or in groups as they seek to focus characters, erects, or themes within a single story or compare books, vents, or properties within a given theme.

c. Conferences

There are many types of conferences including reading, writing, goal setting, evaluation, and coaching. The major purposes are to collaborating, assess and guide.

d. Cooperative learning activities

Cooperative learning involves students working together in groups (often following a teacher presented lesson) with group goals and individual accountability.

e. Demonstration

A demonstration transforms, ideas in to something concrete and observable through visual, audio, art, drama, movement or music. This could also include opportunities to demonstrate and explain procedures and strategies such as a science experiment or a solution to a non –routine problem.

f. Discussion

A discussion provides a safe, open forum where children are encouraged to speak, listen, and respond to opinions, feelings, and ideas regarding the designated topic .

g. Goal setting

Setting goals with children provides the basis for monitoring student performance through collaboration and self-reflection

h. Graffiti walls

Graffiti walls are free from spaces for brain storming or communicating words, phrases or ideas on a topic these are often used as evolving records. A teacher may use them to facilitate brain storming on a particular theme at the beginning of a unit, as well as encourage students to add new words or phrases relating to them as the unit

progresses. In addition to encouraging children to search for new and interesting words, the graffiti wall serves as a class dictionary students need novel words to enrich their writing.

“I learned” statements

i. “I learned” statements be in either written or oral form their purpose is merely to give students a chance to self- select one or more of the things they learned during a class session, an investigation, or series of lessons.

j. Interviews

An interview is structured or unstructured dialogue with students in which the student report his/her reaction or response to a single question or a series of questions this typically provides an opportunity for the teacher to determine the student depth of understanding rather than whether the student can provide the “correct” answer.

Questioning may follow a period of observation to discover if the student’s perception of a situation is the same as the observers.

k. Investigation

Investigation may be related to a specific subject area or may involve several area, integrating curriculum. The most typical form of investigation is a collection of student writing diagrams, table , charts, experiments and other products ,when student become involved in practical or mathematic investigation ,assessment activities or questions can be presented to students without their awareness of any difference between the assessment and instruction.

l. Oral presentations

Oral presentations include speeches, storytelling retelling, recitations, drama, videos, debates, and oral interpretation and are evaluated according to predetermined criteria

m. Peer Evaluations

Peer evaluations consist of student analysis and assessment of peer proficiency using either established or self-generated criteria an activity must be very carefully structured if students are to receive valid feedback from their peers.

Problems of peer assessment in groups

Many teachers and researchers have encountered some problems associated with peer assessment of group work Student reluctance to participate;

- Student discomfort during and after participation,
- Weaker students are being carried by the group and receiving inflated grades at the expense of more capable students (e.g. Heathfield,1999)
- Peers deferring to teacher.

Self- evaluations

A key concept in alternative assessment is having the student learn to recognize his/her own progress by taking the time to reflect. Those who are able to review their own performance ,explain the reasons for choosing the processes they used and identify the next step, develop insight and self involvement self- reflection, an important concept in any form of assessment, is a particular important component of a student portfolio.

n. Observations

Colhen et al.(2000) see observation as an attractive technique, because when carrying it out, you are dealing with a real situation rather than artificial laboratory- based behavior. However, most situations are complex and Simpson and Tuson (1995:22) pointed out that,

One of the most difficult decisions is choosing exactly who or what you are going to select as the observational focus of your study and putting strict boundaries around it so that your study is kept manageable in terms of scale. Observations can be placed on a continuum from highly structured to unstructured. Colhen et al (2000)(and, indeed any good research manual) provide further details for interested readers of how observations may be made.

Simpson and Tuson (1995) reviewed some of the problems to which observational method can give rise. As they point out, observing others at close quarters as they go about their normal business intrudes into people 's personal lives and space, and raise certain ethical issues.

Observation is occasionally used as an assessment strategy in higher education. For example, in Radnor and Shaw's (1995) 'reconciliation model' of assessment, assessment is integrative and formative ,no specific instruments are used, and teachers form judgments through observation and students' responses to set tasks. Similarly, the AAHE(2001a) described a project to be guided by Alverno College faculty, based on the 'student assessment as learning 'principle. Integral to this process is the observation and judgment of each student's performance on the basis of explicit criteria. Swanson et al (1995) reported that observations of student in the workplace, along with witness testimonies and simulations, can provide good sources of evidence of learning and can constitute' developed assessment.

Assessing observation

Observation as assessment involves several problems. For example, McMartin et al. (2000) noted its time-consuming nature. Unstructured observations, where no criteria are made explicit and where checklists are not used, are particularly problematic. Structured observations, with operationalized behaviors and explicit criteria, are preferable. There is some information to be found on the internet relating to the assessment of the observational technique. One of the more useful contributions came from the center for applied research and educational improvement at the university of Minnesota (CAREI, 2003). In this, details of an assignment using observational techniques is described in some detail. Learners are provided with task information, hints on how to proceed and a rubric for assessing the final product. It is not clear from the information provided whether assessment of the product is carried.

o. Oral presentations

Oral presentations seem to feature more in higher education, and much has been written about their assessment. In oral presentations, students, working alone or in small groups, typically research a topic and present their work to their peers. Several overview of alternative or new assessments refer to oral presentations as a widely used vehicle (e.g. McDowell, 1995; Birenbaum, 1996; McDowell and Sambell, 1999; Dierick and Dochy, 2001) reports of individual studies are numerous (e.g. Carter and Neal, 1995). In particular, Magin and colleagues have been involved in studies of assessment of oral presentations at the University of New South Wales for a number of years (e.g. Magin and Reizes, 1995; Magin and Helmore, 1999, 2001; Magin et al., 2001).

Assessing oral presentations

Oral presentations are often associated with self-or peer assessment (e.g. Price and culter,1995 ; Roach,1999). I have used oral presentations with a variety of students a variety of levels and for a variety of levels and for a variety of purposes over a number of years (e.g. Falchiko, 1995a) I find that involving student in the assessment of presentations is extremely beneficial at its most basic having to provide feedback to peer requires concentration , which, in itself makes for more active engagement than simply listening this is as true for teachers as for students other skills may be developed , not least of all the skills of analysis and application of criteria. Tact, too, may be encouraged when having to critique a peer's presentation.

p. Portfolios

Birenbaum argued that most quoted definitions of portfolio' is that provide by Arter and Spandel (1992) who described it as a 'purposeful collection of student that tells the story of the student's efforts, progress, or achievement in (a) given area (s) (Birenbaum,1996:8) portfolios must include not only the guidelines for selection of items, but must involves students in the selection of portfolio content. They must also contain the criteria for judgment and evidence of self- reflection on the part of the student. Hall (1992) defines a professional development portfolio for teachers and lectures as 'collection of material, made by a professional, that records, and reflects on, key events and processes in that professionals' Career (Hall,1992 81,in Challis, 1999:370)

D'Aoust (1992) identified three types of portfolio

- Exemplary folio- best/most representative example
- Process folio- examples of the development process
- Combined folio -2 sub –folios incorporating exemplary and process elements

Challis (1999) argued that it is difficult to describe a 'typical' portfolio given the very personal nature of this form of assessment .she noted that some portfolios, such as those used simply to record a range of activity can be relatively unstructured. However , when portfolios are to be used as part of a formal assessment ,some structure is desirable.

Challis (1999: 370) listed the benefits arising from the use of portfolio based learning;

- It recognizes and encourages the autonomous and reflective learning that is an integral part of professional education and development
- It is base on the real experience of the learner, and so enable the consolidation of the connection between theory and practice;
- It allows a range of learning styles to be used according to the preferences of the learner;
- It enable assessment within a framework of transparent and declared criteria and learning objectives ;
- It can accommodate evidence of learning from a ranges of different contexts;
- It provides a process for both formative and summative assessment based on either personally derive or externally governed learning objectives;
- It provides a model for lifelong learning and continuing professional development .

Keith (1996:180) also argued that ,when used formatively, portfolios become 'a tool for learning as well as measurement'. Portfolio –based learning seems to be widely used in the professions challis (1999) and Ben- David (2000) reported examples

from the medical profession. Challis has also reported examples of portfolio use with pre-registration house officers, in general practice training , with specialist registration house officers, in general practices training ,with specialist registrars, for continuing professional development and in nursing education. Young (1990) referred to portfolio use in the Health sciences. Several examples come from teacher education (e.g. Halsall, 1995; young 1999; Goosling,2000) portfolio are also used in the teaching.

2.5 Reasons for using Continuous Assessment in a class room

According to Capper, 1996, Plessis and et al, (2003), the reasons for using continuous assessment are to

- Find out what students know and can do
- Gain confidence in what teachers say their students know and can do
- Provide all children with opportunity to show what they know
- Promote learning for understanding
- Identify which student need assistance
- Let the students know how well they are progressing in their own learning
- Let parents know how their children are progress –progressing
- Lead to over all evaluation

2.6 Characteristics of continuous Assessment

A more complete view of continuous assessment requires that a teacher understands information about students learning and should be used

continuously during the teaching process to improve teaching and learning. Therefore according to Jamaica ministry of education, youth and culture (2004), effective class room assessment module, there are four features of continuous assessment.

2.6.1 Continuous assessment encourages the use of Multiple works

Assessment occurs often and for different purposes and is not limited to the end of term or end of year hence, multiple samples of students work are taken in order to make a better overall evaluation of students needs and learning achievement .

2.6 .2 Continuous assessment allows for timely feedback to the major stake holders in the systems.

When a continuous assessment mode is used, the teacher can regularly monitor and report on the progress that students are making towards the attainment target and objectives set out in the official curriculum it a teacher does not recognizes student's learning errors until the end of the term or the end-of the year, it usually is too late for any corrective measures to be taken. The nature of the feedback a student receives as well as its timeliness can significantly impact on how a student responds to it .Feedback benefits students, teachers and parents, critical persons during the teaching learning process.

2.6.3 The continuous assessment model makes it easier to use a variety of assessment methods

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

greatly improved when you use a variety of assessment methods for gathering and interpreting students' information.

2.6.4 Continuous assessment gives opportunities for collaboration

Including students in the assessment process through self evaluation and peer evaluations and asking for reflection on what they have learned motivates them. In this manner each student can be challenged to show evidence of his/her mastery of the objectives. Jamaica Ministry of education, youth and culture (2004).

Similarly USAID /Basic Education Program (2006), explains the following basic characteristics of continuous assessment.

