

AGRICULTURAL-BASED CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT IMPLEMENTATION IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN ENUGU STATE, NIGERIA: PROBLEMS AND IMPACT

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Abstract

The study investigated the impact and problems of implementing agricultural-based continuous assessment (CA) in primary schools in Enugu state, Nigeria. The cross-sectional survey research design and the quasi-experimental research design were adopted for the study. Data were collected using a well-structured questionnaire after using proportionate sampling technique and simple random sampling. Data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviation. The results of the study showed that continuous assessment is cumulative evidence that provides the learner regarding the direction of his/her achievement in the academic area. The results also revealed that; time, health challenge, skill-knowledge, finance; limit the implementation of continuous assessment. Findings also revealed that in the avalanche of; skills on the part of the teacher to conduct continuous assessment; full support from the school system and; maximum cooperation from students in terms of participation and the desire to carry out the required continuous assessment activities; systematic implementation of continuous assessment would; develop a positive attitude; overall performance and advancement in the pupil. Finally, the study recommended government to organize in-service training, seminar, and workshop on continuous assessment at regular intervals for teachers to address; continuous assessment implementation challenges and; gap between policy prescription and actual practice in Nigeria.

Keywords: Agriculture; education; philosophy of education; continuous assessment

Introduction

In regards to evaluation according to the new Nigerian educational system, one policy instrument that cuts across all educational levels throughout the Nigerian educational system is that of continuous assessment. In section 1 of the revised National Policy on Education which deals with the philosophy and goals of education in Nigeria, paragraph 9(g) states that “educational assessment and evaluation shall be liberalized by their being based in whole or in part on continuous assessment of the progress of the individual” (FGN, 2013). This statement is well amplified in subsequent sections of the document areas dealing with Secondary education (section 4), Secondary education (section 5), and Tertiary education and finally in section 12 which deals with the Planning, Administration and Supervision of Education (FGN, 2013).

The repeated emphasis being placed on continuous assessment as a major innovation in the revised education policy document (FGN, 2014; 2004) is, clear evidence of its importance as a component of evaluation. To further the need for this innovation, the National Steering Committee on Continuous Assessment in Nigerian schools led by Professor Yoloye posits continuous assessment as a method of ascertaining what a child (pupil or student) gains from schooling in terms of knowledge, industry and character development, taking into account all his/her performances in tests, assignments, projects and other educational activities during a given period of term, year, or during the entire period of an educational level (Ipaye, 2012a; b; 2008).

Besides the above, the introduction of continuous assessment in the Nigerian educational system as an important component for evaluation is further based on the premise that continuous assessment is a method of evaluating performance of achievement and using the recorded performances of each child (pupil or student) to aid him or her improve on his or her achievement through guidance. Educational assessment and evaluation thus, according to the policy document on

education in Nigeria will be; liberalized by basing a child's (pupil or student) performance in whole or in part on continuous assessment-progress of the individual. Hence, in all secondary schools in Nigeria, continuous assessment account for 40 percent of the pupils' performance in each subject whilst most higher institutions of learning allow between 20 and 30 percent in course assessment (Alex, 2010).

However, teaching and learning make the required meaning when the learner and the teacher work with happiness and comfort. Consequently, the current educational policy pattern which deviates from previous realities in emphasising the concept of continuous assessment while, beautifully aimed at improving the learning experience though, may; disadvantage the teacher for two main reasons. First, it (continuous assessment) accords the teacher more work-load hence, increased stress. Second, based on the premise that most schools across Nigeria deviate from the; appropriate learning environment standard – conducive for learning and impact; international recommendation of the appropriate number of students under a teacher – intervals of continuous assessment coupled with the foregone may make more challenging the achievement of the beautiful aim of improving learning experience (Tremblay, Lalancette, Roseveare, 2012).

