



**STATUS AND CHALLENGES OF IMPLEMENTATION OF
CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF SOUTH
OMO ZONE**

BY YIGEZU YILMA SHADO

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PROGRAM: MA IN SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

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This is to certify that the thesis entitled “status and challenges of implementation of continuous assessment in secondary schools of south omo zone” submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Art in Educational Planning and Management, and has been carried out by Yigezu Yilma Shado, under our supervision. Therefore, we recommend that the student has fulfilled the requirements and hence hereby can submit the thesis to the College of Education and Behavioral Studies.

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We, undersigned, members of the board of examiners of the open defense by Yigezu Yilma Shado read and evaluated his thesis entitled “status and challenges of implementation of continuous assessment in secondary schools of south omo zone” and examined the candidate. This is, therefore, to certify that the thesis has been accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of MA in Educational Planning and Management.

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Abbreviations

CA: Continuous Assessment

FMEST: Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Technology

IAEA: International Association for Education Assessment

MBECN: Ministry of Basic Education and Culture of Namibia

MoE: Ministry of Education

SMT: School Management Team

SNNPR: South Nation Nationalities and people's Region

USAID_AED: United States Agency for International Development_

Academy for Educational Development

ZPDP: Zone of proximal Development

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate status and challenges of implementation of continuous assessment in secondary schools of south omo zone. To this end, quantitative and qualitative approach of the research design was employed, descriptive survey methods were used. Data were gathered from both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources were principals, supervisors, teachers and students. The secondary sources were documents include student mark list, teachers' daily assessment report, rosters and report cards. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected using different data collection instruments such as questionnaires, interview and documentary analysis were employed for the study to collect primary and secondary data. Quantitative data which is collected through questionnaire from teachers and students were organized, tabulated and described quantitatively, using percentage, frequency, table, and description with the help of SPSS of version 20. These statistical tests were used for the purpose of testing different information from the respondent groups. Besides qualitative data was narrated qualitatively using words, phrases, statements and paragraphs obtained from interview, open-ended questions. By using simple random and purposive sampling techniques out of 4701 population, 307 individual are taken as sample for the study. Simple random sampling technique was employed to select students and teachers. Purposive sampling was used to select principals' and supervisors. The data analysis led to the following major findings of this study include very weak document handling, and poor record keeping of Continuous Assessment achievements, less learners' involvement in their own assessment. Many assessment techniques were used improperly. The study also found that large class sizes, inadequacy of text books and school infrastructures, lack of manuals, weak follow up, support and feedback system on the implementation of Continuous Assessment, lack of course opportunity for teachers were the challenges that hinder the implementation of continuous assessment in South Omo Zone secondary schools. For further improvement, school based course, adequate and updated manuals, advanced follow up, support and immediate feedback on the implementation of Continuous Assessment, and fulfillment of school infrastructures are suggested as ways for improving the implementation of continuous assessment in South Omo Zone secondary schools.

CHAPTER ONE

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

Education is social activity by which an individual gains knowledge, develop skills, ability, and attitude. It is therefore understood as a basic means of economic, social and cultural changes of a society as a whole. This means it enables individuals and society to acquire the necessary knowledge, skill, and attitude that helps to improve their lives. The responsibility of school principals is to change things, make things happen, correct things and improve things. The school principals should not only set goals but should also be capable of communicating effectively with teachers. School principals help teachers to embrace goals and to understand the changes that are needed to strengthen teaching and learning and to work towards improvement. When she states that school principals are required to transform schools into professional learning communities (Harris, 2004:13).

The implementation of continuous assessment has become a crucial educational challenge in the 21st century that calls for school principals to influence motivations and capacities of teachers, hence transforming schools into professional learning communities in which educators freely teach and learners freely learn. An effective school principal understands how to transform educational practices and work collaboratively with teachers to achieve team goals and objectives (ibid).

Continuous assessment is a powerful instrument for enhancing the attainment of learning outcomes and insuring quality education and academic excellence in the education institutions. In this connection, the education and training policy of Ethiopia (1994) has emphasized the ongoing classroom assessment in academic and practical subjects to ascertain the formation of the round profile of students. So, the subject teachers are advised to carry out regular checks on progress of their students in each subject through continuous and formal assessment (MoE, 2010).

Educational assessment provides the necessary feedback requires in order to maximize the outcomes of educational efforts. It is a means of quality control of determining the level of accountability displayed by stake holders in the industry and also of determining the

effectiveness of teaching and learning as well as in finding out student achievement. Assessment as any produce or activity that is designed to collect information about the knowledge, attitude, or skill of the learner or a group of learners. Assessment is therefore a process through which the quality of individuals work or performance is judged. Continuous assessment is method in which the students' performance in term, session, or a course is determined using a series of tests and other instruments administered on the students at various time during the term, session, or course (Mwebaza, 2010).

Assessment 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 accordingly. Therefore, from classroom assessment information teachers can modify their pedagogical strategies to include the construction of remediation activities for pupil who are not working at the expected grade level and the creation of enrichment activities for pupils who are working at or above the expected grade level. Hence, continuous assessment process supports a cycle of self-evaluation and pupils specific activities by both pupils and teachers (Kellagham, 2001).

In our country Ethiopia, the practical task of implementing the new curriculum at all schools level requires continuous assessment as part of the curriculum in particular and instructional process in general. Policy makers are now considering integrating continuous assessment to all schools level. These movements reflect the change in the nature of assessment and its purpose. Among curriculum changes implemented at schools the most important element is the application of continuous assessment of students' achievement (MoE 1994).

The Ethiopian education and training policy state the following: Continuous assessment in academic and practical subjects including aptitude tests will be conducted to ascertain the formation of all round profile of student at all level. This shows special attention was given by Ethiopian transitional government towards the implementation of continuous assessment. Continuous assessment is particularly used for checking how well students are learning at these initial and intermediate points and providing information for important when learning is below satisfactory. This helps the teachers to have continuous follow up of accurate information on students' learning. Assessment is very vital in helping the learner become effective. It is a collection of different strategies which enable students become competent learners. Again it

helps the teachers to get reliable information about their students and test their teaching methodologies (ibid: 8).

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

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

Livington (2001) had also noted the following concerning implementation of continuous assessment. Employing continuous assessment enables the teacher to assess more of intended behavior of the students and to take note of factors such as their active participation, how articulate they are , their relationships with others and their motivation that have educational relevance. So, it is a must to include continuous assessment in the plan properly and implement for the purpose of assessing students' performance in order to shape the learning. Educational assessment can focus on individual learning community (class, workshop, or other organized group of learners'), the instruction, or the educational system as a whole.

Kinfu (2008) Continuous assessment is the most crucial in teaching and learning practice in order to form meaningful learning. This means successful implementation of continuous assessment program could lead to improve standard of teaching- leaning in the school. Every teacher at all level of education particularly at secondary school must operate continuous assessment properly to improve education quality.

Continuous assessment will also take place over a period; such an approach would be more holistic, representing the learner in his/her entirety. It will begin with the decisions that the teachers and administrators make on the learner regarding end-of-year grading and promotion. Depending on this concept Ethiopia introduced continuous assessment techniques since 1994 to

implement it in all standards of schools. The advantages of continuous assessment over the traditional examination system also introduced and several efforts have been made by government and concerned bodies to implement continuous assessment. However, there are a number of challenges concerning continuous assessment implementation. These challenges of implementation include external and within the school system (ibid).

1.2. Statement of the Problem

There are a number of factors that affect the implementation of continuous assessment in secondary schools. Some of the factors arise within the secondary schools themselves. Some problems such as keeping records and portfolios of the learners in large class have their own impact in the implementation of continuous assessment. In conformity with this, Ellington and Earl (1997) in Muluken (2006) suggested that continuous assessment is carried out at ongoing bases while students are actually working their way through courses.

Implementation problems include the school infrastructure if there is lack of school infrastructure, it affects the instructional process in general and the assessment method in particular. Concerning this fact, Kapambwe (2010), argued that the difficulty with learning materials mainly affected the availability of appropriate teaching and learning of the curriculum. However, many researchers conducted different studies related to validity, reliability and feasibility of continuous assessment and recommended the way of implementing in secondary schools.

Different researchers stated different points about continuous assessment. As Muluken (2006) tried to show the states of continuous assessment and factors affecting implementation. Bogale (1994) attempted to indicate teachers' perception on implementing continuous assessment, and Hailu (2012) indicated the level of practice and challenges of implementing continuous assessment. However, none of these issues were addressed as related to the existing roles of secondary school principals in the implementation of continuous assessment in the context of South Omo Zone Secondary Schools.

The researcher has stayed in teaching profession for several years as a teacher as well as school director in the target zone. During this time, he has observed many challenges related to the role

of principal in implementing continuous assessment in the secondary schools of South Omo Zone. These challenges include lack of proper skill to implement it, knowledge gap on pedagogical advantage of continuous assessment, lack of training, carelessness, resource shortage, lack of leadership support and large class size. So, the researcher is inspired by these problems and decided to conduct this research. Thus, this research is designed to examine the practice and gaps related to the implementation of continuous assessment and then to suggest alternative solution to improve the existing practice and challenges of implementing continuous assessment in the secondary schools.

1.3. Research Questions

The following basic research questions are formulated to guide the study.

1. How effective are secondary school principals in playing their role related to Continuous Assessment in South Omo Zone?
2. What are the major challenges that affect the proper implementation of continuous assessment in secondary schools of South Omo Zone?
3. What strategies should be designed to overcome implementation gaps and the challenges related to implementing Continuous Assessment in secondary schools of South Omo Zone?

1.4. Objectives of the Study

1.4.1. General Objective

The general objective of this study is to investigate the status and challenges of implementation of continuous assessment in secondary schools of south omo zone.

1.4.2. Specific Objectives

The study has the following specific objectives:

1. To establish the effectiveness of secondary school principals in playing their role related to continuous Assessment in secondary schools of South Omo Zone
2. To identify the challenges that hinder the implementation of continuous assessment in South Omo Zone secondary schools;

3. To find out ways for improving the implementation of continuous assessment in South Omo Zone secondary schools.

1.5. Significance of the Study

This study is intended to establish the status and challenges of implementation of continuous assessment in secondary schools of south omo zone. Through this study, the researcher is expected to come up with the enhanced involvement of school leadership, developed cooperation between teachers and students and ultimately high contribution to education quality. In this way, teachers will be benefited by the suggested strategies of the study. It is also useful for school principals and supervisors that it provides them important feedbacks about the existing practice of implementing continuous assessment and its challenges.