1. It is an on- going process of gathering information about students learning progress
2. It uses a variety of techniques to make decisions
 - About what to teach
 - About how to teach
 - About how well students have learned
3. It provide timely feedback to students about what they need to do improve their learning
- 4.It is aligned with curriculum goals and objectives. USAID /Basic Education Program (2006)

2.6.5 Rationales for using continuous Assessment

The conventional assessment focuses more on the end results that students get-some scholars argue that although important to judge the achievement if students at the end of a semester or a course, assessment should mainly be used to improve teaching learning process (Plaessisetal, 2003, Pasigna, 2002 Ellington and etal, 1997) Hence, they advocated a paradigm shift from conventional assessment to CA the central characteristic of this shift the moving of assessment from a judgmental role to a development role... this more reflects evolving ideas on the nature of assessment and it purpose (Puihi,1997:3)

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

- To diagnose learner strengths and needs (so that appropriate events are teaching can be provided)
- To provide feedback to teachers about how well they are teaching (so that they can make needed changes and continue doing things that are effectively
- To ensure and improve the effectiveness of your school
- To provide abases for instructional placement
- To predict learners readiness for future learning
- To provide a record of progress

- To evaluate and grade learner achievement
- To motivate and focus learner attention and effort (to help them learn better)
- To make clear to learner what they are expected to learn
- To inform learners how well they are learning (so they continue to do good work and so that they know when they need to improve)
- To evaluate and grade learner achievement. Generally, by assessing students continuously it is possible to get regular information about teaching, learning and the achievement of learning objectives and competences. Moreover teaching and learning is not a process that can be completed in a short period of time, so it need an ongoing assessment.

2.6.6 Teachers practice on assessment and the problem they face

Important issues related to the principles that guide good assessment were in corporate here under

2.6.7 Factors that must be considered to maximize the efficiency of assessment

According to Mulu and Daniel (2005,p13) the following are the general principles of measurement and evaluation that guide the whole assessment process. Both evaluation and measurement decisions should make in terms of the purpose for which you will use them. Evaluation of student learning is integral part of the instructional process, comprehensive evaluation requires a variety of assessment techniques proper use of evaluation techniques requires and awareness of their limitation as well as their strength and evaluation is a means to an end not and end in itself.

2.6.8 Difficulties in assessment

Aggrawal (1994,p.366) as follow elaborated difficulties of assessing personality. Several difficulties are encountered in the assessment of personality. Although for psychologists have been trying to develop sound techniques for measuring personality yet even to-day ,they are far away from this goal. There are three basic reasons for to arriving at exact conclusion include complex nature of the individuals whose personality to be assess, complex nature of the assessor, and personality and nature of assessment instruments.

2.6.9 Standards for teacher competence in educational assessment of students

Teachers' Knowledge in assessing learners has the greatest position. Unless teachers have adequate knowledge to teach, to mange the class and assess the learners accordingly, the teaching and learning process could affected as a whole. Related to this fact Linn and Miller (2005.p.p.521-523) stressed on the following important points as standards for teacher competence in educational assessment of students teacher should be skilled in choosing assessment methods appropriate for instructional decisions. Teacher should be skilled in administrating, scoring, and interpreting the result of both externally produced and teacher produced assessment methods.

Teacher should be skilled in using assessment results when making decisions about individual student's planning, teaching, developing curriculum, and school improvement. Teacher should be skilled in developing valid pupil grading procedures, which use pupil assessment teacher should be skilled in communicating assessment results to students parents, other lay audiences, and other educators. Teacher should be skilled in recognizing on ethical and other wise in appropriate assessment methods and use of assessment information.

2.7 How to use continuous assessment in the classroom

In the modern way of thinking ,using CA to assess the learners rather than giving tests at the end of one chapter or one unit is more preferable in many countries of the world including Ethiopia the main things to be recognized while using CA in the classroom include assessment questions preparation and documentation ,the way of keeping records in the learners portfolios, using varieties of assessment techniques to assess the learner's performances properly and direct involvement of the learner in his/her own assessment etc. many scholars accepted the importance of portfolio in CA. Regarding this Matthew Apple and Etsuko Shimo (2004), stated that rather than judging a single moment in time, as does an exam, portfolios emphasize individual progress towards goals, which the learners themselves help establish. In that sense, portfolios offer a collaborative assessment, an assessment partly determined by the instructor and partly determined by the learner. This assessment includes not only an assessment of what the result was, but the how and the way, how a student reached the result and why the result came about. “

Additionally, Phul (1997) mentioned the important classroom device in CA as follow, we used classroom CA devices such as self-assessment, peer-assessment and assessment by lecturer, portfolio, and relative statement.

2.7.1 Limitations of assessment as measurement

Serafini (2000) in analyzing assessment practices, conceptualized traditional assessment as assessment as measurement' this is characterized by use a limited number of assessment strategies and techniques it relies heavily on traditional unseen examinations and essay-type continuous assessments or multiple-choice questions. It has been argue that over reliance on a single technique can have adverse effects, as many aspects of learning are not measured by any one assessment method. For

example, as Elton and Johnson (2002:7) noted, 'traditional assessment practices, consisting pre-eminently of the assessment of essay and problem type final examination and similarly constructed course work cannot adequately test for imponderables like independent critical thinking, creativity, etc and this is particularly so for time limited examinations. Similarly, traditional methods may not be good at laying the foundations for life time learning or preparation for work.

In the assessment as measurement paradigm, argued Serafini (2000: 2) objectivities standardization and reliability take priority over concerns of teacher and student involvement ' valid assessment requires that we measure what we set out to measure, but ,too often, as race (2000:2) maintained, we measure what we are able to measure ghosts of the manifestation of the achievement of learning outcomes by students reliability of assessment may be tested by multiple or by double blind marking at best. In addition, Race argued that agreements between markers do not give cause for great confidence that our marking is reliable, as multiple marking causes regression to the mean O'Donovan et al, (2000) also reported a growing concern over reliability and standards in UK higher education, noting the increased proportion of 'good' degree results (upper 2nd and 1st class) awarded in recent years ,at a time of rapid expansion and severe cuts in higher education.

Burke (1996) identified a major problem with one aspect of traditional assessment, in that use of the A-B -C -D -F grading system is often deeply antagonistic to the goals of education Birenbaum (1996 :5) noted that other negative consequences of the assessment as measurement model include inflated test scores and 'test pollution, teaching to the test or, in extreme cases, teaching the test.

2.7.2 Assessment and learning

According to Grand (2006,p.1) assessment in education primarily must serve the purpose of supporting learning, he also added the expand roles for learners are reflected in the assessment process:" From many important issues rose about the principles of assessment for learning which although the focus is mainly on what teachers can do, state the roles of teachers should be to help students take on new roles as learners, especially to understand the learning goals they are pursuing and their peers and /or their teacher will use for assessing progress, understand how they are learning as well as what they are learning reflect on their learning strengths and weakness to develop approaches to learning that build on these, make progress through constrictive for motive feedback from peers and their teacher on how to improve up on their works, think about their learning and progress in relation to their own previous performance rather than in comparison with others finally, develop the skill of peer and self- assessment as unimportant way of engaging in self –reflection, identifying the next steps in their learning and encouraging their peers to do the same.

Regarding this USAID EQUIPI (2003); said that in today's policy environment, testing has become a critical components of education reform policy makers and evaluation administrators often view test scores as a measure of educational quality and use test scores to hold schools accountable for teacher performance. Continuous assessment an alternative or supplement to high tasks testing or pupil achievement, offers a methodology for measuring pupil performance and using those findings to improve the success of pupils continuous assessment is a class room strategy implemented by teachers to ascertain the knowledge' understanding, and skills attained by pupils, know, understand, and can do. These assessments are curriculum-based tasks previously taught in class.

Continuous assessment occurs frequently during the school year and is part of regular teacher pupil interactions pupils receive feedback from teachers based on their performance that allows them to focus on topics they have not yet mastered teachers learn which students need review and remediation and which pupils are ready to move on to more complex work. Thus, the results of the assessments help to ensure that all pupils make learning progress throughout the school cycle thereby increasing their academic achievements.

2.7.3 The Attitudes of Teachers Towards Assessment

Researchers and educators share the idea that teachers low interest or negative attitude towards assessment has contributed to poor assessment practice. In light of this, Brookhart (2002) reviewed that teachers have negative attitudes towards tests used in such a way as to have what they perceive as negative consequences for their students.

Further more, Nitko (1996) and Gronlund and Linn (2000) cited in Birhanu (2004) stated that a new assessment program can succeed only if teachers accept it. If teachers do not have clear understanding of the idea of assessment and if they are not ready to accept the basic philosophy of the program, its implementation will be in question.

Similarly, Teshome (2001) has remarked that teachers must understand the assessment process and accept it as their own for its effective implementation. In spite of this fact, lack of orientation and assistance from the concerned individuals, insufficient training and lack of adequate materials make it difficult for teachers to appreciate and apply CA.

Marso and Pigge (1993) cited in Brookhart (2002) concluded in his review that there were conflicting findings about teacher attitudes towards assessment. Accordingly, some studies they reviewed showed teachers' lack of confidence in testing while some others expressed confidence in their knowledge about testing.

2.7.4 Teachers' practice on assessment and the problems they face.

Teachers face a challenge while they assess student's work in an educational setting where they have not enough access to the type of assessment information that will enable them carry out the assessment accurately and fairly (Pierce, 2002). Related to this, Ellington and Earl (1997) outlined that if teachers are not enriched with the basic skills of record keeping as part of CA of students' work, there is a danger that scores are to be misplaced and they might be made difficult to retrieve similarly, Fradd and Lee (2001) in Pierce (2002) stated that most teachers feel unprepared to assess in the way the institution or the department requires to be done. They further stated that most teachers use the same type of assessment techniques especially those that they were being assessed while they were in schools. Successful implementation of CA demands more work, time and responsibility on the part of teachers. If the teacher is not adequately prepared for operating the system, it may lead to a tendency to cook up scores in the name of CA (Ellington and Earl, 1997).

The study carried out by Crooks (1988) in Black and Wiliam (1998) also showed that teachers have not adequate understanding of CA and this leads to the weak practices. Emphasizing on this point, Black and Wiliam (1998) stated that the implementation of CA calls for deep changes both in teachers' perception of their own role in relation to their students and their classroom practice. On top this, Paworth (2005) pointed out that lack of receptiveness by pupils who feel that they are constantly being tested is another problem teachers face. In sum, the study by Crooks (1998) in Black and Wiliam (1998) mentioned the following reasons that lead teachers'

2.7.5 Practices to be weak in putting CA in to practice.

- The fact that the emphasis of assessment is on grading function rather than the learning function of the assessment.

- The assessment practices usually encourage superficial and rote learning that focuses on recall at isolated facts.
- Teachers do not usually review the assessment questions they use and do not discuss them colleagues that lead to have little or no reflection on what is being assessed.
- There is a tendency to use normative rather than criterion- based approach that emphasizes competition between students rather than personal progress of each.

The evidence in such type of practices is that the feedback is to teach the weaker students visualize their own weaknesses that demotivate and loose in their own capacity to learn. In line with this, sprint hall, sprint hall and Oja (1994) mentioned the reasons teachers may give for not practicing CA. These include large class size, limited number of rooms lack of teachers and heavy work load given for teachers. By the same token, Hayes (1997) cited the effect of class size on teachers' feeling as a problem. In spite of this fact, Allwright (1989) cited in Hayes (1997) asserted that available research evidence indicated class size might not be the problem for student achievement Locastrro (2001) also disregard large class size as a problem particularly in language teaching. According to these view points, large class size is seen relative to contexts and purposes. The emphasis is that teachers are expected to use variety of learning strategies which may help learners to achieve the goal of learning. Regarding large class size, Sarwar (2001) recommended project- based learning as a solution.