This challenge may be the widening arm influencing cases of unmanaged students creating or influencing school racketing, disorder, discontent and; constant mastery of examination malpractice (Ayua, 2012). Thus, this challenge demands that emphasis be placed on finding how best to manage cum apply continuous assessment in teaching school students or; entirely change the system in order to achieve maximum goals in teaching and learning experience.

Continuous assessment: issues and concerns

Across all institutions of learning, continuous assessment is not a new concept in education. In the United States for instance, continuous assessment is built into the teaching and learning process. According to Aggarwal (2010), Mwebaza (2010), Continuous assessment (CA) is not

simply continuous testing nor does it solely depend on formal tests rather; continuous assessment is more than giving a test or project. It involves every decision made by the teacher in class to improve the students' achievement.

Continuous assessment may take different forms such as formal questions given to students during class, take-home assignments/exercises and recapitulation exercises. Assessment is either internal or external. Internal assessment refers to school-based assessment, which includes class assignments, teacher-made tests, recap exercise, projects, field assessment. All these tools form part of the classroom continuous assessment strategies. Also, a strategy in assessment is a purposefully conceived and determined plan of action. It is a pattern of assessment that seems to attain certain outcomes and to guard against other non-desired outcomes (Aliyu, 2017; Aggarwal, 2009). External assessment refers to tests that are produced by examining bodies away from school (Aliyu, 2017).

Continuous assessment: misconceptions, views and perceptions

In Nigeria, there are different views about the concept of continuous assessment and continuous assessment strategies. Continuous assessment strategy refers to the different tools/procedures used in the classroom to understand the academic achievement levels of learners in terms of their knowledge, attitudes and values. To some extent some, continuous assessment strategies and the continuous assessment phenomenon are sometimes subject of misconception (Aliyu, 2017; Aggarwal, 2009). In order to understand this concept of continuous assessment, it is necessary to clarify misconceptions connected to continuous assessment (Yoloye, 1984).

Continuous assessment is not continuous testing of the cognitive ability of students as practiced in most schools – primary and secondary schools of learning these days. As against continuous assessment, continuous testing is where teachers administer test on students on weekly or monthly basis. Rather, assessment is the procedure or activity that is designed to accumulate information about the knowledge, attitude, or skills of the learner or group of learners. Assessment is

therefore a process through which the quality of an individual's work or performance is judged. In addition, assessment carried out on an on-going process is known as continuous assessment (CA) (Greaney, 2012). Hence and according to (Ogunniyi, 2008), continuous assessment (CA) is a formative evaluation procedure concerned with finding out, in a systematic manner, the over-all gains that a student has made in terms of knowledge, attitude and skills after a given set of learning experience.

Its mode of interpretation thus, should, where necessary take into consideration other factors that may affect the student and the learning process. Furthermore, as against what is practiced in many schools currently, the effective and psychomotor domains should not be neglected in the implementation of continuous assessment. Consequently in lieu of, implementation procedure adopted by certain schools that set aside specific days in the month for what is referred to as continuous assessment scores for the term or year; such implementation of continuous assessment seems to have derailed from the continuous design made for continuous assessment mode of implementation (Aliyu, 2017).

Further according to Ezewu and Okoye (2011), continuous assessment refers to a systematic and objective process of determining the extent of a student's performance in all the expected changes in his behaviour, from the day he resumes school upon a course of study with a view to consuming them to guide and shape the student and to serve as basis for making important decisions about the child. In other words, continuous assessment should be systematic, comprehensive, cumulative and guidance oriented.

Invariably in lieu therefore, the systematic sense or objective premise of continuous assessment is said to be achieved methodically when continuous assessment is planned, graded to suit the age and experience of the child (pupil or student) and is given at suitable intervals during the school year. Also, comprehensiveness of continuous assessment means that it is not focused on academic skills alone. It should embrace appropriate timing that saves students from being tested to death or becoming bored with too frequent assessments. In addition,

the comprehensiveness of continuous assessment means that it is not focused on academic skills alone rather, the cognitive, the psychomotor and the affective domains. Subsequently, a child (pupil or student) should be assessed as a total entity using all the psychometric devices such as test and non-test techniques (Yoloye, 1984).