In addition, it will provide information for learner as they will get opportunity to involve in their own assessment with different techniques of continuous assessment. Finally, the finding of this study will be significant to other researchers to conduct similar researches at different educational levels.

1.6. Delimitation of the Study

In order to make the study more manageable, it is delimited to only government general secondary schools (grade 9 – 10) of South Omo Zone. In this case, private secondary schools of South Omo Zone were not included in the study. Again, the study is delimited to only the status and challenges of implementation of continuous assessment in secondary schools of south omo zone

1.7. Limitation of the Study

There were potential problems that the researcher has faced in the research process. These were:

- Some of the respondents were negligent to respond the questionnaire
- Shortage of recent reference materials
- Absence of studies conducted at postgraduate level under the study,
- There were a shortage of time and material resources.

1.8. Operational Definition of Terms

The following key terms were used in the study:

Challenge: Something that tests strength, skill, or ability of teachers in government general secondary school, especially in a way that is interesting (Aggrawal, 1994).

Continuous assessment: making observations and collecting information periodically to find out what a student knows, understands and can do with the target of making an ongoing judgment about how well he/she is doing (Duplessis, 2003).

Government: Legal body that controls a country.

Implementation: Putting into effect by means of definite plan or procedure (Mazibuko, 2003).

Secondary School: School that range from grade nine to ten (MoE, 2008).

1.9. Organization of the Study

The research is composed of five main chapters. The first chapter deals with implementation problems in continuous assessment and it includes background of the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, operational definition of terms, and organization of the study. Chapter two presents the review of related literature. Chapter three deals with research design, methodology, source of data, sample and sample techniques, instruments and procedures of data collection and method of data analysis and interpretation. Chapter four includes the data presentation, analysis and interpretation. Chapter five deals with summary, conclusion and recommendation of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1. The Concept of Classroom Assessment

Classroom assessment might be conceptualized in different ways by different scholars. According to Angela and Cross (1993), classroom assessment is the process where the teacher and students are trying to improve the teaching learning activities in order to achieve the objectives of the instruction. Classroom assessment is both a teaching approach and a set of assessment techniques which refers to all the activities under taken by teachers and by their pupil assessing themselves. It provides information which serves as a feedback to modify teaching and learning activities.

Classroom assessment offers a mechanism on how curriculum, instructional activities and assessment impact pupils' effort and achievement, and provides appropriate information about the progress and competency of pupils to stockholders. Hence, it is stated that including the new approaches to assessment is vital to improve instruction and help educational stockholders benefit from the practice at high level. Realizing this fact, classroom assessment has now become the most crucial, frequent and pervasive issue in educational systems to determine the quality of learning; how pupil know, how efficiently they perform and what attitudes they have developed for future learning (USAID/BEP, 2006).

Classroom assessment is usually carried out by teachers to improve pupils' learning and teachers' instruction on the bases of impression gained through a variety of assessment techniques they employ. However, this part of educational assessment is the most difficult aspect of teaching. This is because judging pupils' work with respect to the different educational domains is difficult since it is a continuous process that demands teachers' knowledge, skills, time and energy (ibid).

The above discussion indicated that classroom assessment is carried out by teachers on continuous basis while teaching and learning is going on and it is vital to improve pupils'

learning and teachers' teaching. When classroom assessment has such features and it is termed as continuous assessment.

2.2. Meaning and Nature of Continuous Assessment

It is helpful that understanding the meaning and nature of continuous assessment before going through the study. The meaning and nature of continuous assessment will be discussed as follows.

2.2.1 Meaning of Continuous Assessment

According to USAID (2003), continuous assessment is a classroom strategy implemented by teachers to ascertain the knowledge, understanding and skills attained by students. USAID in Education quality Review Newsletter explained that teachers make an assessment in variety of ways over time to allow them to observe tasks and to collect information about what students know, understand and can do. These assessments are curriculum based tasks previously taught in the class. Continuous assessment occurs frequently during the school year and is a part of regular teacher-pupil interactions. Pupils receive feedback from teachers on their performance that allows them to focus on topics they have not yet mastered.

The other definition given by the minister of basic Education and culture of Namibia (1999) showed that when both formal and informal assessments are done on a regular and continuous basis, they are referred to as continuous assessment. Continuous assessment is meant to be integrated with teaching in order to improve learning and help, shape, and direct teaching learning process. According to ministry of basic education and culture of Namibia, the assessment is continuous because it occurs at continuous, following of lesson, usually occurs following a topic and frequently occurs following a theme.

Alause (1999) defined continuous assessment as formal assessment of learners' effective characteristics and motivation in which they will need to demonstrate their commitment to task overtime, their workforce readiness and their competence kin team or group performance

contexts. Furthermore, continuous assessment is a way of collecting information about learners on regular basis in order to improve the teaching learning process (Pasigna, 2003).

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

From the above definitions one can infer that continuous assessment is an assessment approach which involves the use of variety of assessment instruments for assessing the learning and teaching process to improve students' learning.

2.2.2. Nature of Continuous Assessment

Continuous assessment is systematic, comprehensive, cumulative, and guidance oriented activity that its effective implementation needs to fulfill this peculiar features. Inters of comprehensiveness, continuous assessment practice requires the use of varied approaches and assessment tools (Adebowale et,al 2008, as cited in Birhanu, 2004).

Continuous assessment other than tests or examinations must include varied assessment tools such as projects, presentations, interviews, observations, oral questions, home works, seat works and similar other kinds (Freedom, 998). Therefore, comprehensive in assessment is meant addressing multiple learning styles, variety in semester and weekly projects and variety in thinking skills and inquires. Hence, pupils' marks could then be a profile of many areas of concepts rather than concerning on a single behavioral domain (Ali, 1988).

The cumulative nature of continuous assessment is related with decision making. This means in order to make dependable and reasonable accurate decisions, teachers must depend on variety of evidences collected using instruments at different times. In the support of this, teachers to collect enough evidence to get representative sample of what their pupils have learned and can do. The justification is that a complete picture of pupils' performance could be known only when teachers put together enough pieces of evidence (Suskiel, 2004). As (Grunlund, 1981; Lin and Nitko 2004), assessment is not an end by itself but the means to an end. The guidance nature of

continuous assessment is driven from these general principles of measurement and evaluation. Continuous assessment mainly focuses on monitoring and guiding pupils' progresses throughout the content of the subject material thought.

As Adebowale (2008: 5), in the nature of continuous assessment, systematic planning is a milestone of continuous assessment practice. Planning continuous assessment ensures whether or not proposed assessment scheme is progressive and properly integrated and that the different assessment vehicles are properly matched to the objectives and learning outcomes that they intended to assess. This integrated nature of continuous assessment is put together as follows: Continuous assessment is systemic in that it requires an operational plan it is also cumulative in nature in that only decision making about a learner is based on earlier decisions and is guidance oriented in that only data gathered on pupils will serve as the bases for further academic growth and development.

So, teachers are expected to plan the assessment activity with variety of techniques and methods in order to have a complete picture or performance level of their students. Therefore, teachers said that continuous assessment implementation is sound only when the actual practice suits with what the theory states.

2.2.3. Assessment Paradigms

The current literature suggested that there are four assessment paradigms to classroom assessment that can be used in conjunction with each other such as assessment of learning, assessment for learning, assessment as learning, and assessment in learning.

➤ Assessment of Learning

Most commonly, assessment is defined as a process whereby someone attempts to describe and quantify the knowledge, attitudes or skills possessed by another. Teacher directness is paramount and the student has little involvement in the design or implement of the assessment process in these circumstances: Teacher designs learning and collect evidence to judge what has been learnt and what has not.

➤ Assessment for Learning

Assessment for learning involves increased levels of student autonomy, but not without teacher guidance and collaboration. The assessment for learning is sometimes seen as being a kin to formative assessment and can be seen as informing teaching. There is more emphasis towards giving of useful advice to the student and less emphasis on the giving of marks and the grading: Teacher designs learning and design assessment with feedback to students concerning learning.

➤ **Assessment as Learning**

Assessment as learning is perhaps more connected with diagnostic assessment and can be constructed with more of an emphasis on informing learning. Assessment as learning generates opportunities for self-assessment and for peer assessment. Students take an increased responsibility to generate quality information about their learning and that of others. Teachers and student co-construct learning, assessment and learning progress map. Assessment for learning and assessment as learning activities should be deeply embedded in teaching and learning and be the source interactive feedback, allowing students to adjust, rethink and re-learning.

2.2.4. Purpose of Assessment

There are so many purposes of assessment. It serves to see whether the teaching learning carried out in schools achieve its objective or not. According to Namibia ministry of Basic education and culture, teachers' Manual on formative Assessment in Science Class (2010). The following purposes of assessment were also suggested by scholars:

- To ascertain what learning, change and progress takes place in the child over a period of time in different subjects of stated and other aspects of the child's personality,
- To find out the needs and learning style of every learner and to devise a teaching-learning plan that is responsive to the individual needs and learning styles.
- To improve the teaching learning materials by adding value and help every learner find out their interests, aptitudes, strengths and weaknesses so that the learner can involve effective learning strategies,
- To measure the extent to which curricular objectives have been realized, and
- To enhance the effectiveness of the teaching-learning process.

In general, the purpose of continuous assessment circles around improving teaching learning activity, addressing students interest in the course of learning and create an opportunity for both teachers and students to work for the same purpose-improving students learning. So, in order to make assessment activity fruitful, prior to the implementation teachers are expected to suit the assessment activity to serve the above listed purpose.

2.2.5. Basic Requirements for Assessment

In order to achieve the purpose, assessment requires basic elements in the teaching learning activity, and one should follow such the basic requirement of the assessment in the purpose of planning and implantation the assessment activity. The following pre-conditions need to be met to make an effective and appropriate assessment (ICDR, 2004).

Jorolimk and Paker (1997) and Ruddell (1997) suggested that assessment must be planned activity and planned how and when the assessment will be made. The teacher must be equipped with adequate knowledge and capacity about assessment techniques and the assessment should be based on the actual condition, time, place and social factors of the class, pupils` level of knowledge and the nature of instruction. Further variety of items and assessment techniques should be selected and applied, the items should be prepared in a clear, readable and precise language, in assessment should be well administered and its result must be recorded, documented and also reported. Assessment practice has its own principles.