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

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

- Discipline and classroom problems.

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

Control- teachers feel that they are unable to manage disciplinary problems.

- Evaluation- teachers feel uneasy to carry out assessment for a number of pupils for it demands more time and energy.
- Individual attention- may teachers feel they are neglecting the needs of their students as individual.

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

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

2.8 Continuous assessments in the context of Ethiopia

The existing practice, rules and regulation in Ethiopia related to the implementations of CA are treated in this topic.

2.8.1 Assessment and promotion

As MoE (2010) ,every teacher should carry out regular checks on the progress of all students in each subject. This is done through continuous and formal assessment it is intended to be a spontaneous and natural part of teaching and learning process, not merely an activity that take place at the end of term or year. It should ensure that students at all levels are genuinely able to achieve the competencies expected of them in addition to the formal conventional tests, a key requirement of the implementation of

the revised curriculum will be the planning of assessment tasks as part of the school program that will show teachers whether, or not students are achieving the expected competences. These tasks are intended to be undertaken throughout the year, such assessments is known as continuous assessment.

Continuous assessment must

Be interesting for students to complete, help teachers to assess the new learning outcomes, help teachers analyze the kind of mistakes that students make in order to be able to help them improve by assessing students in this way. Their ability to achieve the competency can be monitored day by day, they can be informed of their achievements and encouraged to perform better, the result obtained can be used for promotion .similarly information on their achievement can be given to parents / guardians, administration and others /new plans for effective teaching and learning can be made, records can kept of students.

Progress throughout the term and the year. Finally those with learning difficulties can be identified so that remedial work can be provided and those who are talented and gifted can be provided with enrichment work MoE,(2010 P.59). About using varieties of assessment techniques MoE also addressed the following issues. Assessment can be done using oral, written or practical assessment.

Assessment through oral work

Teachers need to observe students and engage them in questioning and discussion. Use full evidence of understanding can be obtained when students are encouraged to talk about how they under take their task. Steps to follow when assessing students through oral work include.

Select competencies to assess in a given learning area set activities to assess the students, give the activities to the student achievement of the competencies expected at the given level. Also observe and assess life skills and values as students participate ,oral work is important since it helps the students to develop their listening and speaking skills, which are important in the development of reading ,writing and mathematical concepts, life skills and values.

Assessment through written work

Written work is the most common source of evidence that a student has achieved a competency. As well as correcting written work and asking students to amend it , teachers could ask students to explain in writing what did student should also have the opportunity to redraft and present their best effort.

Steps to follow when assessing students through written work include.

Select the competency to assess in a given learning area, set activities to assess the students, give the activity to the students, mark the work done by individual students and record each student's achievement , ensure that students do corrections and these are marked the students work is checked and marked regularly and helpful comments are made.

Assessment through practical work .Provides teachers with excellent opportunities to observe and assess their student's performances and raise issues for discussion and them analyze their answers by observing how students start a task ,apply this knowledge to a task, choose the correct resource for the task and report clearly on their results, teachers have evidences of students' understanding and learning

Steps to follow when assessing students through practical work include

Select the competency to assess in a given learning area, set activities to assess the students, give the activity to assess the students, display students work, observe and assess life skills and values as students work.

In assessing life skills and values , students should be able to share and be tolerant, respect themselves and others, work with others comfortably ,express themselves clearly be responsible for their own actions.

Students in the first cycle of primary education should be assessed using continuous assessment only with no formal conventional examination given their promotion will depend only on the continuous assessment. The primary purpose of assessment at this stage must be diagnostic and remedial. If a student is failing to achieve a particular competency the teacher, provide remedial work so that the student can catch up. If another student is achieving at a high level all the time, the teacher should find more work that is challenging for that student although this is an ideal, it may not be easy to achieve for every large class size, but it is a standard that must be attempted assessment without redial support is of little value at this stage of learning. If sufficient support is available both in terms of supervision and teaching materials, teacher will be able to provide this type of diagnostic and remedial style assessment MoE ,(2010,p,p 60-62).

2.9 Some contrasts traditional way of assessment Vs continuous assessment

According to Henry Ellington (1997), in assessing students performance, we explained the distinction between terminal assessment and continuous assessment. We showed that the former is carried out at the end of a course or a major unit e.g. by sitting an examination undergoing a practical or situational assessment of some sort, or submitting a major item or collection of work. We also saw that terminal assessment is

almost invariably carried out for summative purposes. For example determine whether students can proceed to the next stage of the course to determine whether they should be accredited with having satisfactorily completed the course unit being assessed, or to contribute to their final mark, grade or degree classification. Continuous assessment, on the other hand, is carried out on an ongoing basis while students are actually working their way through a course or major unit. As we saw, it can take a wide range of forms, including periodic tests, essays and other types of assignment, ongoing assessment of practical or studio work, or situational assessment we saw that such assessment could be either summative or formative.

Terminal and continuous assessment can be thought of as two contrasting paradigms of assessment the former is based on the premise that it is best to wait until the end of a course or course unit before carrying out the ultimately recorded part of the assessment, since it is only then that it is possible to form a realistic overall picture of what each student has achieved by working through the course. To carry out important assessment (other than for progression-control purposes) before this time is, it argued, unfair to the students, for it does not allow them to develop to their full potential, and may well disadvantage students who only pull things together as they hear the end of a program of instruction. This paradigm dominated higher education assessment in the past. Their position depends on a wide variety of factors e.g the nature of the course or course unit, the level and background of the students, historical precedent, and constraints or pressure imposed by validating and (or professional bodies, and of course their own inclinations and preferences).

Related studies Pertaining CA

In Malawi

High dropout rates, overcrowded classrooms and poorly trained or untrained teachers characterized Malawi's education system after free primary education was introduced in 1994 by 1999 USAID –funded study by the improving education quality (IEO) project confirmed that pupils in grade 3 did not have basic literacy and numeric skills. USAID partnered with the Malawi ministry of education science. And technology to conduct a feasibility study of the impact on pupil achievement of the implementation of continuous assessment primary schools through the USAID –supported IEQII project. The IEQ/Malawi team developed a model of continuous assessment that took into consideration the Malawi primary school curricula for maths. Chichewa and English, the lack of teacher preparation and the large class size . The continuous assessment model was implemented in 21 primary school in the Ntcheu district and the achievement of 122 pupil in those schools was compared to that of 603 pupils in the districts of Mangochi and Balaka .At the beginning of the year, pupils in Ntcheu were able to recognize about the same number of common English words as were pupils in the other two districted (14 in Nteheeu 9 in Mangochi and Balaka) but by the end of the year recognize almost twice as many (41 in Ntcheu. 22 in Mangochi and Balaka) During the same year, pupil in Ntcheu increased the percentage of math problems they answered correctly by 14 percentage pointes compared to a six percentage point increase by pupil in Mangochi and Balaka. Policy makers are now considering integrating the continuities assessment model in to all of malawis primary school beginning with the primary school curriculum and the teacher training collage .

Southern Africa Conference on Continuous Assessment: June 30 - July 2, 2003

The Examination Council of Zambia, assisted by USAID, hosted a sub-regional conference on assessment, "Learner Assessment for Improved Educational Quality: An Exchange of Current Ideas and Best Practices" in Livingston, Zambia. Presentations and discussions revolved around three sub-themes: continuous assessment at the primary and secondary levels; competence testing at the primary school level; and learner assessment in non-formal education environments. Among the key issues noted was the need for teacher education on the tasks of the administration, interpretation, recording, and reporting of assessments, with a suggestion to integrate continuous assessment course work into teacher training colleges. Other observations that came out of the meeting included making continuous assessment complementary to national examinations, relating continuous assessment to remedial interventions, and having a strong process of inspection to ensure and to monitor the use of continuous assessment in schools. The group plans to meet in 2004 in Zimbabwe continue the forum on assessment.

Continuous Assessment in Out-of-School Education Settings – Honduras

In 1999, Hurricane Mitch had destroyed many schools and USAID wanted to meet the immediate needs of middle grade learners now out of school by providing expanded learning opportunities through Educations. USAID's Improving Educational Quality (IEQ) project partnered with the Educations program in Honduras to extend its already successful education program for primary level learners (grades 1-6) outside of the formal school system to the secondary level (grades 7-9).

Work in primary schools suggested that monthly progress tests in Spanish and math helped teachers to use more transparent evaluation criteria and provided more attention to children who were falling behind.

Thus, in the process of developing integrated curriculum materials, Educations/IEQ established continuous assessment processes designed to enhance the quality of the non-formal education experience and to learn what students were and were not mastering in the curriculum.

For instance, volunteer class facilitators received training that allowed them to give feedback on assessment sessions to learners. In addition, and perhaps more importantly, the learning materials included self-assessment exercises that enabled learners to continuously review and strengthen their own understanding of the material and to work together to peer review each other's understandings.

The sustained use and support of the continuous assessment methodology and the incorporation of it into the revised grade 1-6 program illustrate its importance to the quality of the learning experience provided by the Educations alternative mode of education delivery.

Basic requirements for Assessment

- The following pre conditions need to be met to make an effective and appropriate assessment (ICDR,2004)
- Assessment must be a planned activity it should plan how and when the assessment will be made.
- Assessment should be will administered and its results must be recorded, documented and also reported.
- The items should be prepared in a clear, readable and precise language
- Variety of items and assessment techniques should be selected and applied
- The assessment should be based on the actual condition, time, place and social factors of the class, pupils levels of knowledge and the nature of instruction

- The teacher must be equipped with adequate knowledge and capacity about assessment techniques.

Principles of good assessment

Furthermore, Jarolimek and Parker (1997), Ruddell (1997) suggested the following as principles of good assessment these include.

1. It should reduce competition and increase cooperation in the class room. This is against the commonly held belief of traditional paper and pencil test systems. Many researchers have opposed this view. They say it has negative impacts on learning. The purpose of assessment is to find out how well and in what way students are able to do what they want them to do. Thus, cooperation among the student is needed. Assessment should build feelings of self worth and competence.
2. Assessment should focus on learning its goals are to encourage, assist and enhance learning, not to punish students who perform poorly
3. Treat assessment as an integral part of curriculum and instruction.
If assessment is to facilitate student learning it must be woven in to the fabric of curriculum and instruction it must be done before, during and after instruction.
4. Provide ample opportunities for students to learn. Before students are to be assessed they should be given ample opportunities for their learning
5. It should include consistent and meaningful reporting
6. It should be equitable
Assessment procedures are fair just, and impartial there is no bias in terms of race gender abilities, culture socioeconomic status or language background

Values and attitudes about continuous Assessment

- 1) Teachers value and believe in students.
- 2) Sharing learning goals with the students.
- 3) Involving students in self- assessment.
- 4) Providing feedback that helps students recognize their next steps and how to take them.
- 5) Being confident that every student can improve.
- 6) Providing students with examples of what we expect from them.