The cumulative characteristic of continuous assessment means that all information gathered on the individual has to be pooled together before a decision can be taken. Further, to say that continuous assessment is guidance-oriented means that the information so collected is to be used for educational, vocational and personal-social decision-making for the child. However, to achieve this guidance and counselling objective of continuous assessment; continuous assessment activity-implementation is better and best implemented when continuous assessment is akin in accumulating valid, sequential, systematic, continuous, cumulative and comprehensive information (Denga, 2013).

Conceptually as well, and in practice-implementation, continuous assessment is valuable for providing feedback to children and teachers. Such feedback provides information which is used for purposes of improving on the child's performance or modifying the content, context and methods of teaching, as well as in making a variety of other decisions (Yoloye, 1976).

Based on these and, in view of productivity and attempt to increased efficiency and effectiveness; inadequate teaching-learning equipment's and other instructional materials cum teaching aids amidst under-staffing tend to reduce the efficiency and effectiveness expected of the students which hampers the proper implementation of continuous assessment. This presages the feeling of increased workload implied in implementing continuous assessment by teachers since; the attempt to conduct and record assessment regularly and consistently often lowers the teacher's ability to cover the scheme of work as scheduled. Further, inadequate financing of continuous assessment in schools creates the difficulty of quantifying and assessing hand-work materials, local crafts and other subjects that are practical oriented whilst; constant writing of reports, progress charts and record of other technical assessment faults,

and often diminish the attention of teachers from class work (teaching) (Yoloye, 1989).

These difficulties amid the challenge of managing the assessment record of transferred students given the differences in assessment timing between the different schools especially schools in different states, demean; the essence of continuous assessments and its implementation and overtly sometimes provoke and evoke, the call for its withdrawal in teaching and learning in schools.

Implementing agricultural continuous assessment: issues and concerns

The introduction of continuous assessment technique in our school system by the National Policy on Education (NPE) is part of some noble ideas at channelling agricultural education to the development of Nigeria's economic, political, sociological and human resources. This educational policy document conditions this innovative idea to in part or in whole, assess and evaluate via educational liberalization utilise the continuous assessment to aid progress of the learning and developing individual (student or pupil) (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004).

Prior to the institution of continuous assessment, the, procedure of evaluation was one-short – a summative evaluation practice system under-which performance assessment emphasis is on decision at the end of the term or year. One short coming of this practice is that performance feedback that should have squeeze out from continuous assessment is sometimes overtly late to aid teachers in pragmatically implementing actions and inactions, directly or indirectly for pupils or students learning improvement in their path to agricultural mastery. As a result, education system stakeholders (including the pupils, the teachers, the curricula developers and the school administrators) are denied opportunity for meaning-full growth (Janus & Brinkman, 2010).

Therefore, the introduction of continuous assessment in the educational system aimed at correcting several anomalies inherent in the one-short summative evaluation including; according to Mkpa (1986); Igwebuiké (1987); Ohuche (1988a); Ekwonye (1986) the unwise and

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unnecessary effect of denying the educational system the essential feedback impact of continuous assessment. Following, the one-short summative evaluation has been rigorously criticized as observed by Mkpa (1986) to constitute threat to learners who may protrude with the feeling of loop-sided education evaluation given the one-short examination that follows basically at the end of the term as; the sole determinant of the academic future and career destiny of the individual. Consequently, Ohuche (1988b) posits that teachers may not introduce innovation both in the teaching and evaluation of their students partly because of the “Straight Jacket” syllabuses followed by the examining bodies and partly because the teacher may not meaningfully be involved in the evaluative part of their job.