In regard to this, there are principles of good assessment, for instance, assessment focuses on learning. Its goals are to encourage, assist and enhance learning, not to punish student who perform poorly. Reward students who straggle to take risk for their learning. Teachers should treat assessment as an integral part of curriculum and instruction. If assessment is to facilitate students learning, it must be woven in to the fabric of curriculum and instruction. It must be done before, during and after instruction (ibid).

Assessment aimed at looking in to students` ability to apply knowledge and skills successfully in meaningful or authentic tasks which show their ability to use what has been learned. Moreover, it should be equitable. Assessment procedures are fair, just and impartial. There is no bias in terms of race, gender, abilities, culture, economic status or economic background and provide ample

opportunities to learn. Before students are to be assessed, they should be given ample opportunities for their learning and finally, it should include consistent and meaningful reporting

2.3. Theoretical and Educational Foundation of Continuous Assessment

The theoretical foundation of continuous assessments lies on Piaget's and Vygotsky's (1969) learning theories. Piaget believes that individuals must adapt to their environment. He described two processes for adaptation which is an organism's ability to fit in with its environment, assimilation and accommodation. Assimilation is the process of using or transferring the environment so that it can be placed in preexisting cognitive structure.

Accommodation is the process of changing cognitive structures in order to accept something from the environment. It changes the schema, so it increases its efficiency. By using Piaget's theory in the classroom, teachers and students benefit in several way. Teachers develop a better understanding of their student's thinking. They can also assign their teaching strategies with their student's cognitive level (e.g. Motivational set, modeling, and assignments). Their goal is to help the individual construct structures (ibid).

As defined by Garner (2008:34), conservation of constancy is the ability to understand how some characteristics for of a thing can thing, while others stay the same. In other words, it is the realization that even though an object can be changed physically, some of the characteristics for that object remain the same for instance, if we give students modeling clay and tell them to mold it, the shape will change, and the color of the modeling clay will remain the same. Conservation of constancy identifies relationships and makes sense of physical and abstract information` (Garner, 2008: 47).

Educators create, implement and assess the curriculum being taught, assuming throughout the process that students can conserve constancies. If students lack this ability, they, will not benefit academically because they have limited concrete sensory data and literal interpretations. Thus they will experience difficulty in thinking abstractly problem-solving, planning, and discerning rebalance and for example, if the student is studying fractions, he or she may not be able to recognize that one third and three-ninths are equal (Garner, 2008).

In order for students to develop their conservation of constancy skills, teachers, must provide their students with opportunities to recognize similarities and differences' at both the physically and abstract visualization and reflective awareness are crucial to students understanding of conservation of constancy. By encouraging students to notice similarities and differences in objects, they increase their conservation of constancy (ibid).

According to Vygotsky's Theory, social interaction plays an important role in student learning. It is through social interaction that students learn from each other, as well as adults. Vygotsky's theory suggests that we learn first through person-to-person interactions and then individually through an internalization process that leads to deep understanding. Vygotsky explores three different types of speech: social, private and internal. He refers to social speech as the instructions given by adult to children. Private speech allows children to process what the adult has said and try to apply it to similar situations. For example, a teacher tells the class to keep their hands to themselves. Self-control is an example of private speech because children are using for themselves the same language that adults use to regulate behavior. So, since their teachers have informed to keep their hands to themselves, the students do not hit or punch each other in class. Both teachers and students share the responsibilities of developing students' private speech. Internal or inner speech takes place as the student's silent, abbreviated dialogue that she carries on with self that is the essence of continuous mental activity.

Vygotsky's central topic was the Zone of proximal Development (ZPD), which uses social interaction with more knowledgeable others to move development forward. A more capable person, such as teacher or peer, provides assistance to the student; the student is able to complete the task with this assistance. Students, who are in the ZPD, need active teaching. Therefore, Vygotsky's theory promotes the belief, "What is learned must be thought." Teachers should be explaining, modeling, and using guided practice in the classroom. By modeling what they want their students to do, students will be better able to work through their assigned tasks.

Think-aloud, an instructional strategy that allows students to talk through new steps of an endeavor aloud can be used with upper elementary and middle school students, who are in the ZPD. This strategy assists students' thinking about how they make meaning. During think-aloud, students listened to a skilled reader using "strategies to comprehend text and their teachers'

thinking become visible at them”. Students need time to try out various strategies; so, they can develop answer or responses. At the same time, teacher questioning techniques should guide the social interaction implicitly or explicitly. Think-aloud help teachers determine why and how students are experiencing difficulty in reading. In addition, students can analyze their own thinking about their reading.

Educationally, continuous assessment is based on the contractive epistemology which assures knowledge as something produced through the meaning full instruction between the learner and the world around him/ her. This would be possible when pupils are made to actively involved in the entire system of the teaching learning process. (ICDR, 2004). The insights from the learning theory and emerging educational philosophies led to a set of changes in the classroom assessment. One area is change is the assessment trolls and frequency of the assessment itself.

Regarding this change, pupils don’t need to acquire a vast amount of information, typically the focus on traditional assessment but rather the ability to think and organize the information for specific purpose. The implication is that assessment should move away from the narrow focus on simple tests to assessment methods that address overall development of pupils. The other area of change is the form of regularly monitoring the teaching learning process and using varied ways of assessment and providing frequent and constructive feedback on how learning is progressing rather than merely auditing learning (USAID/AED, 2006).

Generally, the foundation that continuous assessment established itself on the contemporary development is cognitive and constructivist theory which in turn change educational practitioners’ view of knowledge acquisition and competence.

2.4. Characteristics of Continuous Assessment

According to Jamaican Ministry of Education, Youth and Culture (2004], 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, in effective classroom assessment mode, there are different features of continuous assessment such as:

- Continuous assessment encourages the use of multiple works. Assessment often occurs and for different purposes and is not limited to the end of term or end of year.
- Continuous assessment allows for timely feedback to the major stakeholders in the systems. When continuous assessment mode is used; the teacher can regularly monitor and report on the program that students are making towards the attainment targets and objectives set out in the official curriculum. If a teacher does not recognize a student's learning errors until the end of the term the end of the year, it is usually too late for any corrective as well as its timelines significantly impact on how student responds to it.
- The continuous assessment model makes it easier to use the variety of assessment method. For example, a teacher can use a class discussion, oral question, a project, class work, assignments, and student observation to help him gather different types of information he/she needs to plan, teach, decide, and report. The validity of our decision is greatly improved when we used variety of assessment methods for gathering and interpreting students' information.
- 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 and motivates them.
- Continuous assessment occurs throughout the teaching learning process. A teacher who has more understanding of continuous assessment, required to realize that assessment information should be used through all the teaching learning process. In other words, that assessment really must be continuous. If we divide the teaching process into three stages, teachers can describe continuous assessment in each stage along with the main purpose of assessment.
- Before instruction, gather information about what students already know about the upcoming unit and what misconceptions they may have used this information to help plan the instruction and teaching activities for the unit.
- During instruction, gather information about how well students are learning thus far, use the information to decide which students are making good progress and which are struggling and use the information to guide change that should be made in lesson plans or to guide remediation or re-teaching.

- After instruction, gather information about how well students have learned the material that was taught, use the information to assign grades or re-teach students who have fallen defined.

In general, effective assessment helps to focus effort on implementing strategies to facilitate learning both inside and outside the classroom, and demonstrates the characteristics like: congruent with instruction, and integral to it, ongoing and continuous, based on authentic tasks and meaningful learning process and; based on criteria that students know and understand, appealing to their strengths; a collaborative process involving students; multi-dimensional, and uses a wide range of tools and methods; and focused on what students have learned and can do.

2.5. Rationales for Using Continuous Assessment

The conventional assessment focuses more on the end results that students get. Some scholars argue that although it is important to judge the achievement of students at the end of a semester or a course, assessment should mainly be used to improve the teaching learning process (Plessis et al, 2003). Hence, then advocated a paradigm shift from conventional assessment to continuous assessment. The characteristics of this shift (a paradigm shift in educational assessment) is to moving of assessment and its purposes (Puhl, 1996).

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

Generally, through continuous assessment of students' performance, 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 needs an ongoing assessment.

2.6. Practices of Continuous Assessment in Ethiopia

The concept of continuous assessment is first incorporated in the policy and introduced in primary schools of Ethiopia with the launching of education and training policy in 2002. However, before the introduction of the policy, test and examination are the most dominant mode of assessment of students at all level. After stressing of the need of continuous assessment in schools of the country, Ministry of Education has expanded continuous assessment for students, teachers and to education system as a whole (Ministry of Education, 2002: 126-127).

Bearing in mind those all facts, a great number of documents encompassing of details, rules and guidelines about continuous assessment has been prepared since the commencement of Education and Training Policy. One of these documents was ‘A National Curriculum Guideline for Pre-service Teacher Education Program.’ In this document, under the subsection competencies for Ethiopian teachers, there is an evident detail that divulges the responsibilities of teachers in practicing classroom continuous assessment. On the other verge of these efforts, there are many problems in the implementation of continuous assessment. Since teachers are the major implementers of continuous assessment it is affected by teachers in one way or another. But implementing of continuous assessment is not only the responsibilities of teachers alone but also students, and parents (ibid: 9).

Based on research findings by Tamene (2007), poor implementation of continuous assessment is due to lack of time, lack of facilities, teachers’ knowledge and commitment, class size and attitude of teachers which were the major problems of assessing students continuously. Birhanu (2004) indicated that proper handling of students’ assessment in general and continuous assessment in particular at high school level in selected high school of Arsi zone is poor and not up to the standard compared to contemporary assessment system. In his findings, major problems in implementing continuous assessment includes lack of awareness about the techniques and procedures, lack of guidelines/directives, in adequate preparation of teachers, lack of technical

support, unmanageable large class size, lack of adequate learning materials, lack of adequate supervisors who can guide practitioners, lack of students motivation and learners negative attitudes towards and project and assignments. To this end, the above research are conducted on primary and secondary school and at college level and clearly shows the problems of assessment in general and continuous assessment in particular.

2.7. The Key Roles of the School Principals

The principal is responsible for the management and day- to - day operations and business of the school. The authority to exercise managerial powers is delegated from the Board, which retains responsibility for the overall governance of the school. The principal oversees the educational programs and developments in the school (and must keep Board members abreast of these issues. It is critical that the principal and the Board have confidence in one another.

Good governance involves the school Board and the principal having an open and honest relationship where there is an effective flow of communication between the parties. As it is chair's role to act as the Board's primary channel of communication with the principal, trust, honesty and respect between the principal and the chair are essential aspects of good governance. The principal should attend all Board except those at which the principal's performance is to be discussed. The principal may or may not a member of the Board.