National Research Findings on the Implementation of C.A

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

Derebsa (2006) also in his research findings on assessment techniques and the implementation of a learner centered focus on the right answers to an examination question, students commit a large part of their time to memorizing chunks of information as replied by 90.3% of the sample student because teachers mostly emphasize facts and information in their questions for exams (tests) He further explains his findings by saying that assessment ,particularly in the form of examination, which emphasizes recall of a wide range to very specific information .

and problems solving by formula does not encourage. Active learning, as replied by many sample students (66.8%) the assessment system employed by teachers only allows students to pass by replying information from lectures and text books.

The purpose of evaluation in the learner centered learning approach is not merely to rate the learners performance and to maintain academic standards but it should be used instead to encourage independent learning and critical thinking Derbssa (2006).

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

Recommendations of TESO for Ethiopian teacher education institution (TEIS) for using continuous Assessment (CA)

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

1. Show understanding of the principles of assessment and the varieties that can be used.
2. Use the out comes of assessment to evaluate reflect upon and improve teaching in order to improve standards of student aims attainments.

3. Monitor, assess and record the aptitudes, abilities ,needs and progress of students regularly.
4. Assess student's attainments against objectives and targets set for particular groups.
5. Provide students regularly with constructively feedback (write and oral) on their progress.

In addition, TESO mentioned the following reasons for using FCA

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

TESO concludes its recommendations for using CA in courses by indicating that CA is linked to teaching and learning in a way that enables the teacher to be more accountable for learner achievement .New pre service students will have mastered the techniques of using CA before graduation. Similarly, the continuous professional development program has developed a series of learning modules based on CA as part of one of requirements for recertification (USAID) basic education program (2006).

CHAPTER THREE

3. Research Design and Methodology

3.1. The Research Design

The purpose of this study was explored teacher's understanding of continuous assessment, current practices and the major factors faced in its implementation at the second cycle primary schools. To attain this, a descriptive survey method was employed. This method is employed because of its importance that it fits to get detail of data from many respondents and it is appropriate to assess the status of the phenomena. Regarding this method Babbie, (1990), cited in Creswell (2003, P. 154.) stated:

“... descriptive survey method includes cross-sectional and longitudinal studies using questionnaires or structured interviews for data collection with intent of generalizing from a sample to population also it enables to generalize from a sample to a population so that inferences can be made about some characteristic, attitude or behavior of that population”.

3.2 Sources of the data

This study used both primary and secondary sources of data. The primary data sources were school directors and teachers. On the top this, to substantiate the data obtained from primary sources, documents such as plans and performance reports were reviewed and used as secondary sources of data.

3.3. The Samples and Sampling techniques

The target population of the study were teachers and principals. In Addis Ababa there are then sub cities .In this study the researcher selected one sub city using simple random sampling (lottery method.).The selected sub city was kirkos sub city. In kirkos sub city there are 23 primary schools. It would be unmanageable to include all the schools population in the study, therefore, it was necessary to determine and identify number of schools that would serve as representative sample to generalize the findings of the study.

According to Singh (2007, P. 224) population or universe means, the entire mass of observations. This is parent group from which, a sample is to be formed. Kumar (2007) also cited that “population is the class electorates from which you select a few students (families) electorates, to sample”. Sampling is the process of taking limited number of samples from the total population. Regarding this Gliner, Morgan, and Leech (2009, P.15).

Sampling is the process of selecting part of large group of participant with the intent of generalizing from the sample (the smaller group) to the population (the larger group). To make valid inferences about the population, we must select the sample to that it is representative of the total population.

Singh (2007, P. 160) on his side agreed that, “the concept of sampling has been introduced with a view to making the research findings economical and accurate.” On the other hand, Gliner, Morgan, and Leech (2009, p.118) Cited,

That selecting less than the total population is an advantage for researchers for several reasons. First it is less expensive to interview, observe, or send surveys to smaller group of people than to larger number. Second, it takes less time. Third, better quality control can be obtained.

Based on this fact from the 23 Schools 6 schools were selected using simple random method. The following sample table shows were selected from the different schools.

Table 3.1**Sample Population, Size and Sampling Frame**

No	Name of the school	Teachers			Directors			Sample taken from two groups		
		M	F	T	M	F	T	T	D	TOTAL
1	Atse Tewodros	10	9	19	2	1	3	7	3	10
2	Urale	7	8	15	2	1	3	5	3	8
3	Fenifine	7	8	15	2	1	3	5	3	8
4	Abiot Ermja	8	10	18	2	1	3	7	3	10
5	Yelibe Fana	11	7	18	3	-	3	7	3	10
6	Tensae Birhan	9	7	16	2	1	3	5	3	8
	Total	51	49	101	13	5	18	36	18	54

3.4. Sampling Procedures

From the ten sub- cities in A.A, Kirkos was selected by using simple random sampling method. In Kirkos sub city, there were 23 primary schools. Out of these, the number of government primary schools were 18. The public primary school was 1 in number and the remaining figure constitutes the non- government primary schools. Using simple random sampling technique (lottery method),I selected six schools accordingly the sample schools were Atse Tewodros, Urale, Fenifine, Abiot ermja, Yelibe fana and Tensae Birhan and from the 101 teachers 36 teachers were selected using simple random method and 18 school directors selected using available sampling method.

3.5 Instruments and procedure of data collection

The data collection mechanisms included questionnaire, and interview .

3.5.1 Questionnaire

The questionnaire was used together information from 36 teachers and 18 school directors . The questionnaire were designed with closed ended items set in rating scales and open ended items for extended as response . This approach was preferred for the reason that the rating scale can provides more flexibility to the respondents and afford greater accuracy in recording their views on a given subject (Wilkinson and Birmingham,2003:20-21). Accordingly,10 different types of questionnaire were used for school directors and 45 for teachers. The questionnaire were prepared in English.

The questionnaire is a preferable data gathering tool which enables to effectively collect data in planed manageable ways. It also helps to cover many subject or issues and can be easily and quickly analyzed once field data gathering work is completed (Wilkinson and Birmingham,2003:11-12. The questionnaire was developed based on the research basic questions and on the available literature. The major components of the questionnaire were demographic and study data. For 36 participant teachers, according the nature of their duty and responsibility 30 close ended and 7 open- ended questionnaire. Many scholars wrote about the important of using questionnaire to collect information from respondents. Regarding this, key (1997) mentioned that, “ questionnaire is a means of eliciting the feelings, beliefs, experiences, perceptions or attitudes of some sample of individuals.”

key (1997) mentioned that “questionnaire is a means of eliciting the feelings beliefs, experiences, perceptions or attitudes of some sample of individuals.

Sarantakos (2005, p.263) on his side stated the following about the use of questionnaire.

Questionnaire are less expensive, consistent and uniform measures, free of variation they offer a considered and objective view of the issue, since respondents can consult their files and since many subjects prefer to write rather than talk about certain issues. Questionnaire allows a wider coverage, than other methods. In addition, they offer less opportunity for bias or errors caused by the presence or attitude of the interviewers.

3.5.2 Interview guide

An interview schedule was prepared. It was then intended to interview a total of 18 directors from the sample schools. Before starting the interview, the respondents were informed about the purpose of the study. Moreover, the purpose of ethical consideration, they were informed that no harm will come to them as a result of their participation in the study. On the top of this they were informed that they will remain anonymous in the presentation any discussions of the results of the study.

The interview was developed based on the research question and on the available literature. The interview guides used together information from total of 18 respondents. The major components included personal information and study data carried out before CA. Factors affecting implementing of CA, understanding of teachers about CA and the existing school practice of CA. The interview was conducted through oral questions and writing notes. This approach helps the interviewer to have more chance to give the answer and to as to dialogue with the interview to get valid information for cross checking and supplementing quantitative data.

The importance of using interview was discussed by (Pfeifer,2000 Mahar,1995, and Roth 1987) in Sarantako (2005,p.286)as... interview has flexibility ,high response rate, easy to administrate, easy to control over the environment of the interviewer capacity for correcting misunderstanding by respondents and has opportunity to control overtime, date and place of the interview.

The open-ended interview questions were prepared and presented together with the relevant data from 18 school directors. The numbers of interview questions were 6. To make the communication more effective, all interviews were using Amharic. The interviews were recorded using field notes. Finally the responses of the interviews were analyzed and incorporated in the analysis.

3.5.3 Pilot testing the instruments

Before administering the instruments of data collection, it is very essential to validate the tools as it gives the first chance to comment and check its clarity. Accordingly, after several peers reviews with the colleagues and the advisor, the designed questionnaires were tried out at 3 selected schools for 14 males and 8 females totally 22 teachers. The pilot test was conducted to test validity and reliability of the instruments. Accordingly, the reliability statistics asserted that the result is .932, and this implies that reliability is in a good position and this helps the researcher to distribute the questionnaire.

3.6 Data analysis techniques

The data were analyzed using frequency and percentage method of data analysis technique. This is because to have opportunity of critically examining the target school problems related to continuous assessment and suggests the possible recommendations. Regarding the importance of this method as (Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) cited in Creswell (2009, p.4) that "mixed method research is an approach to inquiry that combines or associates both qualitative and quantitative forms. So that the overall strength of a study is greater than either qualitative or quantitative research" Based on the above fact, the interview were analyzed qualitatively. The close-ended questionnaire response were analyzed quantitatively using frequency table and percentage.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. Data Presentation, analysis and interpretation

In this section, the results obtained from the questionnaire and interview for teachers and directors were analyzed, percentage as a statistical method was employed to present and analyze the structured items of the questionnaire quantitatively to supplement and enrich the information that was drawn using a questionnaire, the data from open questions and described qualitatively.

4.1 Current practice of implementing CA

In the following three tables, the five scales of measurements have condensed in to three for more clarity and easy analysis and interpretation. Strongly agree and agree are condensed in to agree and strongly disagree are condensed into disagree .

(The raw data is enclosed in appendix)

Table 4. 1 Teachers’ response on the practice of implementing of CA

No	Item	Condensed responses					
		Agreed		Undecided		Disagreed	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
1	I used continuous assessment and paper pencil inter changeably	32	88.9	2	5.6	2	5.6
2	I use different techniques like projects, class works, home works; group works etc regularly to assess my students.	35	97.2	1	2.8	0	0
3	I assess my students progress in their day to day activities rather than at the end of the unit	33	91.7	3	8.3	0	0
4	All tasks used to assess the learners and information gathered about their achievements is well recorded and documented.	31	86.1	3	8.3	2	5.6
5	After assessing my students, I used the achieved result as a feed back to evaluate my instructions.	35	97.2	0	0	1	2.8
6	There is an opportunity to examine the strength and weakness of implementing continuous assessment in our school	30	83.3	5	13.9	1	2.8
7	The student’s achievement is regularly reported to parents with appropriate details.	27	75	8	22.2	1	2.8
8	I give immediate and continuous feedback for my students about their achievement.	35	97.2	10	27.8	1	2.8

As shown in table 4. 1 item 1, 88.9 of the respondent, agreed CA and paper pencil tests are used interchangeably. The other 5.6 of the respondents refuse to give their opinion.