Another reason for the adoption of the strategy of continuous assessment is for the careful emphasis of the concept of assessment as an integral part of the child’s (student or pupil) performance and development – theoretical, academic and in practice. It is therefore reasonable that the teacher should be involved in the final assessment of the students he, or she has taught. By so doing, the system motivates the learning individual and system to inform performance assessments whereby a substantial part of the pre-final performance assessment (examination) rating is earned from school work. Subsequently, the learning individual will grow to the realization that gradual progressive steps make the better of evolving individuals since passing or failing in final examination would not solely define, determine and limit on performance. In that wise, the National Steering Committee on continuous assessment emphasizes on the weights (rating) used in continuous assessment and the need in, combining school assessment with the final examination. She thus recommended that continuous assessment should be combined with the final examination at the end of senior secondary school as follows:

first year - 10%, second year - 20%, third year - 30% and final exam (WAEC or NECO) – 40%. She also further recommended that weights should increase progressively so that the test taken earlier in the subject carry less weight than those taken towards the end. This is aimed at progressive development and not one-short, summative development

and, is necessary in order, for instance, not to un-dutifully penalize a pupil or student who might be poor at the beginning (or session end) but, has been making steady and progressive acts. Also, on the other hand, it does not evoke undue rating consistent with wrong feedback and development when a student attains high level of (rating) performance in the one-short examination (evaluation) at the end of the subject. Thus, at the same time, the system discourages complacency on the part of the initially brilliant students (Denga, 2005).

However, there is considerable evidence that suggest that the implementation of agricultural continuous assessment has a number of challenges. Ekwonye (1987); Nzewi (2010); Eze and Nzewi (1999) observed these challenges that persist in the implementation of continuous assessment across all subject areas and vocation/skill subject (agriculture) continuous assessment in certain to include; inadequate supply of teaching aids; dearth of vocation/skill teachers; heavy teaching loads; inadequate time for test and recording; lack of interest and motivation to sit for test (on the part of students). These in part or whole makes it very difficult if, not impossible for a teacher to assess up to 40 students effectively especially with non-test instrument (Okpala, 1999).

Following, Egwu, Elewa and Shinto (1989) pointed out that science, vocation/skill subject teachers in Benue and Ondo states are unqualified to implement some aspects of the new subject curriculum in which continuous assessment is part. Egwu, Elewa and Shinto (1989) also observed the challenge of high pupil-teacher's ratio that makes it very difficult if, not impossible for a teacher to assess, up to 40 students effectively especially with non-test instrument.

The philosophy of formative education

Education is a broad term and ambiguously interpreted by many people to mean separate things. Sometimes, education is interpreted merely to mean a product. In that case, people refer to education as the, amount of education cum knowledge attained especially from formal education processes. This particular education interpretation is suggestive of – highly educated or mid educated or lowly educated – as measured either

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by counting the number of years spent in formal school or; the different levels of formal education covered ranging, from Nursery to University. This interpretation also implies the, amount of academic stuff or education-capacity in counting the number of school subjects, academic courses, or number of examinations passed. This interpretation under-describes education as a product relative to her measurable items of knowledge and not to; any change that may have been brought about by such knowledge (Okeke and Okudo, 2021).

Education may also be interpreted purely as a process. In that case, emphasis is shifted from the number of materials of knowledge accumulated to the change these materials have brought in the educated person. In other words, for, this particular education interpretation there is a focus on, the quality rather than the knowledge acquired. Consequently, this particular education interpretation defines education as a means rather than an end in itself. Further, interpreting education as the process of developing the individual potential, hastening the process to evolve individual capabilities. Thus, education as a process-interpretation conforms more to, the etymological meaning as ‘ex-ducere’ or to ‘lead out of a lower state into a higher state of existence’ (Ortyo-Yande, 1984).

A third interpretation of education is basically institutional. This education interpretation is linked to the structures which are set-up to provide knowledge. In that case given this particular interpretation, education is conjured up as formal schooling and the concepts of formal schooling in lieu as, inseparable from the core essence of education. Under this interpretation, out-of-school education is absurd (Denga, 1987).