Although the principal usually occupies a unique position in a managerial sense, in order to achieve good governance practices the principal needs to have managerial roles, responsibility and accountability similar to those of the chief Executive officer of a commercial undertaking. It is important that roles, responsibility, delegations and authority of the principal are clearly defined and understood include:

- Management powers,
- Appointing school staff,
- Managing expenditure within budget,
- Implementing the Board's strategic plan by effectively, and
- Managing the school's resources.

The above should be clear and unambiguous. Each Board members and the principal need to these issue. At the time of appointment the principal should be given a formal job description and a letter of appointment outlining the duties, rights and responsibility attached to the role. Good governance requires the school to have clear guidelines determining the boundaries between the governance role of the Board and the day-to-day management of the school, which is the principal's role.

2. 7.1. The Role of School Principal in the Management of Learners

The implementation of continuous assessment in schools requires a healthy and positive school climate where teachers are free to teach and learners are free to learn. This healthy and conducive environment with positive discipline remains the duty and responsibility of the school and its stakeholders.

Learners' behavioral problem such as absenteeism can negatively impact on the smooth implementation continuous assessment in the Further Education and Training Band since there are many tasks or activities to be administered to learners on daily basis. Therefore, the school principal's duties and responsibilities should involve ensuring that all personnel, parents and learners are aware of the policies regarding positive learner behavior and ensuring that policy regarding disciplinary measures is implemented (WCDoE, 2007:3). Furthermore, the school principals must ensure that learner behavior and learner issues are discussed regularly during staff meeting and parents' meetings.

The maintenance of discipline in schools does not happen by chance. According to section 8 of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, this begins with the adoption of the school's code of conduct. The aim of school's code of conduct is to establish a disciplined and purposeful environment in which effective teaching and learning can take place. Some of the requirements given in A Practical Guide to Understanding and Managing Learner Behavior with the School Context released by the Western Cape Department of Education is that (1) the school's code of conduct must be drawn up against the background of the school's ethics and take into consideration the particular character of the school and the values and culture of learners and the community, (2) it must be aimed at creating a disciplined and goal-orientated school

environment within which quality education can take place, and it must be dynamic and flexible (WCDoE, 2007: 11).

The implementation of continuous assessment requires a healthy and sound environment where the conduct of learners is well regulated through the code of conduct and disciplinary policies. Therefore, maintain that learners who miss assessment tasks without a genuine reason can be dealt with fairly and consistently by school principals when there is a school code of conduct and disciplinary policies which are communicated to the learners through their representatives.

2.7.2. The Motivation Role of School Principals

Motivation is usually defined as an internal state that arouses, directs, and maintains behavior (Wolfolk, 2007: 372). This definition reveals three components of motivation: arousing human behavior, directing human behavior, and maintaining human behavior. It is clear from the definition that the ultimate goal of motivation is to keep teachers working towards the attainment of goals or outcomes by energizing, directing and maintaining their behavior. Mason (2004:41) points out that motivation should be understood as a management strategy to persuade people to change, to release staff's trapped potential, to bring out the best in people, to improve teaching and learning and to satisfy a psychological need in an individual for the benefit of both the individual and the school. Motivation is a natural antidote to low staff morale and is capable of transforming any ineffective organization into an effective one.

According to Kyprianou as cited in Steyn and Van Niekerk (2007: 135), there are three reasons why motivated staff makes an organization more effective:

- Motivated employees are always looking for better ways of doing their job,
- Motivated workers are usually concerned about quality, and
- Highly motivated workers are more productive than apathetic ones.

Continuous assessment can be successfully implemented if school principals become aware of basic human needs and motivation theories and processes.

2.7.3. The Monitoring and Supporting Role of School principal

The new assessment policy provides the opportunity for teachers to use different methods and learner-centered techniques. Teachers who are not familiar with these methods will not function until they are trained and have received follow-up support in order to implement these methods successfully. School principals should provide in-school support with regard to the implementation of the new assessment policy. Mason (2004:47-48) pointed out that the School Management Team (SMT) should monitor and support:

- Content teaching to ensure that the content for teaching and learning is in line with the assessment standards
- Integration in planning and presentation to ensure that integration of assessment standards and various methods of teaching are done properly.
- Learning outcomes and assessment standards to ensure that learning outcomes and assessment standards are correctly arranged to allow progression.
- Learner-centered and learner-paced teaching to ensure that teaching pace is determined by learner's learning progress.
- Continuous assessment to ensure that assessment is not done once off, like in the form of examination, but it takes place on a continuous basis.

Monitoring and support remains a critical issue in ensuring that the implementation of continuous assessment is successful. This is simply because of two reasons: (a) there is no adequate training for the wide array of assessment strategies used by teachers, which may lead to them using wrong assessment strategies, and (b) teachers need to be taught how to select, modify and develop assessment tasks (IAEA, 2006:4). School principals' constant monitoring and support will ensure that assessment standards are not compromised and an increase in the level of learners' achievement is realized. In this connotation, IAEA's (2006:12) suggested that monitoring on the actual implementation of assessment process should cover the following aspects:

- Ensure compliance with policy,
- Ensure assessment tasks are designed in accordance with the subject guideline,
- Ensure assessment tasks are administered in accordance with the principles of good assessment,

- Ensure assessment evidence is marked according to the marking guidelines, and marks are totaled and recorded as per policy.

2.7.4. Assessment Rights and Responsibilities of Principals

Assessment is ever to reach its immense potential as a force for good in schools, principals across the country must fulfill critically important assessment leadership responsibilities. As of Stiggins (2000: 24-25), the following responsibilities are considered principals have to crucial responsibilities regarding assessment literacy.

First, principals must become assessment literate themselves. Without this basis of professional expertise, principals remain unable to bring the issue of effective assessment to the fore as a school priority or provide the support teachers need to develop and use assessments productively in their classroom. Second, principals must remove all barriers to the development of teachers' assessment literacy (ibid).

These include personal, institutional and community barriers. Personal barriers may include the anxiety that accompanies trying new assessments before one is certain that they will work. The principals need to assure teachers that initial failure to assess dependably or to use assessment effectively will not lead to directive to stop trying. Teachers need to know that school resources will be allocated for these purposes-and the principal need to make sure that they are. Community barriers may include parents who question changes in assessment and communication procedures. Principals need to be sufficiently assessment literate to be able to ease community concerns in this regard and to support teachers in their relationships with parents during the process of change (ibid: 12).

CHAPTER THREE

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Approach

Based on the objective of the study, the investigator employed both quantitative and qualitative approaches since the study focuses on the status and challenges of implementation of continuous assessment. In fact, it is possible to know the magnitude, rate and extent of implementation of continuous assessment descriptively. As a result, the researcher focused on the different qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection instruments, method of data analysis and interpretation, and sampling techniques while conducting the study.

3.2. Research Design

Descriptive survey design was employed for this study. It is selected for the reason that it enables the researcher to obtain current information about the status and challenges of implementation of continuous assessment in secondary schools of south omo zone. It is also relevant to collect detailed and a variety of information concerning the status and challenges of implementation of continuous assessment in secondary schools. As Kothari (2004) stated, the major purpose of descriptive survey is description of the state of affairs as it exists at present. Furthermore, he explained that the main characteristic of descriptive survey is that it enables the researcher to come up with what has happened or what is happening.

3.3. Description of the Study Area

South Omo Zone is located the Southern Western extreme part of the Ethiopia, as well at the Southern tip of the South Nation Nationalities and people's Region(SNNPR).Astronomically, it is roughly lies between 4⁰43'N to6⁰46'N latitude and 35⁰75'E to 37⁰07'E longitude, 741kms South of Addis Ababa and 588 kms from the regional city, Hawassa. It is boarded with Keffa Zone and Konta special Woreda in North, GamoGofa Zone and Basketo Special Woreda in North East, Keniya in Suoth, SegenZuria People's Zone in East, Oromiya region (Borana Zone) in Suoth East, and Bench Maji Zone in West and North West directions (zonal Annual Statistical Abstract,2009E.C).

The total size of the zones' population in 2009E.C. is estimated to 767915 while the total area of the zone is 22,835.8 square km. The crude population density of the South Omo Zone is 33.63persons per square km. The South Omo Zone is a multination which consists of Sixteen (16) ethnic groups out of 56 nations, which found in the South Nation Nationalities and people's Region (SNNPR). Those ethnic groups have their own distinct geographical location, language, culture, and social identities. At present the South Omo Zone is sub-divided in to eight (8) Woredas and One (1) Town administration. This study would be conducted in selected secondary schools of South Omo Zone (ibid).

3.4. Sources of Data

Having a real source of data in the process of the study is unquestionable to address the basic questions. To have reliable and valuable data, both primary and secondary sources of data were used in this study.

3.4.1. Primary Sources

Primary sources were secondary school principals, secondary school teachers, secondary school students and cluster supervisors. Primary sources help the researcher to get firsthand information about the issues under study.

3.4.2. Secondary Sources

Secondary data was obtained from documents. In this regard, an assessment of documents related to the area of the study was consulted at the selected secondary schools. These documents

include student mark list, teachers' daily assessment report, rosters, report cards and other important documents.

3.5. Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

South Omo Zone has eight (8) woredas and one (1) administrative town. The classification of this zone into woreda and administration town is for the purpose of provision of effective administration and facilitating the guidance and support to teaching and learning process. Due to this fact, all necessary activities related to teaching learning process are anticipated to be realized in both cases. However, in terms of facilities, and background of teachers, those secondary schools found in administrative towns are more beneficial than those found in woredas.

As a result, the researcher categorized the zone into two strata which are administrative town and woredas. On top of this, one (1) Administrative town was incorporated in the study using purposive sampling technique. In the case of woredas, three (3) out of eight (8) woredas were selected by using simple random sampling technique. Thus, for this study Jinka administrative town, Malle woreda, Suoth Ari woreda, and Benna Tsemay woreda were considered. From these, Jinka administrative town has three, Malle woreda has five, South Ari has five, and Benna Tsemay has two secondary schools, and the total number of secondary schools in selected woredas are fifteen. Among these, six secondary schools are selected by using simple random sampling technique. The selected secondary schools are Malleka, Koibe, Benneta, Jinka, Kako and Gazer Secondary schools.

Likewise, all numbers of principal six out of six and cluster supervisors five out of five were taken from selected woredas and administrative towns by using purposive sampling technique. In the case of teachers from the total of 144; 72 (50%) of teachers were sampled from each school by using simple random sampling. Besides, 224 out of 4546 students were selected by using simple random sampling techniques.