The remaining 5.6 of the respondents remained undecided on this issue. Many of the open- end questionnaire respondents also responded that as continuous testing and CA can go hand in hand. Here it seems that, more than half of the respondents still consider CA and written tests are the same. Nevertheless, the reality do not consider with the respondent's perception.

Regarding this fact Puhl (1997) in Muluken (2006) mentioned, "tests are only one faces of CA". This implies that it is possible to use paper pencil tests as one component of CA, but not possible to replace the whole CA with in paper pencil tests. Based on the above finding, the conclusion is that, still there is misunderstanding to differentiate students' continuous assessment and students continuous testing and this directly or indirectly influences the implementation of students' CA. Therefore capacitating the teachers to identify the differences of the two hand enabling them to implement students' CA properly is important.

The next is item 2 in table 4.1, this item expressed that how far teachers used different assessment techniques i.e. (class work, homework, project works, writing and reading activities, singing and dancing activities, etc) in implementing CA. From the total respondents of them agreed that as they use varieties of assessment techniques in their CA. However, only 2.8 of the respondents do not accept this idea. In the obtained result, it seems that as nearly all of the respondents apply varieties of assessment techniques in their CA. Heaton (1990) in Bogale (1994, p.121) cited the following. CA's flexibility also attributes to giving credit to various features of learning such as project, grades, and comments from course work, group work, home work, progress tests and the like, more over this combining method maximizes both reliability and validity of continuous assessment.

On the other hand, as proved by the researcher, all the observed second cycle primary schools were listed varieties of CA techniques in their mark lists. However there is no proper usage of the assessment techniques one by one due to large class size, shortage of time and work load of the teachers as responded by open- end questionnaire respondents over all. Then solving problems related to the implementation of student's CA demands high effort from all concerned groups.

The result from table 4.1 in item 3 shows that 91.7% of the respondents agreed as they used CA to measure their students' progress rather than giving written tests at the end of one unit or one paper. The other 8.3% of the respondents do not accept this opinion. Regarding item 3 of table 4.1, most of the open end questionnaire respondent teachers stressed that, using variety of assessment techniques with an ongoing basis to assess learners' progress is very important rather than a test at the end of one chapter. However, it is very difficult to use it on on-going base due to lack of time.

Related to the use of CA rather than continuous testing LAL (2006: p.38) cited as "continuous assessment seeks to spread the basis of grading on a number of tests with regular even intervals instead of placing it on one end of the course test". Respondents' agreement was more of theoretical, the existing practice and the response of participants highly mismatch. Therefore, the need for implementing students' CA rather than GAAMY assessment technique should be given more attention sooner.

In table 4.1, item 4 express how to handle documents and keep records of information gathered to give decisions on students' CA. Related to this opinion 86.1% of the respondents agreed as they properly gather information, handle properly CA documents and keep all the necessary records properly. The rest 8.3% refuse this opinion. The remained 5.6% of the respondents do not decide on this item.

The how to use and manage portfolio of the students was discussed by many scholars. From these, Dessalegn (2004, p.15) documented the following.

A portfolio of a student work is a systematic collection of students' work over a year, a term or a topic. The work can be collected in a carton box, folder, drawer, filing cabinet or other suitable container. When a student completes an assessment activity or task, it is placed in their portfolio. All the different pieces of work in the portfolio contribute to an overall evaluation of students' work. The portfolio can show students' progress over time. Item 5 in table 4.1 describes using students' achievements as a feed back for the teaching and learning process in the class room. 97.2% of the respondents agreed as they use their learners' CA achievements as a feedback for their teaching and students' learning. The rest 2.8% remained undecided on this issue. Related to the importance of feedback for the students, Desalegn (2004,p.7) cited the following.

Frequent interaction between pupils and teachers mean teachers know strengths and weakness of their pupil. These interactions foster good pupil- teacher relationship. Consequently, pupils learn that their teacher values their achievements and that their assessment out comes have an impact on the instruction that they received.

Based on the results showed that as teachers do not used students' achievements as a feedback for their teaching and learning processes. Therefore attention has to be given to the achieved result of the students to use it as feedback for teachers. Thus, it can be concluded that the system of using students' achievement as a feedback was less recognized.

Item 6 in table 4.1 express that; as teachers have opportunities to see the strengths and weakness of students' CA implementation 83.3% of the respondents accepted that as there is opportunity to identity their weakness or strengths related to their students' CA implementation. The other 13.9% of the respondents refused this opinion. The rest 2.8%

of the respondents remained undecided on this issue. The importance of identifying strength or weakness of teaching learning activities was expressed by many scholars. From these, Dessalegn (2004, P.7) expressed “teachers can share assessment results with important education stakeholders including parents, other teacher, community members, and the learners themselves”. The existing practice to see strengths and weakens of their CA implementation was not programmed and continuous. From the same table 4.1, item 7 discuss; as teachers’ have regular program to report students’ achievements for their parents with appropriate details only 75% of the respondents accept that as they have regular program to report their students’ achievements to their parents with appropriate details to increase the learners’ efficiency in the teaching learning process. The other 22.2% of the respondents do not accept this opinion. The rest 2.8% respondents remained undecided. Linn and Miller (2005, P.373), as follow, discussed reporting students’ achievements with appropriate details to the parents.

The parent teacher conference is a flexible procedure that provides for two- way communication between home and school. Besides receiving a report from the teaching parents have an opportunity to present information concerning the student’s out of school life. The conference permits teachers and parents to ask questions, discuss their common concerns in helping the student, and cooperatively plan a program for improving the students’ learning and development.

The last point raised in table 4.1 is item 8. This item elaborates about giving immediate feedback for the learners based on their achievements in their assessments continuously. From the questionnaire respondents 97.2% of them replied as they continuously give feedback for their students based on the learners’ assessment results to avoid misunderstandings in students learning on the other hand 2.8% of the respondents do not accept this opinion. Regarding the importance of feedback for learners Nitko (2004) in Fisseha (2010), cited that:

It is a good practice if assessment procedures provide feed back and comments to students about their learning. In order to improve learning by feedback, learners must be given chance to review both correct and incorrect performances. Feedback should always contain ways for improving learning in the future. Therefore teachers who show only grades or marks are not providing enough feedback to help improve student learning. When there is less involvement of students in their own assessment, real feedback system base on learner’s achievement is impossible.

4.2 Challenges of CA

Table 4.2 Teachers’ response on the challenges of implementing of CA

No	Item	Condensed responses					
		Agreed		Undecided		Disagreed	
		f	%	F	%	F	%
1	I have the basic skills of recording and documenting students’ continuous assessment achievements .	11	30.6	3	8.3	22	61.1
2	I have different training opportunities on the implementation of continues assessment at my school, and woreda level.	33	91.7	2	5.6	1	2.8
3	There are discipline problems while assessing students due to the large number of students.	31	86.1	3	8.3	2	5.6
4	I don’t see the relevance of continuous assessment for pupils learning.	4	11.1	29	80.6	3	8.3
5	The large size classroom affects my continuous assessment techniques by taking more of my time.	33	91.7	1	2.8	2	5.6
6	I dislike using continues assessment because it requires me to do more wok that demands more time.	28	77.8	6	16.7	2	5.6
7	I believe that my work load and additional school activities affect my assessment.	30	83.1	1	2.8	5	13.9
8	There are clear manuals and guide lines on how to implement continues assessment.	30	83.3	3	8.3	3	8.3

All items 1-8 in table 4.2 are related to difficulties that teachers faced while implementing CA. Item 1 in table 6 targets on teachers skill of recording and documenting students' continuous assessment achievements. Related to this item 88.9% of the respondents believed as they have the necessary skill of recording and documenting students' skill of recording and documenting students' continuous assessment achievements. However, 2.8 % of the respondents do not accept this idea. The other 8.3% do not decided on this issue. How to keep record and manage documents of assessment were the main issues addressed while CA is going on. Related to this fact Chilora, et al., (2003 cited in Dessalegn (2004, p.5) as follow.

“Recording grades- a quality assessment activity is not complete with out accurate recording of grades. To this end, in continuous assessment, the recording of grades should be timely and consistent so that teachers would be able to have an accurate picture of their pupils' performance at all times.

Based on the findings of the questions by the research it was proved that there was poor document management and keeping record of students assessment. Therefore, documentation and poor record keeping system of students' assessment need more emphasis.

In table 4.2 item 2 is about the training opportunities of the teacher on how to implement CA in his school in his woreda education level too. Regarding this item, only 30.3% of the total respondents agreed as they have different training opportunities but, the rest 61.4% of the respondents oppose that as they have training opportunities on how to implement CA in their school and at the woreda education level too. The other, 8.3% of the respondents remained undecided.

The importance of training for teachers was cited in Desalegn (2004, p.21) as follow;

... the implementation of CA in primary school needs knowledge, skills, motivation and dedication on the part of primary school teachers. The necessary knowledge and skills can be improved through training in the preparation and use of continuous assessment activities". The training opportunity for teachers seems already forgotten. Revising the existing plan for facilitating different training opportunities for teachers on the implementation of student CA should be recognized further.

Item 3 in table 4.2 discuss about the disciplinary problems of large class size to implement students' CA properly. Related to this item 86.1% of the respondents accepted that implementing CA at the students in a large class size has disciplinary problems. The other 5.6% of them refused this opinion. The remaining 8.3% respondents don't decide on this issue. Related to the disciplinary problems of large class size to implement learners' CA, many respondents accept it as it is the major problem. Arends (1997, p.92) discussed regarding the disciplinary problem of large classes during the implementation of CA as follow:

Suggested direct instruction lesson are taught many to whole groups of students. In any large group situation, there is opportunity for some students to be involved while others are not only uninvolved but perhaps miss behaving. Rather than attempting to uncover and deal with the cause of student misbehavior, a most difficult and time consuming task that does not necessary lead to better management, we recommend that teachers focus on the misbehavior itself and find way to change it, at least while the misbehavior student in the classroom. Then, the need to reduce these large classes to manageable and standardized label should be prioritized.

In the same table 4.2, item 4 is the relevance of CA for pupils learning. Regarding this item ,11.1% of the respondents accepted that they don't see the relevance of CA for

pupils learning .The other about 80.6% of the respondents oppose that there is no relevance of CA for pupils learning The rest 8.3% of respondents remained undecided.