Thus, the concept and philosophy of education – formal or formative – involves knowledge transfer from the teacher to the student or, more precisely to the student’s ‘head’ except in the case of vocational education where, the knowledge or know-how is supposed to be transferred to the students ‘hands’. This should be institutional, requiring school structure and founded in intellectualism or the cultivation of rational powers (as supported by Greek philosophers: Plato and

Aristotle); or, founded on moralism or the teaching of good manners (as supported by Patristic and Scholastic philosophers) (Yoloye, 2009).

Further, the concept and philosophy of education – formal or formative – is ideal to Pluto’s principle of professionalism which was in turn based on the fundamental principle also shared by Socrates that, knowledge is virtue and ignorance is vice. Virtue here means, the efficient performance of one’s duties as well as moral uprightness. Thus, in lieu, for Pluto, ‘the activity’ of education should be divided into levels (nursery, primary, secondary and tertiary); for Aristotle, intellectual pursuit as its highest form of activity measured either via performance for the purpose of theoretical reason and of the pure intellectual activity to discover knowledge and the truth (Patrick & Uvietesivwi, 2018).

These promoted the emphasis on cognitive knowledge by Scholastic philosophers including St. Thomas Aquinas who, strongly advocated for the application of the intellectual powers of the human mind to the task of probing the mysteries of revelation (Robert, 2023).

Characteristics of formative continuous assessment

Sense of inclusiveness

Continuous assessment provides students with a constant stream of opportunities to improve and prove their mastery of learning and evoke the habit that everyone can succeed if given enough time and practice. Thus, continuous assessment reduces anxiety around finality testing and heighten the emphasis on learning itself (Adebayo, 2007). When this sense of inclusiveness is achieved, mastery instead of competition with other students becomes of focal prominence creating, a shift from superficial competition to true understanding and personal learning (Denga, 2013).

Improves learning

In a system akin to continuous assessment, advanced learning progress is achieved amongst students engaged at their own pace amidst pursuing more challenging work. By so doing, the student is stretched within the standard to aid the student maximise potential. Consequently, the student

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achieves success defined on an absolute and individualised basis and not achievement satisfied vis-à-vis others; thus, encouraged to seek their own course and take responsibility for their learning (Garba, Ali, Michael, 2022).

Purposeful to achieve clarity

Continuous assessment provides indicators of achievement and feedback on performance. This tendency identifies clearly what has been learnt or achieved and exactly what needs to be learnt or grasped (Oguejiofor, Ogbuanya & Onuorah, 2023)

Remediate weakness through strength

Continuous assessment is a process founded as a network. By, placing a student within this network, continuous assessment unveils a proven effective learning path by introducing a learning style and, its proficiency level with the motivation to attain proficiency level exuded within the network (Yoloye, 2009).

Increases self-awareness

Students come to understand their proficiencies and knowledge gaps. This evolves self-awareness of – understanding how one feels, thinks, and learns. This is one of the most significant proficiencies for professional and personal success. Thus, accordingly, the more a student is assessed continuously, the more self-knowing and astute to intrapersonal intelligence by gaining – what it takes for them to master something, how they can approach problems differently; what their blind spots are; and how to eliminate them (Samuelson, 2000).

Uncover interdisciplinary relationships between subject domains and concepts

Given that continuous assessment is; comprehensive, cumulative, diagnostic, formative, guidance-oriented and, systematic in nature (Roberts, 2007), it, evokes; the attention required to uncover the root content of a subject; the common knowledge across subject areas; and,

effective remediation to refine understanding capacity of multi-disciplinary cum interdisciplinary subject areas

Materials and method

The researchers adopted both the cross-sectional survey design and the quasi-experimental research design. Ezeah (2014) affirmed that cross sectional survey design is one of the descriptive survey design appropriate, when one is studying the perception, belief system, values and demographic characteristics of people at an instant situation of a particular issue or phenomenon under investigation. This method is appropriate for the purpose of achieving the study objective of unveiling the problems encountered in implementing continuous assessment and since the researcher's collected data on variables of interest at a particular point in time (Ezeah, 2004).