Table 1: Sample and Sampling Techniques

No	Secondary Schools	Principal			Teachers			Supervisor			Students		
		P	S	%	P	S	%	P	S	%	P	S	%
1	Malleka	1	1	100	26	13	50	1	1	100	814	40	5
2	Koibe	1	1	100	24	12	50				618	30	5
3	Beneta	1	1	100	12	6	50	1	1	100	552	27	5
4	Jinka	1	1	100	42	21	50	1	1	100	1368	68	5
5	Kako	1	1	100	18	9	50	1	1	100	561	28	5
6	Gazer	1	1	100	22	11	50	1	1	100	633	31	5
	Total	6	6	100	144	72	50	5	5	100	4,546	224	5
Sampling Method		purposive sampling method			Simple random sampling method			purposive sampling method			Simple random sampling method		

SOURCE: South Omo Zone education Department 2011/2019 Secondary schools statistical report (Unpublished)

3.6. Data Collection Instruments and procedures

Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected using different data collection instruments such as questionnaires, interview and documentary analysis were employed for the study to collect primary and secondary data.

3.6.1. Questionnaire

For this study, questionnaire is the important data collection tool that was used to get sufficient primary data. Both open-ended and close-ended questions were developed for teachers and students. The questionnaire is selected not only because it is the most common data gathering tool, but also it helps to collect a great deal of information within the time limit and help to reach large group of research subjects Kothari, (2004). The questionnaire was prepared for teachers and students separately.

To test the validity and reliability of the instrument due to consistency, a draft of the questionnaire was distributed for senior graduate students and to the researcher colleagues. The pilot study was conducted at Ashaker Hidasse Secondary school, the participants of this pilot study were ten teachers from which seven male and three females. The purpose of the pilot study was to find out ambiguities, omissions or misunderstandings in the instruments. They commented that, the instruments lack consistency and clarity in some aspects. Based on their comment the necessary correction was done to improve the validity and reliability of the instruments.

3.6.2. Interview

The other instrument for the collection of primary data for the study is an interview. It is helpful to supplement the information gathered through other instructions as well as for the clarification of some information. Consequently, face to face communication was held with 6 principals and 5 cluster supervisors. So, principals and cluster supervisors were responded to the interview during the study.

3.6.3. Document Analysis

In addition to the above instruments of data collection, documentary analysis was used to gather secondary data. Therefore, reliable information was obtained from the six selected secondary schools. Essential documents like student mark lists, continuous assessment records, teacher assessment reports, rosters and report cards were analyzed.

3.7. Method of Data Analysis

Both quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods were used in the study. Quantitative data which is collected through questionnaire from teachers and students were organized, tabulated and described quantitatively, using percentage, frequency, table, and description with the help of SPSS of version 20. These statistical tests were used for the purpose of testing different information from the respondent groups. Besides qualitative data was narrated qualitatively using words, phrases, statements and paragraphs obtained from interview, open-ended questions.

3.8. Ethical Considerations

The researcher was go to selected secondary schools having a permission letters from Addis Ababa University and introduce this objectives to selected secondary schools. After making agreement with the concerned bodies of the secondary school, the researcher was introduce his objectives and purposes. Then, the final questionnaires was administered to different respondents

(teachers & students). Any communication with the concerned bodies was accomplished at the voluntarily consent without harming and threatening the personal and institutional wellbeing of the participants. In addition, all information obtained from individual respondents and the school as well different offices records were kept confidential.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This chapter deals with the presentation and analysis of data gathered from participants using questionnaire, interview and documents. The questionnaire was administered to teachers and students whereas the interview was conducted with secondary school principals, and cluster supervisors at the selected secondary schools. In order to get more information, documents were analyzed in selected secondary schools. The first part of this chapter deals with the personal information of participants while the second section deals with the analysis of the findings of the study in relation to the basic research questions.

4.1. Background and Characteristics of Participants

This Analysis was based on 72 questionnaires from secondary school teachers, 224 questionnaires from secondary school students, interview of 6 principals, interview of 5 cluster supervisors and document analysis. In general, Out of 72 questionnaire 67(93%) were filled out and returned from secondary school teachers and 214(95.5%) out of 224 questionnaires from secondary school students were used for the analysis.

Table 2: Characteristics of teacher participants by age, sex, qualification, teaching experience and teaching load.

The following table deals with the personal information of teacher participants. It focuses on sex, age, qualification, teaching experience and their work load.

No	Items	Teacher Respondent characteristics	N	%
	Sex	Male	53	79.0
		Female	14	21.0
		Total	67	100
	Age	20-25 year	12	18.0
		26-30 year	44	65.6
		31-35 year	9	13.4
		36-40 year	2	3.0
		41 and above	-	-
		Total	67	100
	Qualification	Diploma	11	16.4
		BA/Bed/BSC (Degree)	56	83.6
		Master's degree	-	-
		Above	-	-
		Total	67	100
	Teaching experience	0-3 year	11	16.4
		4-7 year	28	41.8
		8-11 year	17	25.4
		12-16 year	7	10.4
		17 and above	4	6.0

respondents have positive implication on the study activity in that it helps the researcher to get the necessary data from different age group and work experience.

Table 3: Characteristics of student participants

Table 3 below emphasizes the student participant characteristics. It mainly stressed on their sex, age and their grade level.

No	Item	Student participants' characteristics	N	%
	Sex	Male	142	66.4
		Female	72	33.6
		Total	214	100
	Age	14-16	45	21.0
		17-19	142	66.4
		20-22	16	7.5
		more than 23	11	5.1

		Total	214	100
	Grade	9 th	118	55.2
		10 th	96	44.8
		Total	214	100

Table 3 above dealt with the background of student participants. It emphasizes on sex, age and grade level of students. As we can see from the table 142 (66.4%) male and 72(33.6%) female students were participated in the study process. Though the sample selection technique was stratified random sampling method, the difference was existed because of that the number of female students at high school level is low. Regarding their age, similarly 142(66.4%) of students were in the age group of 17-19. This shows us most of the students were at secondary school age level which enables them to practice any activity that given them through continuous assessment techniques.

In-service course, activities such as periodic refreshment courses, workshops, seminars and conference are essential parts of the ongoing work and development of teacher in order to keep up with the current trends in the application of continuous assessment. The effective implementation of continuous assessment depends on continuous and practical course of teachers and students. If this is so, there will be progress on teaching learning activity.

Table 4: The course taken by teachers in the pre-serve program regarding to continuous assessment implementation

No	Description	Response	Teacher participants	
			N	%
1	Have you taken a course on continuous assessment in the pre service program?	Yes	18	26.8
		No	49	73.2

	Total	67	100
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As shown in table 4 respondents were asked if they had taken a course on continuous assessment. Thus, 18(26.8%) of participants confirmed that they had taken a course on continuous assessment during their pre-service program. On the other hand, 49(73.2%) have not taken the course. This affects the continuous assessment practice process which teachers expected to implement in the teaching learning activity.

4.2. Integration of Continuous Assessment Method in Lesson Plan

Continuous assessment is well practiced if it is integrated with the lesson delivered in the class. The following table discusses whether teachers integrate continuous assessment in their lesson or not.

Table 5: Continuous Assessment Integration Method in Lesson Plan

NO	Integration of continuous assessment	Response	Teacher participant	
			N	%
1	Including continuous assessment in the lesson plan	Yes	55	82.1
		No	12	17.9
	Total		67	100
2	Frequency of incorporating continuous assessment in lesson plan	Alternatives		
		Always	13	19.4
		Sometimes	39	58.2
		Rarely	15	22.4

		Not at all	-	-
	Total		67	100

In table no.5 item no. 1, participants were asked to react if they include continuous assessment plan in the lesson. Thus, majority of them 55(82.1%) were confirmed that they include it in a lesson plan. This tells us though most of the teachers haven't taken course; they incorporate continuous assessment in the lesson. Concerning its frequency, when 13(19.4%) of the teachers were included always the continuous assessment method in their lesson, 39(58.2%) include sometimes. As we understand from table 5, it seems most teachers incorporate continuous assessment plan in their lesson.

As we understand from table 5, it seems most teachers incorporate continuous assessment plan in their lesson. But results from the document analysis shows there was no such well-planned lesson which have different assessment techniques. And also as the interviewee (Teacher Mengistu), from Malleka secondary school on May 12/2019 responded that though we try to incorporate in the lesson, because of time constraint and large class size, we did not implement the method in practical.

Regarding this, Ellington and Early (1997:121) stated that unless continuous assessment is carefully planned and coordinated, there is a very real danger that student may be grossly over assessed particular of certain times of the year, when several lectures are asking simultaneously for assignments to be handed in continuous assessment can, if not properly managed adversely and their tutors with the latter being regarded with suspicion and some extreme case enmity and occasionally even introducing mal practice, as in introducing penalties for seeking help.

As it is understandable from interview results, though some teachers not include continuous assessment in lesson plan, sometimes they use in a class without plan.

4.2.1. Different Types of Continuous Assessment Techniques and Students' Involvement in Continuous Assessment Tasks

There are different methods of continuous assessment in assessing students learning. The uses of these methods help the teacher to know each students understanding about the lesson. The table below shows the responses of teacher participants regarding the issue.

Table 6: The various forms of continuous assessment methods

No	Items	Response	Teacher participant	
			N	%
1	What are different types of continuous assessment techniques that used in a class?	Project work	20	30
		Presentation	28	42
		Peer assessment	9	13
		Individual work	6	9
		Field trip reports	4	6
	Total		67	100
2	Involvement of student in continuous assessment	Alternatives		
		Always	42	62.6
		Sometimes	15	22.4
		Rarely	10	15.0
		Not at all	-	-
	Total		67	100

As in table 6 item 1 above, participants were asked whether they use different type of continuous assessment in a class. Thus, 28(42%) were confirmed that the teachers use presentation as types of continuous assessment technique in a class. Besides, 20(30%) of respondents replied that project work is used as one of types continuous assessment to evaluate teaching-learning process. Only 4(6%) of the teachers replied that they used Field trip reports as types of continuous assessment techniques in a class. As the data from interview and document analysis confirmed, though teachers try to use different types of continuous assessment in a class, the activity was not address each student or students were not assessed individually. Teachers assess through group works, project work, presentation, peer assessment, individual work, field trip reports, and assignments which lacks proper feedback and comment. So, it is possible to say, there is only intention to use continuous assessment without having full understanding of how to use different techniques of continuous assessment and because of this the real practice of continuous assessment is low.