Implementation of students' CA in large classes, takes more of teachers' time while learner's assessment was raised in table 4.2 item 5. Regarding this item, 91.7% of the respondents accepted that implementing learners' CA in large class size is more time consuming. The other about 5.6% of respondents refused this opinion. The remaining 2.8% respondents remained undecided on item 5 table 4.2 Most of the open-ended questionnaire respondents replied that, implementing learners CA in large class size is more time consuming activity. Regarding this fact, Kapambwe (2010), stated one of the major challenges of CA was the large class size. Workload become higher as they were required to mark and keep records of the progress of all learners. The reality here is that, large classes could take much of teachers' time, and challenge teachers not to implement properly students' CA. Therefore, reducing the large class size needs more stress in the target second cycle primary schools. The next is ,item 6 table 4.2 the work load and shortage of time affects the assessment .Regarding this item 83.1% of the total respondents agreed as they as affect the assessment by the demands of more time to do more work but, the rest 2.8% of the response oppose that as work load and shortage of time. The other 13.9% of the respondents remained undecided.

The discussion issue in table 4.2, item 7 is about the effects of allotted periods for the teachers, co-curricular activities and other in school activities on the implementation of learners' CA. Related to this item 83.3% of the respondents admitted that allowed periods for the teachers, co-curricular activities and other in school activities have great impacts on the proper implementation of learners' CA. on the other hand 13.9% of the respondents opposed this opinion. The remaining 2.8% of the respondents remained undecided. Similarly almost all open end questionnaire respondent teachers stated that

the excessive work load in the school have great impact on their implementation of learners CA by taking more of their time.

As Ellington and Earl (1997) cited in Muluken (2006:22), “successful implementation of CA demands more work, time and responsibility on the part of the teacher. If the teacher is not adequately prepared for operating the system, it may lead to a tendency to cook up scores in the name of continuous assessment”. Additional activities in the school are too many. However, giving special attention for the learners’ assessment by readjusting these many activities can contribute a lot to implement CA properly.

In table 4.2, item 8 is about the availability of manuals, guidelines and conducted training or workshop materials related to the implementation of learners’ CA to use as a guidelines. 83.3% of the respondents that they could get adequate manuals, guidelines and conducted training or workshop materials related to the implementation of learner’s CA. on the other hand, 8.3% of the respondents refused this opinion. The other 8.3% the respondents remained undecided.

NIED of Malawi (1999, P. 33) expressed the importance of manuals for students’ CA, as follow:

At each grade at lower primary level, a teachers’ manual on continuous assessment will be developed and provided to schools. This manual will cover all subjects in a given grade and will contain examples of good practice. It will also give guidance on how assessment types should be designed, how their matching marking schemes should be developed and how marking should be done and recorded for tests and other assessment tasks.

4.3. Understanding of teachers CA.

Table 4. 3- Teachers' response on understanding of CA

No	Item	Condensed responses					
		Agreed		Undecided		Disagreed	
		f	%	f	%	f	%
1	Employing CA improves pupils learning.	36	100	-	-	-	-
2	CA is Serving as a teaching pupils learning.	31	86.1	4	11.1	1	2.8
3	CA enables teachers to see the performance of pupils which they couldn't do it in tests.	26	72.2	7	19.4	3	8.3
4	CA generally provides a more natural assessment environment for pupils.	30	83.3	3	8.3	3	8.3
5	CA is considered as merely giving series of tests to pupils.	28	77.8	4	11.1	4	11.1
6	Portfolios are often used as a means of CA of pupils work.	27	75	5	13.9	4	11.1
7	Teachers are well trained to implement CA in the classroom.	2	5.6	4	11.1	30	83.3
8	Teachers don't feel like using CA for it overloads them and demands more time.	26	72.2	5	13.9	5	13.9
9	CA is beyond testing.	27	75	5	13.9	4	11.1
10	CA Seems impractical for teachers in our situation for it demands highly trained man power and a lot of resources.	30	83.3	3	8.3	3	8.3
11	Teachers feel that their pupils have sufficient to practice CA	27	75	5	13.9	4	11.1
12	Teachers do not see the relevance of CA for pupils learning.	36	100	-	-	-	-
13	Teachers do not have the required understanding about CA.	27	75	4	11.1	5	13.9
14	Teachers find CA is simple to mange for there is a guide line developed by MoE	12	33.3	4	11.1	20	55.6

As can be seen from Table 4.3, item 1 all the respondents (100) believed that employing CA in the class room improves pupils' learning. The same result is depicted in item 12. That is all the respondents took in to account the relevance of CA for pupils learning, teachers completely agreed on the importance of CA for pupils' learning if it is handled properly. In line with this, Puhl (1997) asserted that CA contributes largely to the full development of the learner potential if it is properly communicated.

Almost all of the respondents 88.2 agreed that CA is a teaching strategy using a variety of assessment techniques. However, few of the respondents 11.8 didn't accept this view. In addition, most of the respondents 83.1 reported that CA enables teachers to see the performance of pupils which they couldn't do it in test only. The minority of these respondents 12.9, however, disagreed on the issue and 4.1 didn't show either agreement or disagreement. In the same way, the majority of the respondents 81.3 maintained that CA provides a more natural assessment for pupils. Few of these respondents 13.7 indicated disagreement and still others 5% didn't either agree or disagree. In line with this, Ellington and Earl (1997) pointed out that continuous assessment enable pupils to be assessed in a better situation closely related to the real practice:

The results from table 4.3 item 5 showed most of the respondents 77.8 perceived CA as simply giving series of testes but some of these respondents 11.1% didn't accept this view and the remaining 11.1 remains undecided. Along with these perceptions, findings from open questions indicated that the majority of the respondents considered CA as if it is simply giving series of testes for pupils to measure their performing.

This implies respondents reacted differently for the same item which reads: "I consider CA is simply giving series of tests." Clearly, the results showed that teachers do have a wrong conceptualization of the term CA though few have understood it in its true sense.

In relation to this, the responses collected from the respondents in item 9, table 4.3, indicated most of them 72.2% viewed CA as something beyond testing while large number of these respondents 19.4 believed that CA is not beyond testing. Still few of the respondents 8.3 neither agreed nor disagreed on it. Concerning this Livingston (2001) stated that CA is far from testing where the over all aspects of the learner is takes in to account.

A close examination of table 4.3, revealed that the majority of the respondents 75% in item 6 reported that they didn't use portfolio as part of CA of pupils' work. Yet, some of these respondents 11.1% didn't accept this idea and 13.9 remained undecided. Along this line, Nitko (1996) noted that portfolio assessment is new trend to make all authentic assessment pertaining to students' performance or product in the class room. At this point, it is possible to infer that portfolio is an important segment of CA but most teachers have not used it as part of the assessment process yet.

As the result for (item 7, table 4.3) depicted, most of the teachers 83.3% reported, that they are not well trained to implement CA in the classroom. Nevertheless few of these respondents 5.6% reported that they are trained enough to practice CA and very few of them 11.1% didn't show either their agreement or disagreement. It is believed that teachers should get on job trainings regarding CA though special training on the issue for all teaches in the college/ University is not expected.

Further more, table 4.3, item 8 portrayed that 72.2% of the respondents didn't feel like using CA for it is tiresome and demands more time. However, others 27.8 felt like using CA in the class room. Regarding this Taylor Fitz- Gibbon cited in Papworth (2005) commented that internal assessment is often unpaid extra work for teachers' time.

This shows CA demands commitment on the part of teachers if it is to improve learning. In this respect Teshome (2001) stated teachers should accept CA as their own for its effective implementation.

As shown in (Table 4.3, item10), most of the respondents 83.3% believed that CA is impractical in their school situation for it demands highly trained teachers. Yet, some of these respondents 8.3% didn't accept this view and few of them 8.3% did not show either agreement and disagreement.

The result from Table 4. 3, item 11 further indicated that the majority of the respondents 75% pointed out from their observation that pupils do not have sufficient time to carry out each and every element of CA while some of these respondents 11.1% are disagree and 13.9% reported, it respondents remained undecided. In this regard, Sarawar (2001) identified shortage of time as a problem that teachers and student face to carry out each element and every element of the continuous assessment strategy. It can be inferred from this that CA demands more time on the part of teachers and pupils to be effectively implemented. For item 13 of the same table, most of the respondents 63.9% admitted that they didn't have the required understanding about CA. Despite this, few of these respondents 13.9% didn't accept this view. Still others 22.2% didn't either agree or disagree on the issue.

More specifically, this implies teachers are not well aware of the CA program and this in turn has an impact on the implementation. To overcome this, ICDR (2004) stated that teachers must be equipped with an adequate knowledge and capability about assessment techniques as a basic requirement for continuous assessment.

Eventually, in item 14 of table 4.3, some of the respondents 33.3% found CA simple to manage in the class room for there is a guide line developed by MOE. In contrast the majority of these respondents 53.7% showed disagreement and few of them 11.1%

neither agreed nor disagreed on it. As the result showed, though guidelines might be developed by MOE, many teachers didn't reach it. Because of this, the respondents stated that CA becomes hard for them to manage. It is true that guidelines should give directions for teachers as to how they can handle CA smoothly. However, if the guidelines developed are under the shelf, the effort made will be in vein.

4.2.3. Responses to Open Questions by Teachers

With regard to the open question what problems teachers faced in CA implementation, almost all participants suggested continuous assessment implementation is difficult and unmanageable under their school contexts for a number of reasons. Most of the common reasons suggested were the availability of few or no instructional materials with great emphasis on lack of materials for students to practice on after they finished a duty and shortage of materials to be assessed with the large number of students in a class was also suggested as a barrier to follow the progress of each and every student which in turn made the teachers to group students to overcome the shortage of materials. The other problems suggested were shortage of time, and lack of knowledge on different assessment techniques, lack of guidelines, poor administration support.

4.2.3.1. Continuous assessment as Perceived and Practiced by teachers

It is believed that one's belief greatly affects one's action. Put it differently, there is a close tie between perceptions and actual practices. Thus, it is worth while to know the perception of teachers towards continuous assessment and the general practices in the school context.

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

- Conception of continuous assessment as simply giving series of written tests.

- Viewing continuous assessment more than tests i.e. continuous assessment is seen as beyond testing surprisingly, most of the respondents felt that continuous assessment is simply administering series of paper and pencil tests to their pupils. However, this conception doesn't give a clear meaning of the term continuous assessment in its true sense. As Phul (1997) explained, tests are only one facets of continuous assessment, other aspects other than tests should be considered to speak of the right meaning of CA. I personally shared what Phul remarked.

On the other hand, some of the respondents had the idea that CA is beyond testing. For them, CA is wide in concept including tests (Oral and Written), project works, assignments a side from predominant use of written tests though the actual practice is something different. Moreover, the open questions regarding continuous assessment – whether it should or should not be understood as continuous testing. Accordingly , the result showed that CA should not be perceived as continuous testing for tests are only one dimension though what is practiced is far from the reality on the basis of the respondents' it can be reported that teachers equate continuous assessment with administering tests periodically. Yet, this doesn't mean that there are not teachers who perceive continuous assessment in its real sense. In line with this, a review of literature from the perspective of different scholars reported that continuous assessment is a typical class room based strategy using different techniques to measure pupils' performance.