The researchers also adopted the quasi-experimental research design. Iketaku (2011) affirmed that quasi-experimental research exposes one group (experimental group) to treatment conditions and does not expose one group (control group) to treatment conditions. This design provided the basis for determining the effect of treatment or adoption (using) continuous assessment in teaching and learning.

The study was carried out in Enugu Education Zone, one of the six educational zones in Enugu State. The zone is comprised of three local government areas which include Enugu North, Enugu East and Isi-uzo. The target population for the purpose of achieving the study objective of unveiling the problems encountered in implementing continuous assessment was 1583 teachers, comprising 177 male and 1406 female primary school teachers in 194 public primary schools in Enugu Education Zone (Enugu State Government & State Universal Basic Education Board, 2021). The sample size for the purpose of achieving the study objective of unveiling the problems encountered in implementing continuous assessment was 319 determined using Taro Yamen formula. In view of the fact that teachers' population varies according to schools, the researchers adopted proportionate sampling

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technique (Table 1) in order to determine the appropriate sample size for each of the local government areas in Enugu Education Zone.

For determining the effect of treatment or adoption (using) continuous assessment in teaching and learning, the quasi-experimental research design, specifically the non-randomised experimental/control group, pretest-post-tests design was used because the experiment was carried out intact-classes in order to avoid disruption of normal classes. A total of 60 pupils were randomly sampled from two primary schools, and two classes were randomly sampled from streams in the schools. Purposive sampling technique was used to select two primary schools in Enugu Education Zone based on the following criteria:

1. The schools are public schools;
2. The teachers of the classes are of the same sex (female);
3. These teachers possess the same professional qualifications (TCII and N.C.E certificates).

Further, each of the classes was used intact because the school authority did not allow randomisation of pupils into treatment and control groups to avoid disruption of normal classes in the school. Again, in achieving the objective of determining the effect of treatment or adoption (using) continuous assessment in teaching and learning, two types of instruments were used – achievement tests and observation.

Table 1: Calculation of Proportionate Sample Size

S/N	Name of local government/schools	Population	Proportionate Calculation	Sample size
1	Enugu East	679	$\frac{679 \times 319}{1583} = 136.8$	137
2	Enugu North	554	$\frac{554 \times 319}{1583} = 111.6$	111
3	Isi-Uzo	350	$\frac{350 \times 319}{1583} = 70.5$	71
	Total	1583		319

For the purpose of achieving the study objective of unveiling the problems encountered in implementing continuous assessment the instrument used was a well-structured questionnaire. It was structured in Likert four-point scale-rating of, Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A),

Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). It had two sections. Section A contained socio-demographic data of respondents while section B contained substantive issues.

The instrument was validated by three experts; one from Measurement and Evaluation and two from Education Foundations, from the Enugu State College of Education Technical, Enugu and Peaceland College of Education, Enugu. The reliability of the instrument was determined using test-retest method. The researchers administered 20 copies of the questionnaire to 20 respondents in primary schools in Udi Education Zone which was one of the educational zones outside the area of the study. Two weeks later, the same instrument was re-administered. Using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient to calculate for the two sets of data, the result was 0.83 showing positive correlation and that the instrument was reliable enough for the study.

Mean and standard deviation were used as statistical tools in answering the research questions. The cut-off points for accepting or not accepting was put at 2.5. The decision rule was that where the calculated mean for any item is equal to or higher than 2.5, it is regarded as agree. However, if the calculated mean for any item is below 2.5, it is regarded as disagree.

Research Question 1

What is the meaning of continuous assessment?