One of the major importance of continuous assessment implementation is that it enhances student participation in the teaching learning process. Concerning the involvement of students in continuous assessment activity, as shown in table 6 item 2, participants were asked whether they involve students in continuous assessment activity or not. Hence, 42 (62.6%) of the participants were responded that they always involve their students in the activity. About 10 (15%) rarely give a chance to involve students in the continuous assessment activity. But results from interview show that teachers, give group work or project work for students in such a case most students perform without full participation in the group member and we mark the activity equally for all group members without checking the efforts made by each group members because of shortage of time.

In general, the results of the above table shows teachers were not used different assessment methods and techniques of continuous assessment similarly in continuous way. The results from interview and document analysis also show the practice of continuous assessment in high school context is unmanageable for a number of reasons. This practice, however, is highly criticized by educators. Black and William (1998) commented that teachers' heavy use of tests as a means of assessing student performance encourage rote (learning by repetition) and superficial (pertaining to surface) learning.

Similarly, Pap worth (2005) stated that teachers' reliance on testing denies many learners the opportunity to demonstrate their true potentials. According to Freedman (1998), continuous assessment, other than tests of examinations must include varied assessment tools such as projects, presentation, interviews, observations, oral questions, home works, seat works and similar other kinds. The validity of our decision is greatly improved when we use a variety of assessment methods for gathering and interpreting students' information.

4.2.2. Continuous Assessment Documents Used by Teachers and Support of Principals

The practice of continuous assessment could be assisted by different documents. Here table 7 shows that how many teachers used different documents that help the school principals in order to implement the continuous assessment.

Table 7: Documents of continuous assessment and support of principals

NO	Items	Alternatives	Teacher participant	
			N	%
1	Types of documents used for continuous assessment	Only assessment format given from school	31	46.3
		Assessment guideline developed at school level	21	31.3
		guideline developed at department level	15	22.4
		No, because, I have got full professional development	–	–

		through past training		
	Total		67	100
2	Support of school principal on continuous assessment	Very high	–	–
		High	11	16.4
		Average	26	38.8
		Low	30	44.8
		very low	–	–
	Total		67	100

As illustrated in table 7, participants were asked to give answer regarding types of continuous assessment on item items 6, 31 (46.3%) of the teachers confirmed that they used assessment format given from school and 15 (22.4%) of teachers use the guideline developed at department level. The data indicates that there are no uniform continuous assessment documents in secondary schools. Results from document analysis revealed that, there was no continuous assessment guideline provision except the assessment recording format which was provided from school.

To sum up, the change of behavior in teaching learning process will be checked only by means of assessment. But, the document like lesson plan which includes continuous assessment techniques was not prepared in these schools, and this affects the teaching learning activities and instructional processes. Without having proper plan of continuous assessment devices it will not be easy to bring changes in teaching learning process and it affects the quality of education.

School principals have the highest responsibility to support activities which enhance the teaching learning activity of the school. Unless the efforts made by the principals, whatever the teachers practices in the school may not resulted as intended. Regarding the support provision, as shown in table 7, item 2, participants were asked whether they have support from school principal or not. Thus, only 11 (16.4%) of teachers reply that the support from school principals was high and 30 (44.8%) replied that the support provided to teachers is below average. This indicates the support given from school principal for the continuous assessment practice is not enough and continuous in each secondary schools. The result from teachers' interview ascertain principals were not in position to guide and support teachers. One of the interviewee responds on May

13/2019 from Koibe Secondary School, as the activity concerning continuous assessment is left only for teacher by saying “How could be possible to clap with one hand?” it means there is no planned and timely support from school principals or from any other stakeholders.

Table 8: Provision of Feedback by Teachers and Students on Continuous Assessment Activities

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

NO	Items	Alternatives	Respondents						
			Students		Teachers		Total		
			N	%	N	%	N	%	

1	Feedback provision	Yes	98	45.8	58	86.6	156	55.5
		No	116	54.2	9	13.4	125	44.5
	Total		214	100	67	100	281	100
2	Frequency of feedback provision	In each continuous assessment tasks	26	26.5	22	38.0	48	30.8
		When test papers returned to the students	58	59.2	25	43.1	83	53.2
		At the end of the semester/course	14	14.3	11	18.9	25	16.0
	Total		98	100	58	100	156	100

Regarding feedback provision, as indicated in table 8 item 1 above, student participants required to reply whether they have given feedback or not. Thus, 116 (54.2%) give their response as feedback is not given for them. In case of teacher participants 58(86.6%) of them replied that they give feedback for students. This mean that feedback provision on continuous assessment is not in similar and continuous way. Results from data analysis and interview revealed that in many activities such as in group discussion, presentation, oral questioning, and assignment teachers always collect mark for those activities.

Rather than used for feedback or diagnosis, checking progress or how much they have changed by the instruction. From this we can understand that the results of continuous assessment were not used properly or it was practiced for grading or product rather than for the process. As a result it could not improve both the learning and teaching activities and also put negative impact on the quality of our education. Timely feedback serves a good purpose than which provided lately.

As illustrated in the table 8 item 2, participants were asked the time of feedback given. Thus, 58(59.2%) of students reply that feedback is given while the test paper returned to students. In case of teacher respondents about 25(43.1%) of them give feedback when the test paper returned

to students. This confirms that most teachers give feedback, at the termination of test paper for students which has nothing to improve students' current academic progression.

As most teachers give feedback but some teachers didn't provide feedback to students. Regarding the absence of feedback, 9(13.4%) participants were try to reason out for not using feedback such as lack of time and students are not highly interested. When students are told their weakness, they feel ashamed. But the teaching learning process always needs feedback to bring a change in the students' performance. Concerning this, (Airssian, 1991 cited in Brihanu, 2004) shows opposite idea to this finding, because it is stated that students learn more in classes where assessment is an integral part of instruction and which provides feedback about learning progress.

In addition to this, the aim of continuous assessment is to provide feedback. In the light of this, Brooks (2002) also put the same idea that was shown in the literature. This implies that giving and receiving feedback are the central skills of continuous assessment and the purpose of feedback is to help students improve their learning. It should also be specific, accurate, timely, and clear, focused up on the attainable and expressed in a way which will encourage students to think and changes their mind. But, the finding shows most of the feedback not given timely. In general, the way that the feedback was given to students is not similar and not continuous. This makes the teachers not to get the real students performances; and students are not able to improve their performance since they don't get timely feedback.

Table 9: School Guideline to Implement Continuous Assessment

No	Item	Alternatives	Teacher participants	
			N	%
1	Guideline supplied by school	Yes	21	31.3
		No	46	68.7

	Total		67	100
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As illustrated in table 9 item 1, participants were asked to give answer whether they are supplied guideline by school. Based on the question 21 (31.3%) were replied that the assessment guideline is provided by schools. In contrast, 46(68.7%) given their response that schools do not provide any guideline on continuous assessment. Furthermore, interview participant of principals said that it is up to teachers to use the MoE guide line supplied in the form of jobs, duties and tasks. Therefore there is a difference in teachers and principals regarding the issue.

Generally, if there is no common guide lines of what, how and when, etc..., for continuous assessment, the overall objectives of schools will not be achieved as assessment and teaching-learning activity must be done cooperatively and collectively, rather than separately. If they were using the guideline at department level, there would be some confusion on students and on the collective nature of teaching learning could not practice effectively.

4.2.3. Students' Interest towards Assessment Tasks

Students' interest has a significant place in the practice of continuous assessment or in any other teaching-learning duties. Students have their own reason why they are interested or not interested to continuous assessment as discussed in the following

Table 10: Interest of students towards assessment activities

No	Item	Response	Students participants	
			N	%
1	Are you interested to do continuous assessment activity	Yes	198	92.5
		No	16	7.5
	Total		214	100

As in table 10, regarding the interests of student towards continuous assessment activity, respondents were asked to answer whether they have interest to do continuous assessment activity or not. Hence, 198(92.5%) of students confirmed that they were interested to do continuous assessment activity. Only 16(7.5%) of the students were answered as they were not interested to do continuous assessment activity. Concerning the reason students respond that tests and final exams are better than continuous assessment to measure individual progress in learning, it is not effective to measure different performance, all group members did not provide equal contribution in the activity and continuous assessment is time consuming. As understandable from interview with teacher, most students like continuous assessment not for taking full responsibility in the learning activity, but because of that through continuous assessment they get equal result without such strong involvement in group activities with those who can perform well. This is the point where the assessment activity detached from its objectives-assessing individual student to know their performance and make them to work for better achievement.

According to principal A, the principal should have knowledge of what the continuous Assessment is, all about to be able to communicate it to others. The principal should have a vision about continuous assessment and be able to translate it into an operational plan. In that way, he did not encounter problems in managing the implementation of the continuous Assessment. The principal from school A stated that staff meetings which are held every week to update teachers on the implementation of continuous assessment in order to clarify uncertainties and motivate the teachers.

According to the principal from school A, status and challenges of implementation of continuous assessment is to motivate teachers and give them guidance where possible. The principal should have a management plan that indicates dates for checking teachers and learners' work. The principal from school A stated that implementation of continuous assessment is the core responsibility of the principal.

According to the principal from school B, status and challenges of implementation of continuous assessment is to motivate teachers, check the teachers and learners' work, address learning area problems during staff and learning area meetings, ensure a positive school climate and establish communication. The principal from school B stated that it is necessary to make teachers feel

important by giving every one of them a task and expecting report back. During report back the principal should give motivating remarks. The principal may create positive school climate by ensuring that relevant policies are in place and resources are available.

According to the principal from school C, the principal should play a leading role in the implementation of the continuous assessment. The principal should also conduct class visits to appreciate what the teachers are doing and assist them where they encounter problems. He/she should pay attention to positive aspects, help teachers and address their weaknesses. The principal should motivate staff members by demonstrating dedication, enthusiasm and hard work.

The principal from school C stated that demonstration of teachers how to assess the students concentrating on continuous assessment methods. Principals always talk about continuous assessment in the staff meeting. The teachers in this school are happy and proud of the principal visiting their classrooms to see their work.

According to the principal from school D, the principal should have sound knowledge of the continuous assessment because continuous assessment implementation is the core function of the school. She should demonstrate compliance with policy documents and circulars from the Education Department. The principal should give teachers the structure (skeleton) of the work and allow them to develop it. The principal from school D also stated that the principal should take more time reading the policy documents from the Education Department to enrich his/her knowledge in order to be able to give guidance to others. He/she should be able to demonstrate reading lesson to others if there is a problem with reading. He/she must have programs for staff development and coordinate availability of facilitators if he/she cannot facilitate it. He/she should lead teachers through vision, goals and values and ensure that there is common understanding. The principal should create positive school climate through relaxed atmosphere and policies.