For instance, Curzon (1996); Phul (1997) and Living Stone (2001) stated that continuous assessment is more than testing which gives an over all pictures of the learners if it is implemented in the right way with regard to the practice of CA in the school context, the respondents giving a number of written tests periodically is emphasized. This implies the multidimensional nature of continuous assessment other than testing have

not been fully practiced yet. On the importance of continuous assessment the respondents completely agreed. Most of the respondents answered on CA enables learners simply to pass from grade to grade without being properly assessed and pupils have been given marks through series of tests and also pupils are not properly assessed for continuous assessment is not fully practiced in their schools yet. Some of the respondent answered that CA is the best class room based strategy in which pupils achievement is improved.

Administering paper and pencil tests as a measure of pupils' performance was given focus. This practice, however, is highly criticized by educators. Black and William (1998) commented that teachers' heavy use of tests as a measure of pupils' performance encourage rote and superficial learning. Similarly, Papwrth (2005) stated that teachers' reliance on testing denies many learners the opportunity to demonstrate their true potential. All this imply that teachers don't have a full understanding of the concept CA and this partly contributes to the poor practice in schools.

4.3 Major problems faced in implementing CA.

The practice of CA in a school context is complex though it seems simple. Broadly speaking, there might be quite a number of problems that hinder the effective use of CA. This study is aimed at finding out the major constraints based on the respondents' reaction but not to exhaust all. As the evidence from open questions indicated, almost all of the respondents 95% Pin pointed the pertinent problems that they faced in not using CA smoothly in their school. Accordingly the major challenges include.

The large number of pupils in a class

The respondents underlined that attempting to practice CA with large number of pupils is a big challenge. In conformity with this, Ellington and Earl (1997); Papworth (2005)

stated that large class size is the major limiting factor that affect the use of CA. Similarly, Hares (1997) underlined the problem of large class size for teachers in terms of classroom management and assessment of students work. At this point, it is not hard to understand that assessing large group of pupils in the class room is a big challenge for teachers. Of course, the optimal class size which is targeted by MOE is so for the primary level. Despite this, the actual situation is far from what was targeted contrary to the findings of this study, Allwright cited in Hayes (1997) and Locastro (2001) asserted that large class size might not be a problem for students achievement if teachers use a variety of learning strategies.

Mis conception of the overall aspects of continuous assessment by teachers

As noted earlier, teachers wrongly conceptualize continuous assessment equating it with continuous testing and this in turn has an impact on the practices. There, the respondents attributed their mis conception of CA to lack of sufficient knowledge in the area. On the basis of the respondents, it can be noted that teachers should be equipped with the basic skills and knowledge pertaining to continuous assessment before they start implementing it. In fact, the MOE (2004) in its action plan noted that teachers will be given further training and orientation to use CA to better know and support students. The results of this research, however revealed that teachers' mis conception of CA emanated from lack of orientation and on job training about it. In consistent to this, Teshome (2001); Nitko (1996) and ICDR (2004) confirmed that lack of orientation and insufficient trainings are challenges for teachers to implement CA as desired.

Time Constraint

As the findings of this study indicated, teachers answered that shortage of time is a challenge for them to effectively handle CA.

This explanation gives the impression that CA demands sufficient time and commitment on the part of teachers for its effective implementation. In spite of this fact, it is believed that shortage of time as a challenge can be overcome by careful planning. As outlined in ICDR (2004) assessment must be a planned and coordinated activity to come up with a good practice.

The Availability of few or no instructional materials

Lack of adequate instructional materials is a challenge for teachers to implement CA in their school context. To integrate assessment with instruction, the respondents added, instructional materials are indispensable and the scarcity without any doubt affect the practice of CA. Conformity to this Teshome (2001) and Mkhonta (2003) mentioned lack of adequate materials in schools as an encountered difficulty in implementing CA. It is evident from the above description that instructional materials are important assists for CA, as a component of the instruction to be handled effectively.

On top of the aforementioned problems, some of the respondents pointed out that lack of proper control and supervision mechanisms; reluctance of learners to simply participate in CA tasks as challenges. From the teachers responses during the open questionnaire it can be noted that CA requires cooperation and coordination of the concerned bodies at different levels for it is proved to be effective. Failing to do so, however becomes a challenge for the implementation process.

4.4. Findings from Interview with the school directors

In responses in the mechanism the school directors had for checking if teachers were implementing assessment continuously, the Director's interviewed said, they didn't have any ways of checking and they had not attempted to do so. One of the interviewed Director said "Let alone checking the implementation of continuous assessment, I have

found it very difficult to keep teachers in their allotted classrooms according to the program they are given. He further said that against the school administrative structure I was forced to select for teachers for the purpose of checking teacher absentees and late comers and early leavers of classes”.

Regarding material support they all answered that they give stationary material like pen , pencil and paper etc on semester basis for teachers. As far as teaching materials for the students and teachers are concerned, the school always attempt to supply as far as the school budget allows, however, said one of the Director’s “The purchasing of a material has to pass through a long process and takes time, and this in turn has an impact on the teaching and learning process”.

CHAPTER FIVE

5. Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter presents the short summary of the whole study and draws conclusion of the whole study. Finally, it gives recommended solutions based on the findings of the study.

5.1. Summary

The main objectives of this study were to examine the understanding of teachers about CA, to identify the existing practices of implementing CA, to identify challenges related to the implementation of learners' CA and finally to recommend alternative solutions for the improvement of the existing practices and for identified challenges in implementing students' CA at second cycle primary schools. To attain this, teachers and directors from six second cycle primary schools were randomly selected in the sub city.

This study aimed to address the following basic research questions.

1. How do teachers in the second cycle primary school understand continuous assessment.
2. How do primary school teachers practice continuous assessment.
3. What are the major factors that affect the implementation of continuous assessment .

From the total 23 schools, 6(26.1%) schools were selected and from the total of 101 second cycle primary school teachers, 36 (35.6 %) were taken by using stratified random sampling technique to give equal chance for all schools as well as male and female teachers. The other school directors were taken all 18(100%).

In order to treat the above basic questions, the descriptive survey research method was employed. To gather important data for this study, close ended and open-ended questionnaire and interview were applied. These data were analyzed using the mixed approach that is, frequency count and percentage and qualitative method was used for more expressions.

The major findings of this study were.

1. Findings related to the understanding of teachers implementing students continuous assessment.

A considerable number of teachers didn't have the required understanding about CA. For this reason, they perceived it as continuous testing. Some of the teachers, however, clearly understand CA but they didn't practice it in the classroom in light of their views.

- Continuous assessment in the second cycle primary schools was not fully practiced yet as expected. The common assessment trend was giving written tests and examinations for pupils continuously.
- Teachers didn't employ a variety of assessment techniques to measure their pupils' performance. This implies that the multidimensional aspects of continuous assessment was ignored and heavy use of written tests to assess pupils was reflected.
- Large class size, lack of sufficient materials, teachers lack of commitment, teacher's inadequate knowledge, time constraint, pupils' reluctance, and lack of administrative support were some of the major factors that hinder the implementation of CA.
- Giving intensive on job trainings, reduced the high work load of teachers, providing sufficient materials and reducing the class size were suggested as solutions by teachers.

5.2. Findings Related to the existing practices of implementing students' CA

There is confusion to differentiate what CA and paper- pencil- test or written test means. Many teachers (56.35%) still consider that CA and paper- pencil tests can be used interchangeably. Using different assessment techniques and the importance of assessing learner's day-to-day progress was still in its theoretical phase.

The implementations of different assessment techniques were used only for formality, in the day to day assessment of student, no attention was given to assess learners' psychomotor, cognitive and affective domains. Even if the teachers agreed they did it well, the result from the questionnaire made by the research proved that, the way teachers handle documents, keeping records of students CA and the whole learner's portfolio management system were very less organized. There is no similarity among teachers in the same schools and the same weorda, related to handling documents, keeping records and managing learner's portfolios and all are incomplete.

5.3. Findings Related to Challenges of implementing students' CA

Implementation of learners' CA is highly influenced by the large class size , school co-curricular activities, make up tutorial classes and shortage of time highly challenge the teachers' CA implementation by taking more of their time. Lack of follow up, lack of giving support and immediate feedbacks for teachers on their implementation of students' CA from their supervisors' and directors.

5.4. Conclusion

Based on the above findings, the following conclusion were made.

The researcher concluded in this study that the implementation of learners, CA in the sub city seems more of theoretical rather than being practical. This means, theoretically one can hear, as there is proper implementation of students CA. However, the real practice on the ground is the opposite. It is impossible to find properly organized assessment questions that enable to measure the learner's psychomotor, cognitive and affective domains. The involvement of the learners in their own assessment seems practically recognized due to large class size and time constraints.

It is also difficult to find well- handled documents and properly kept assessment records or portfolios of the students, and the system of reporting learners' achievement for their parents regularly with appropriate detail is completely rejected. It is further proved that as there is inadequacy of teaching learning materials, Similarly, lack of adequate manuals on how to implement CA, lack of continuous training opportunity for teachers, lack of follow up, support and inadequacy of feedback were found to be the major challenges of implementing students, CA.

In conclusion, preparing and distributing relevant manuals for the implementation of CA, improving the current practice of implementing students CA by providing the teachers adequate and relevant on the job training opportunity were less organized. Furthermore, continuous following support and immediate feed backs for the teachers on their CA implementations from their supervisors were very less attention.

5.5 Recommendations

The researcher suggested the following recommendations in light of the summary and conclusions made.

- The government and other concerned bodies are expected to make an utmost effort to reduce the large number of students in a class so that the class size will be optimal.
- Intensive trainings on the concepts and the role of CA organized specially for teachers in the form of on job trainings, workshops, seminars and in-service program.
- If committees are organized to monitor the assessment practices at woreda and sub- city level, the establishment of the cluster schools is one way out and this will be strengthened.
- The work load of teachers reduced for effective implementation of CA at school level.
- The current mode of assessment which is focused on giving grades to pupils changed. Its emphasis on improving the teaching- learning process i.e. helping pupils to learn.

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APPENDIX – A

Summary of teachers' questionnaire response related to challenges of implementing CA.
The following is the key used by the respondents in the questionnaire to show challenges of CA

5 =Strongly agree 4= Agree 3= Undecided 2= Disagree 1= Strongly disagree

No	Items	5		4		3		2		1	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	I have the basic skills of recording and documenting students' continuous assessment achievements.	18	50	14	38.9	3	8.3	1	2.8	0	0
2	I have different training opportunities on the implementation of continuous assessment at my school, and woreda level.	21	58.3	12	33.3	2	5.6	0	0	1	2.8
3	There are discipline problems while assessing students due to the large number of students.	18	50	13	36.1	3	8.3	1	2.8	1	2.8
4	I don't see the relevance of continuous assessment for pupils learning.	14	38.9	15	41.6	4	11.1	2	5.6	1	2.8
5	The large size classroom affects my continuous assessment techniques by taking more of my time.	17	47.2	16	44.4	1	2.8	1	2.8	1	2.8
6	I dislike using continues assessment because it requires me to do more wok that demands more time.	11	30.6	17	47.2	6	16.6	1	2.8	1	2.8
7	I believe that my work load and additional school activities affect my assessment.	14	38.9	17	47.2	5	13.9	0	0	0	0
8	There are clear manuals and guide lines on how to implement continuous assessment.	14	38.9	16	44.4	3	8.3	2	5.6	1	2.8

APPENDIX – B

Summary of teachers' questionnaire response related to practice of implementing of CA. The following is the key used by the respondents in the questionnaire to practice of implementing of CA.