Table 2: Mean responses on the meaning of continuous assessment

S/N	Item	X	Decision
1	A regular test on what is taught	2.7	Accept
2	A process of improving teaching and learning	3.8	Accept
3	A systematic process of getting the final result	3.2	Accept
4	Aids proper teaching and learning	3.5	Accept
	Grand mean	3.3	Accept

Results in table 2 showed that the overall mean responses of items 1 to 4 were higher than the cut-off point of 2.50, and therefore considered to be Agree (A). Furthermore, the overall grand mean response was also higher than 2.5 ($x = 3.3$). This implies that there is agreement on the

meaning of continuous assessment. This agrees with the findings of Ani (2016) that continuous assessment helps students to perform better in examinations and should include systematic content to build student's/pupils' cognitive learning abilities, and reflect the three domains of a child's learning ability; cater for varied cultural background, engage with new and related content, create self-teaching strategies so that the child (pupil/student) can develop amid providing basis to facilitate knowledge and comprehension.

In addition, this finding agrees with Adebowale and Alao (2008) that using continuous assessment (CA) in student learning (such as test, assignment or observation) is an important component of continuous learning. This finding also lends credence to the submission of Ipaye (1985) that the major advantage of continuous assessment is the cumulative evidence it provides the learner regarding the direction of his/her achievement in the academic area. Thus, in lieu, Afolabi (1999) suggested increased frequency of continuous assessment proportional and dependent on the subject area parameters to be covered for the academic year.

Research Question 2

What are the problems teachers encounter in implementing continuous assessment?

Table 3: Mean responses on the problems teachers encounter in implementing continuous assessment

S/N	Item	X	Decision
5	Time is one of the problems of teachers in implementing continuous assessment	3.2	Accept
6	Health challenged students are not properly evaluated	3.7	Accept
7	Inadequate/Absence of finance to provide teachers with the necessary materials for effective continuous assessment	3.4	Accept
8	Inadequate/Absence of regular workshops and seminars to advance teachers skill-knowledge	3.1	Accept

9	Inadequate/Absence of regular workshops and seminars oriented to advance teaching and learning	3.3	Accept
	Grand mean	3.34	Accept

Results in table 3 showed that the overall mean responses of items 5 to 9 were higher than the cut-off point of 2.50, and therefore considered to be Agree (A). Furthermore, the overall grand mean response was also higher than 2.5 ($\bar{x} = 3.34$). This implies that there is agreement on the problems teachers encounter in the implementation of continuous assessment.

These problems, agreeing with the positions of; Oguejiofor, Ogbuanya, & Onuorah (2023); Harbor-Ibeaja and Nworgu (1986) as most teachers reported in their studies limit the implementation of continuous assessment besides, hampering the opportunity in using continuous assessment for an effective tool for knowledge transfer. It also fetters adequate vertical integration of the subject content by the teacher to the students exposing acquired skill-knowledge on the part of the students at risk.

Research Question 3

What are the problems students encounter in implementing continuous assessment?

Table 4: Mean responses on the problems students encounter in implementing continuous assessment

S/N	Item	X	Decision
10	Short time is spent with teachers	3.1	Accept
11	Studying for examination as against acquisition of knowledge	3.6	Accept
12	Less time for extra-curricular activities	1.4	Reject
13	Difficulty in class control	2.9	Accept
	Grand mean	2.75	Accept

Results in table 4 showed that the overall mean responses of items 10, 11, 13 were higher than the cut-off point of 2.50 and therefore considered to be Agree (A). Overall mean response of item 12 was lower

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than the cut-off points of 2.50. The overall grand mean response was also higher than 2.5 ($x = 2.75$). This implies that there is agreement on the problems students encounter in the implementation of continuous assessment.

This finding lends credence to the study of Olomolaiye (1992) who emphasised that the frequency of continuous assessment of most teachers were short of; being comprehensive and guidance-oriented in nature. Thereby, losing its appraisal effect especially when such continuous assessment is based only on cognitive development excluding the affective and psychomotor development of the child (pupil/student). It is when a child has been exposed to a variety of learning tasks as well as conglomerate of assessment devices that valid information could be obtained about the child's overall performance

Research Question 4

What are the solutions to the problems encountered by both teachers and students in implementing continuous assessment?