According to the cluster supervisor from school B, the principal should give teachers moral support, motivate and encourage learners. The principal should provide human and material resources to make the work easy for the teachers. The cluster supervisor from school B stated that the principal should come to the classroom to see what makes the teachers not to cope with

continuous assessment implementation and be able to help. Encourage instructional excellence, visit classroom, talk with teachers about their teaching concerns, initiate program review and revitalization active participant in the life of the school.

According to, one of the cluster supervisor from school C stated that the principal is an official of the department placed in the school. Thus, he/she should conduct class visits to see what teachers are doing in order to support them and give real report on their performance. He/she should not rely only on the reports of Head of Departments. By conducting class visits the principal supports the Head of Departments. The principal should motivate and set a good example by allowing Head of Departments to check his/her work. The principal should know what is expected of teachers in various Learning Areas in order to lead compliance.

The cluster supervisor participants from school A, C and D are agree that the role of the principal in the implementation of the continuous assessment is to support teachers through resources and facilities, give teachers guidelines on planning for teaching and learning, motivate teachers and create a positive school climate through the creation of policies. All participants, except participants from school E, agree that the principal should conduct class visits to appreciate what the teachers are doing and give assistance where needed. The participants from school E argue that the principal should manage teaching and learning through the department heads as they are in charge of teaching and learning. Other participants indicated that the principal is an official of the Department placed at the school to be the eye of the Department. Thus, the principal should conduct class visits to observe what is happening in the school and give a proper report on the performance of teachers.

According to this study, the status and challenges of implementation of continuous assessment includes but is not limited to the following:

- To communicate the purpose of the continuous assessment.
- To monitor compliance with the implementation of continuous assessment policy document.
- To lead and manage continuous assessment planning (learning programs, work schedules and lesson plans).
- To lead and manage assessment of learners.

- The principal should be able to guide teachers on the format and features of the assessment plan.
- To implement and monitor the performance management system, also known as the Integrated Quality Management System.
- To manage the allocation of time for learning areas on the time table.
- To manage punctuality and attendance to lessons.
- To create a positive school climate through adherence to policies, by being consistent, by sincerely involving educators in decision-making, by exercising effective management behavior, praising educators on a job well done and making educators feel at home.
- To provide instructional leadership through classroom observation, giving feedback on observation, motivating and supporting teachers for effective classroom practice and personal growth.
- To give meaning to teachers' activities for stimulation and to inspire teachers to work creatively, energetically, cooperatively, collaboratively and coordinately. Burke and Krey (2002:23) state that action that is not meaningful has little chance of been creative or stimulating. Therefore, the principal should be well informed and spend time studying educational policies and circulars in order to provide effective leadership in continuous assessment management.

4.3. The Major Challenges that Affect the Proper Implementation of Continuous Assessment in Secondary Schools of South Omo Zone

One of the interviewed principal of school A said following on the major challenges of implementing continuous assessment: In school A there is the beginning on implementing continuous assessment but it is not this much satisfactory because, there are students who has no interest when they are assessed by continuous assessment. Especially, our school students did not like to do assignments and home works. The commitment of our school teacher is also low and there is overlook between our teachers. (May 17/2019)

As principal of school B respondent, concerning the major challenges of implementing continuous assessment are lack of experienced teachers, class size, teachers' students' ratio, absence of pedagogic center, carelessness of some teachers, students interest to do homework,

physical environments of the school, not sufficient books in the library, no recreation centers for teachers and Sharing schools with some communities (May 12, 2019). In relation to the major challenges of implementing continuous assessment, one of the interviewed principal of school C responded that teachers' blame that most of students are disinterested doing different activities like home work, class activities, assignment and presentation, Because of lack of due attention and carelessness they are not using their best of effort. (May 17, 2019)

According to principal of school D, many challenges faced during and after implementation of continuous assessment. The problems are teachers' students' ratio, Absence of pedagogic center, Carelessness of teachers, Students interest to do homework (May 15, 2019). Principal of school E responded that experience of teachers, class size, teachers' students' ratio, absence of pedagogic center, carelessness of some teachers, students interest to do homework, physical environments of the school, not sufficient books in the library, no recreation centers for teachers and Sharing schools with some communities. (May 16, 2019)

This was revealed in the major challenges of implementing continuous assessment by one of principal of school F that about 75 students are accommodated per class due to this reason it is very difficult to implement continuous assessment. Even at the beginning of school year the number of students per class reaches 80-90, finally by students dropping out it declines up to 70 to 75 still there is a problem, it is very difficult for the implementation of continuous assessment (May 18, 2019). In addition to this, one of the interviewed supervisors from school A said the following when the supervisor asked about the major challenges of implementing continuous assessment that infrastructures like text books, chairs, black boards, instructional materials and adequate class School rooms have big roles for the implementation of learners' continuous assessment. (May 18/2019)

For the major challenges of implementing continuous assessment at secondary schools; The respondent supervisor from school B mentioned that secondary schools have many challenge during the implementation of continuous assessment; - these challenges are shortage of laboratory and technicians, attention and attitude of teachers, giving marks for irrelevant things if implementing continuous assessment, For example, giving 10% marks for exercise book neatness, testing continuously is considered as a continuous assessment, lack of school principal checkups weather teachers are implementing continuous assessment because school principals

had different administration and political responsibilities, lack of class and teachers man power and teacher students ratio. (May 19, 2019)

One of the participants from supervisor from school C replied that the major challenges of implementing continuous assessment at secondary are lack of infrastructures like students' text book, classrooms, laboratory materials and the likes. With the absence of these school infrastructures, it is difficult to imply the learners' continuous assessment properly. (May 17/2019)

The interviewee revealed that regarding the major challenges which secondary school faced problem of ineffective implementation of continuous assessment;

As supervisor from school D, many challenges faced during and after implementation of continuous assessment. The problems are teachers' students' ratio, Absence of pedagogic center, Carelessness of teachers, Students interest to do homework (May 10, 2019). The participant of supervisor from Secondary school E also explained about the major challenges of implementing continuous assessment at secondary schools: Even if the teachers have basic skills on the recording and documenting student's continuous assessment achievements, they are not volunteer to do so. I think they consider that recording the learners continues assessment achievement is exhaustive. (May /17/2019)

4. 4. The Strategies Designed to Overcome the Challenges of Implementing Continuous Assessment in Secondary Schools of South Omo Zone

One of the interviewed principal of school A responded that possible strategies that help to minimize the problems behind the implementation of continuous assessment are persuading teachers and students that continuous assessment is very relevant in teaching and learning process, guidance and counseling for careless and aim less students to use their efforts, discussing with students' parent towards students interest and attention, providing psychological support for those students and teachers (May 20, 2019).

One of the interviewed school director D replied that if teachers report students' continuous assessment to their parents, they will give a chance to evaluate their assessment system for themselves. (May 22, 2019)

Regarding this fact Dr. Desalegn (2004.p.9) stated the following; Parents want to know own well their children are doing in school. Reports on regular basis not just at the end of year but based on continuous assessment by teachers help parents to know about their children's progress.

Linn and miller (2005, p.373) mentioned as follows; that the parent teacher conference is a flexible procedure that provides for two way communication between home and school. Besides receiving a report from the teachers, parents have an opportunity to present information concerning the students out of school life. The conference permits, teachers and parents to ask questions, discuss their common concerns in helping the students, and cooperatively place a program for improving the student's learning and development.

Informing parents of their children's school progress is a basic function of a grading and reporting system. These reports should help parents understand the objective of the school and how well their children are achieving the intended learning outcomes of their particular program.

This information is important from several points of views.

- First by knowing what the school is attempting, parents are better able to cooperate with the school in promoting their children's learning and development.
- Second, information concerning their children's success, failures, and special problems enables parents to give them the emotional support and encouragement needed.
- Third, knowing their children's strengths and weakness in learning provides a basis for helping them make sounder educational plan.
- Fourth, teachers get chances to evaluate and check their teaching methodology from the feedbacks of parents.

To serve these purposes adequately the reports and portfolios of the reports of students work should contain as much information and detail as parents can comprehend. Therefore, in the targeted zone to improve the implementation of continuous assessment reporting student's achievement to their parents should be given special attention.

The other principals' participants believe with the fulfillment of infrastructures as a strategies for the proper implement of student's continuous assessment. As we have seen, all these strategies are accepted by different scholars. As a researcher I recommend that the targeted zone should be

taken these strategies so as to bring a big change on the implementation of continuous assessment in general secondary schools.

Furthermore, the followings were among major suggested strategies forwarded by respondents to implement continuous assessment effectively:

- Organizing different materials in to library;
- Awareness creation for teacher and students about the uses of continuous assessment;
- Creating recreation opportunity for teachers and providing motivational factors;
- Paying attention of continuous assessment implementation from school administration and concerned body;
- Making continuous assessment as a system and best practice;
- Providing teachers relief from making the extra a responsibilities;
- Providing continuous assessment guide lines;
- Motivating, recognizing, awarding and promoting of best implementers of continuous assessment were suggested as a major solution.
- Improve teachers' and students' attitude towards continuous assessment through awareness creation programs, such as conducting workshops, seminars, arranging regular experience sharing program.
- Provision of guidance and counseling

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

Under this chapter the overall summary, conclusion and the recommendation forwarded by the researcher are presented consecutively.

5.1 summary

The objective of this study was to investigate the status and challenges of implementation of continuous assessment in secondary schools, to identify the challenges that hinder the implementation of continuous assessment, to find out ways for improving the implementation of continuous assessment in South Omo Zone secondary schools.

This study was targeted to address the following basic questions.

1. How effective are secondary school principals in playing their role related to Continuous Assessment in South Omo Zone?
2. What are the major challenges that affect the proper implementation of continuous assessment in secondary schools of South Omo Zone?
3. What strategies should be designed to overcome implementation gaps and the challenges related to implementing Continuous Assessment in secondary schools of South Omo Zone?

In order to answer the above basic questions, the descriptive survey research design was employed. To gather important data for this study; questionnaire, interview, and document analysis techniques were applied. These data were analyzed by using both quantitative and qualitative data analysis methods.