5 =Strongly agree 4= Agree 3= Undecided 2= Disagree 1= Strongly disagree

No	Items	5		4		3		2		1	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	I used continuous assessment and paper pencil inter changeably	20	55.5	12	33.3	2	5.6	1	2.8	1	2.8
2	I used different techniques like projects, class works, home works; group works etc regularly to assess my students.	25	69.4	10	27.8	1	2.8	0	0	0	0
3	I assess my students progress in their day to day activities rather than at the end of the unit	17	47.2	16	44.4	3	8.3	0	0	0	0
4	All tasks used to assess the learners and information gathered about their achievements is well recorded and documented.	12	33.3	19	52.8	3	8.3	1	2.8	1	2.8
5	After assessing my students, I used the achieved result as a feed back to evaluate my instructions.	16	44.4	19	52.8	0	0	1	2.8	0	0
6	There is an opportunity to examine the strength and weakness of implementing continuous assessment in our school	10	27.8	20	55.5	5	13.9	1	2.8	0	0
7	The student's achievement is regularly reported to parents with appropriate details.	6	16.6	19	52.8	10	27.8	2.8	2.8	0	0
8	I give immediate and continuous feedback for my students about their achievement.	11	30.6	16	44.4	8	22.2	1	2.8	0	0

APPENDIX – C

Summary of teachers' questionnaire response related to Understanding of CA.

The following is the key used by the respondents in the questionnaire to show Understanding of CA

5 =Strongly agree 4= Agree 3= Undecided 2= Disagree 1= Strongly disagree

No	Items	5		4		3		2		1	
		f	%	f	%	F	%	f	%	f	%
1	Employing CA improves pupils learning	14	38.9	13	36.1	5	13.8	2	5.6	2	5.6
2	CA is Serving as a teaching pupils learning	15	41.6	16	44.4	4	11.1	1	2.8	0	0
3	CA enables teachers to see the performance of pupils which they couldn't do it in tests	14	38.9	12	33.3	7	19.4	2	5.6	1	2.8
4	CA generally provides a more natural assessment environment for pupils	14	38.9	16	44.4	3	8.3	1	2.8	2	5.6
5	CA is considered as merely giving series of tests to pupils	13	36.1	15	41.6	4	11.1	4	11.1	0	0
6	Portfolios are often used as a means of CA of pupils work	15	41.6	12	33.3	5	13.9	3	8.3	1	2.8
7	Teachers are well trained to implement CA in the classroom	13	36.1	17	47.2	4	11.1	0	0	2	5.6
8	Teachers don't feel like using CA for it overloads them and demands more time	15	41.6	11	30.6	5	13.9	3	8.3	2	5.6
9	CA is beyond testing	13	36.1	14	38.9	5	13.9	2	5.6	2	5.6
10	CA Seems impractical for teachers in our situation for it demands highly trained man power and a lot of resources	13	36.1	17	47.2	3	8.3	3	8.3	0	0
11	Teachers feel that their pupils have sufficient to practice CA	12	33.3	15	41.6	5	13.9	3	8.3	1	2.5
12	Teachers do not see the relevance of CA for pupils learning	10	27.8	13	36.1	8	22.2	2	5.6	3	8.3
13	Teachers do not have the required understanding about CA	15	41.6	12	33.3	4	11.1	3	8.3	2	5.6
14	Teachers find CA is simple to mange for there is a guide line developed by MOE	17	47.2	13	36.1	4	11.1	1	2.8	1	2.8

Addis Ababa University
Addis Ababa University College of Education
Department of Educational Planning and Management
Graduate program on Educational Leadership and Management
Questionnaire for second cycle primary school teachers.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect basic data for the study of about the current practice and challenges of implementing continuous assessment in the second cycle primary schools to suggest alternative solutions .Since the success of this study entirely depends up on the responses, your sincerity (honesty and frankness) is of great value. The information to be obtained will undoubtedly be used for academic purposes. Certainly, your response will be kept confidential Please read the instructions and each item carefully so as to provide your responses accurately when you feel that you should change your responses make sure that you have cancelled the previous ones .Finally, please check you have treated all the pages. It is not required to write your name in any part of the questionnaire .

Thank you in advance for your time and concern.

Part I back ground information

1. Name of the school-----
2. Sex
 - A Male
 - B. Female
3. Age
 - A. 20-25 year
 - B. 26-30 Year
 - C. 31-35 Years
 - D. 36- 40 Years
 - E. 41 years and above
4. Your qualification
 - A. certificate
 - B. Diploma Major -----minor -----
 - C. BA/ B.E d/BSC in (Area of study) -----
 - D. Please indicate if other than the above -----
5. Teaching experience -----
 - A. 0-2 years
 - B. 3-6 years
 - C. 7-10 years
 - D.11-14 years
 - E. 15 years and above
6. Teaching load per week
 - A. 10 and below
 - B. 11-15
 - C. 16-20
 - D. 21 -25
 - E.26-30
 - F.31-35
7. The subject you taught -----
8. If you have extra responsibilities other than teaching in your school please specify -----

Part II The existing practice of implementing continuous assessment

St /agree/ S.A=5

Agree/Ag/=4

Undecided/und/=3

Disagree/D.A/=2

Strongly disagree/ S.D. A/=1

The following questions are expected to address the issues related the current practice of implementation of continuous assessment in your school. Please use (X) to show your level of agreement under one of the five scales of measurement for each question. The values for the scales of measurements are:-

No	Items	S-A=5	Ag=4	Und=3	D.A=2	S.D.A=1
1	I used continuous assessment and paper pencil inter changeably					
2	I used different techniques like projects, class works, home works; group works etc regularly to assess my students.					
3	I assess my students progress in their day to day activities rather than at the end of the unit					
4	All tasks used to assess the learners and information gathered about their achievements is well recorded and documented.					
5	After assessing my students, I used the achieved result as a feed back to evaluate my instructions.					
6	There is an opportunity to examine the strength and weakness of implementing continuous assessment in our school					
7	The student's achievement is regularly reported to parents with appropriate details.					
8	I give immediate and continuous feedback for my students about their achievement.					

Part III Factors affecting implementations of continuous assessment

St /agree/ S.A=5

Agree/Ag/=4

Undecided/und/=3

Disagree/D.A/=2

Strongly disagree/ S.D. A/=1

The following questions are expected to address the issues related to factors affecting implementations of continuous assessment in your school. Please use (X) to show your level of agreement under one of the five scales of measurement for each question. The values for the scales of measurements are:-

No	Items	S-A=5	Ag=4	Und=3	D.A=2	S.D.A=1
1	I have the basic skills of recording and documenting students' continuous assessment achievements					
2	I have different training opportunities on the implementation of continuous assessment at my school, and woreda level					
3	There are discipline problems while assessing students due to the large number of students					
4	I don't see the relevance of continuous assessment for pupils learning					
5	The large size classroom affects my continuous assessment techniques by taking more of my time.					
6	I dislike using continuous assessment because it requires me to do more work that demands more time					
7	I believe that my work load and additional school activities affect my assessment					
8	There are clear manuals and guide lines on how to implement continuous assessment					

Part IV Teachers understanding of Continuous assessment

No	Items	S=A=5	Ag=4	Und=3	DA=2	S.DA=1
1	Employing CA improves pupils learning					
2	CA is Serving as a teaching pupils learning					
3	CA enables teachers to see the performance of pupils which they couldn't do it in tests					
4	CA generally provides a more natural assessment environment for pupils					
5	CA is considered as merely giving series of tests to pupils					
6	Portfolios are often used as a means of CA of pupils work					
7	Teacher are well trained to implement CA in the classroom					
8	Teachers don't feel like using CA for it overloads them and demands more time					
9	CA is beyond testing					
10	CA Seems impractical for teachers in our situation for it demands highly trained man power and a lot of resources					
11	Teachers feel that their pupils have sufficient to practice CA					
12	Teachers do not see the relevance of CA for pupils learning					
13	Teachers do not have the required understanding about CA					
14	Teachers find CA is simple to mange for there is a guide line developed by MOE					

Appendix: D

Part v Write out what you fell about the following questions

1. How do you perceive continuous assessment ,and what is your opinion about the importance of continues assessment for instructional purposes?

2. what do you think the major problems teachers are facing when they use continuous assessment in their class rooms ?

3. How do you see the practice of continuous assessment in your school ?Is manageable? If not way ?

- 4.Would you suggest the possible solutions that help minimize the problems behind continuous assessment ?

5. How do you assess the performance of your pupils ?Is it using continuous assessment ?If so how?

6. Do you think CA should be understand only as continuous testing ? If Yes ,how, if not how?

7. Some people say continuous assessment enables learners simply to pass from grade to grade as they are not properly assessed. How do you react to this?

APPENDIX – E-

Addis Ababa University

Addis Ababa University College of Education

Department of Educational Planning and Management

Graduate program on Educational Leadership and Management

Interview questions for primary school Directors

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect basic data for the study of about the current practice and challenges of implementing continuous assessment. In the second cycle primary schools to suggest alternative solutions .Since the success of this study entirely depends up on the responses, your sincerity (honesty and frankness) is of great value. The information to be obtained will undoubtedly be used for academic purposes. Certainly, your response will be kept confidential. Please read the instructions and each item carefully so as to provide your responses accurately when you feel that you should change your responses ,make sure that you have cancelled the previous ones .Finally ,please check you have treated all the pages .It is not required to write your name in any part of the questionnaire .

Thank you in advance for your time and concern.

I Name of the school -----

II sex-----

III Qualification-----

IV work experience-----

1. How do you understand continuous assessment?

2. What are the different requirements of continuous assessment?

3. What factors do you think affect the level of practice of continuous assessment?

4. Can you tell how do you follow up ,the way you provide support and giving regular feed back to teachers continuous assessment implementation ?

5 Does the school provide guide lines ,formats ,and necessary materials to facilitate continuous assessment implementation ?

6. What do you think about the attitude of most of the school teachers towards continuous assessment implementation

DECLARATION

The under signed, declared that this thesis is my own work and has not been presented for any degree and that all sources of materials used for thesis have been fully acknowledged.

Name-----

Signature-----

Date-----

This thesis has been submitted for examination by my approval as a university advisor.

Name-----

Signature-----

Date-----