Table 5: Mean responses on the solutions to the problems encountered by both teachers and students in implementing continuous assessment

S/N	Item	X	Decision
14	Allocating more time for teaching of subjects	3.2	Accept
15	More emphasis on project work	3.5	Accept
16	Closing the gap between teachers and students	3.1	Accept
17	Availability of finance	3.4	Accept
	Grand mean	3.3	Accept

Results in table 5 showed that the overall mean responses of items 14 to 17 were higher than the cut-off point of 2.50 and therefore considered to be Agree (A). The overall grand mean response was also higher than 2.5 ($x = 3.3$). This implies that there is agreement on the solutions to the problems teachers and students encounter in the implementation of continuous assessment.

In lending credence to this finding, Faleye & Adefisoye (2016) posit that in the avalanche of; skills on the part of the teacher to conduct continuous assessment; full support from the school system and; maximum cooperation from students in terms of participation and the desire to carry out the required continuous assessment activities; the pupil/student will develop a positive attitude towards continuous assessment (CA). In lieu, continuous assessment should be comprehensive and guidance-oriented in nature; grounded on cognitive, affective and psychomotor development of the child (pupil/student) via exposing the child (pupil/student) to a variety of learning tasks to evoke a conglomerate of assessment record with valid information about the child's (student's/pupil's) overall performance and advancement (Olomolaiye, 1992).

Consequently, and importantly, Denga (1986) in line with this finding posits that; the frequency of continuous assessment should be systematic in nature in the sense that the students are tested at pre-determined intervals within a given school year. Subsequently, continuous assessment should be implemented and carried out in such a way that the students are not overstretched in the name of assessment except for, accenting the cumulative knowledge impact-advantage of continuous assessment. Thus, this flexible and innovative tool in teaching and learning called continuous assessment if, well implemented will, go a long way to, minimizing the tendency and temptation to ensure success by all means orchestrated by the single final examination (Omebe, 2014).

Table 6: Performance of pupils taught agriculture by one-short evaluation method and using continuous assessment

Factors	Groups								
	Group 1			Group 2			Total		
	N	X	SD	N	X	SD	N	X	SD
Treatment	12	3.64	0.72	18	3.80	0.92	30	3.73	0.85
Control	16	3.06	1.39	14	3.07	1.39	30	3.07	1.38
Total	28	3.31	1.18	32	3.48	1.20	60	3.40	1.19

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Results in table 6 showed that teaching and learning agriculture using continuous assessment showed improvement in pupils' achievement over teaching agriculture by not using continuous assessment. This implies that one effective impact of teaching and learning using continuous assessment on pupils' achievement is the active participation that using continuous assessment evolves. Eze (1999); Agunbiade (1999); Chukwu (2001) affirms learning is advanced in active participation which in turn improves the learner's academic achievement and gradual development.

Conclusion/recommendation

To operate agricultural continuous assessment effectively, agriculture teachers need to spend time on each child; helping and observing. This implies that the teacher has to teach a smaller number of students per class.

Further, agriculture teachers need stanch to share and mobilize knowledge, technology, expertise and resources through action-oriented alliance and development-oriented to contribute knowledge, skills, experience, innovation, continuous learning to drive tangible results that foster a culture of wealth creation, sustainable growth and development and, personal growth cum development

Accordingly, competence in developing valid assessment instrument for evaluation of behavioural outcomes in the three domains should be financed in; the amount of material (content) that should be covered by each test and; related materials to be taught before and after each preceding test. The skills to be possessed as well for, the practice of agricultural assessment, the grading, records keeping of the child's achievement as they are scored accordingly to appropriate weightings given each component area that has been assessed is vital. Also, the standard number of students per class is essential to be kept to global student-to-teacher ratio otherwise; it makes it difficult for teachers to teach and evaluate effectively.

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