Major findings

The implementations of different assessment techniques were used only for formality. The system of using learners' achievement as a feedback and reporting learners' achievement for parents was less recognized. There is no similarity among teachers in the same school in the implementation of continuous assessment, and poor handling documents, keeping records and managing learner's portfolios. There is a significant deference between the attitude score for male and female. But, no significant difference of attitude score for teachers based on their qualification and experience. Lack of infrastructures, inadequacy of learning materials, large class size, and lack of interest on students concerning continuous assessment, poor administrative support, time constraints, absence of continuous assessment guide line and shortage of immediate feedbacks were the major factors that hindered the proper implementation of continuous assessment in secondary schools. Almost the majority of teachers replied that there

was no continuous assessment guide to measure practical skills except the format with different assessment points in the implementation of continuous assessment.

Therefore, getting adequate and updated manuals and guidelines, fulfilling schools infrastructures, regular follow up, support and feedback are the strategies designed to overcome implementation gaps and the challenges related to implementing continuous assessment in secondary schools of targeted zone.

5.2. Conclusion

In light of the findings, the following conclusions were drawn.

There is no doubt that well implemented continuous assessments have a valuable asset to the schools and thereby increases the students' performance by providing necessary information about their progression. With this understanding, the secondary schools understudy has implemented continuous assessment. These secondary schools could not strictly follow all the methods of implementing continuous assessment processes.

The implementation of continuous assessments in the targeted zone is poor. It is also difficult to get 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 weak. The findings include that most teachers handling find time to revise previous tests in class. So that the learners' can learn from the revision exercise. When such revisions are not carried out, then a most essential component of the continuous assessment has been neglected.

Generally, fulfilling the necessary school infrastructures, continuous follow up, support, immediate feedback for the teachers and a course opportunities are demands more emphasis in the targeted zone.

5.3. Recommendations

The following recommendations have been provided for any attempts designed to bring about improvement and effective implementation of continuous assessment at secondary schools in south omo zone.

1. It would seem from the findings on teacher concerns in the study that sufficient attention is not being directed to give a course to teachers in school level. For this to be realized, however it is recommended that continuous and ongoing staff and administrative development. So that continuous assessment can be institutionalized and sustained.
2. Resources have been defined in terms of human, material, financial and time. Ongoing resources are an important part of making change work. The understanding, therefore, must be if continuous assessment is to be successfully implemented in schools, the schools should operate as resource center of facilitate the professional needs of principals and teachers
3. Providing clear and understandable manuals and guidelines for the front line practitioners of continuous assessment for principals, supervisors and teachers is should take the prime role.
4. Teachers and principals are expected to plan and involve students by providing tasks in the continuous form.
5. Materials are crucial for the practice of the matter. There should be material (reference books, laboratory equipment's, different assessment formats) provision to assist the implementation of continuous assessment from the concerned body.
6. Continuous supervision and follow up should be carried out by school principals as well as education officers to ensure that weather all teachers are implementing continuous assessment properly.
7. The secondary School principals should include the issue of implementing continuous assessment in their plan and make a discussion and set an objective with teacher prior the starting of implementation.
8. The secondary School principals expected to give timely constructive support for teachers as well as for students to enhance the implementation of continuous assessment.
9. Educational leaders, and secondary school principals should consider motivational factors like, recognition, award and promotion for teachers those who implementing continuous assessment properly.

10. Finally, the researcher suggests carrying out further, research of wide scope in the area of continuous assessment.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Questionnaire for Teachers

Dear teacher

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect data for the research on the role of secondary school principals in the implementation of continuous assessment in south omo zone. The research intends to show the practice and to indicate possible solutions for the problems encountered. Your genuine response to this questionnaire has significant value for this research. Accordingly, I kindly request your cooperation to fill out the questionnaire as accurately and genuinely as possible. I thank you in advance for your cooperation!

You are not expected to write your name.

General Instruction

This questionnaire contains close ended and open ended questions. Please circle the letter of your choice for closed ended questions and then please provide answers by writing your opinion or view for open ended questions on the space provided.

Part I: Teacher Respondent's Information

Please give appropriate information about yourself by circling the letter of your choice or by writing where appropriate.

1. Name of the school _____

2. Sex: M_____ F_____

3. Age: A) 20-25 yr B) 26-30 yr C) 31-35 yr D) 36-40 yr E) 41 and above

4. What is your qualification? Please choose among the following

A) Diploma

B) BA/Bed/BSC (Degree)

C) Master's degree

D) please indicate if other than the above

5. Teaching experience in the secondary school

A) 0-3 yr

B) 4-7 yr

C) 8-11 yr

D) 12-16 yr

E) 17 and above

6. Teaching load per week

A) Below 10

B) 10-15

C) 16-21

D) 22 and above

7. Which grade are you teaching currently?

A) 9th

B) 10th

C) both

Part II: Major Questions related to Continuous Assessment

Circle the letter of your answer and give explanation where it is required.

1. Have you taken a course on continuous assessment in the pre service program?

A) Yes

B) No

2. Do you use continuous assessment plan in your lesson?

A) Yes

B) No

3. What types of continuous assessment do you use in the teaching and learning to assess your students learning?

A) project work

D) Individual work

B) Presentation

E) Field trip reports

C) Peer assessment

F) If any other_____

4. How often do you involve your students in the continuous assessment process?

A) Always

B) sometimes

C) rarely

D) not at all

5. What is the document you use to manage and implement continuous assessment in your school?

A) Only assessment format given from school

B) Assessment guide line developed at school level

C) Guideline developed at department level

D) No, because, I have got full professional development through past training

6. To what extent does the school principal help teachers in implementing continuous assessment?

A) Very high

D) low

B) High

E) very low

C) Average

7. How effective is the principal in the proper implementation of continuous assessment in the school?

A) Very effective

D) Ineffective

B) Effective

E) Very ineffective

C) Average

8. Do you provide feedback to your students?

A) Yes

B) No

9. If your response for question no 8 is “yes” what was its frequency?

- A) In each continuous assessment tasks
- B) When test papers returned to the students
- C) At the end of the semester/course

10. If your response for question no 8 is “no” what was your reasons?

- A) Lack of time to cover the topic
- B) No need for feedback
- C) Students are not interested when you told their weakness
- D) If any other _____

11. In assessing your students’ performance is there any guideline supplied by the school?

- A) Yes
- B) No

Part III: Give your response clearly

12. What effective role does school principal play in the implementation of continuous assessment in your school? _____

13. What are the major challenges that can affect the proper implementation of continuous assessment in your school? _____

14. What strategies should be used to overcome implementation gaps and the challenges related to implementing Continuous Assessment in your school?_____

APPENDIX B

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL STUDIES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Questionnaire for Students

Dear students

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect data for the research on the role of secondary school principals in the implementation of continuous assessment in south omo zone. The research intends to show the practice and to indicate possible solutions for the problems encountered. Your genuine response to this questionnaire has significant value for this research. Accordingly, I kindly request your cooperation to fill out the questionnaire as accurately and genuinely as possible. I thank you in advance for your cooperation!

You are not expected to write your name.

General Instruction

This questionnaire contains close ended and open ended questions. Please circle the letter of your choice for closed ended questions and then please provide answers by writing your opinion or view for open ended questions on the space provided.

Part I: Student Respondent's Information

Please give appropriate information about yourself by circling the letter of your choice or by writing where appropriate

1. Name of the school _____

2. Sex M____ F____

3. Age A) 14-16 B) 17-19 C) 20-22 D) more than 23

4. Grade level A) 9th B) 10th

Part II: Major Questions related to Continuous Assessment

Circle the letter of your answer and give explanation where it is required.

1. What types of continuous assessment your teachers' uses in their lesson?

- A) project work
- B) Presentation
- C) Peer assessment
- D) Individual work
- E) Field trip reports
- F) If any other_____

2. Are you willing to do assessment activities?

- A) Yes
- B) No

3. If you are not willing to do assessment activities, what is your reason?

- A) Continuous assessment is time consuming
- B) Continuous assessment is not effective to measure different performance
- C) All group members did not provide equal contribution in different group
- D) Tests and final exams are better than continuous assessment
to measure individual progress in learning

4. Do teachers inform you about the assessment process?

- A) Yes
- B) No

5. Is there timely feedback for students in relation to their continuous assessment results?

- A) Yes
- B) No

6. If your answer for question no 6 is "yes" what was its frequency?

- A) In each continuous assessment tasks C) At the end of the semester
B) When test paper returned to the student D) If any other_____

Part III: Give your response clearly

7. What role does the principal play in the implementation of continuous assessment in your school? _____

8. What are the major challenges that can affect the proper implementation of continuous assessment in your school?_____

9. What strategies should be used to overcome implementation gaps and the challenges related to implementing Continuous Assessment in your school?_____

APPENDIX C

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Interview guide questions for secondary school principals

The purpose of this Interview is to collect data for the research conducted the role of secondary school principals in the implementation of continuous assessment in south omo zone. The research intends to show the practice and to indicate possible solutions for the problems encountered. Thus dear principal your genuine response to this interview has significant value for this research. Accordingly, I kindly request your cooperation. I thank you in advance for your cooperation!

1. As a secondary school principal, what role do you play in implementation of the continuous assessment in your school?
2. What support do you give to the teachers in the implementation of Continuous Assessment?
3. In what way do you monitor and support your staff?
4. What strategies do you use to motivate your staff?
5. What are the major challenges of implementing continuous assessment in your school?
6. How do you rate your effectiveness in playing your expected roles related to the implementation of continuous assessment in your school?
7. Would you suggest possible strategies that help to minimize the problems behind the implementation of continuous assessment in your school?

APPENDIX D

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Interview guide questions for cluster Supervisor

The purpose of this Interview is to collect data for the research conducted the role of secondary school principals in the implementation of continuous assessment in south omo zone. The research intends to show the practice and to indicate possible solutions for the problems encountered. Thus dear supervisor your genuine response to this interview has significant value for this research. Accordingly, I kindly request your cooperation. I thank you in advance for your cooperation!

1. What role does a secondary school principal play in the implementation of continuous assessment in your school?
2. How do you judge (rate) the effectiveness of the school principal in playing expected roles in the implementation of continuous assessment?
3. What are the major challenges that can affect the proper implementation of continuous assessment in your school?
4. What are the strategies to overcome implementation gaps and the challenges related to implementing Continuous Assessment in your school?

Declaration

I, Yigezu Yilma, declare that this Thesis is my original work that prepared under the guidance of Wossenu Yimam (PhD) and it has not been presented by any institution or individual. All sources of materials used for the manuscript have been duly acknowledged.

Name of Candidate: Yigezu Yilma Shadow

Signature: -----

Date: -----