

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE EXTENT TO WHICH HEAD TEACHERS  
MONITOR CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES IN SELECTED SECONDARY  
SCHOOLS IN SOLWEZI DISTRICT**

**BY**

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## DECLARATION

I, **Chiyenge Frank**, declare that this dissertation is my own work and that no one has ever submitted this work for a degree at this University or indeed any other institution of higher learning.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This dissertation of **Chiyenge Frank** is approved as fulfilling part of the requirements of the award of the degree of Master of Education in Educational Management by the University of Zambia and Zimbabwe Open University.

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## **DEDICATION**

To Shadrick Kasongo my late young brother, your death on 14<sup>th</sup> July 2017, was a blow to the entire family. This work is dedicated to you. Gloria Zimba Chiyenge my wife, my children, Helen, Dimas, Regina, Chapala, Maggie, Kunda, and my sweet mother Elina Chapala; despite your bedridden state you are so special to me. Your encouragement for me to pursue my post graduate degree and indeed your material, moral, spiritual, and financial support will always rejuvenate my love for all of you. You are special to me. Thank you.

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## ABSTRACT

This study sought to examine the extent to which head teachers monitor continuous assessment in selected secondary schools of Solwezi District of North-Western province of Zambia. The objectives of the study were to; identify the types of continuous assessment activities undertaken in selected secondary schools in Solwezi district, establish how often teachers conduct continuous assessment in their respective subjects, determine the extent to which head teachers support continuous assessment activities in their schools and how, and establish challenges faced by schools in undertaking continuous assessment activities in the selected secondary schools in Solwezi district.

This research employed a descriptive research design. The sample comprised five head teachers, five deputy head teachers, eleven heads of department, fifty eight teachers and one hundred and one pupils provided. Data was collected using semi-structured interviews schedule for administrators while questionnaires were used to collect data from teachers and pupils. Data was analyzed using excel a computer software which facilitated mathematical manipulation of data and the creation of frequency tables, tables and charts. Furthermore, qualitative data collected was analyzed using content analysis.

The study established that continuous assessment activities undertaken in selected secondary schools in Solwezi district included class exercises, end of topic test, week 4, 9 and end of term tests. The study also revealed that teachers did not frequently conduct continuous assessment activities. They relied on testing as directed by the education assessment policy of testing the learners three times in a term. Only four out of 58 teachers indicated that besides the mandatory week 4, 9 and end of term tests, they gave a lot of homework and class exercises to learners.

It also indicated that head teachers gave some support to teachers and learners by providing stationary especially during the mandatory three tests alluded to above and also provided preparation books. However head teachers did not provide such material other assessments initiated by the teachers. Teaching and learning aids were rarely given to teachers.

The study also indicated that schools faced challenges in undertaking continuous assessment activities. The challenges included poor funding by the government, and failure on the part of head teachers to prioritize academic activities against extra- curricular activities. Other challenges were inadequate furniture and over enrolment, causing a lot of overcrowding in classes.

The study made the following recommendations; teachers should be encouraged to use additional assessment strategies such as portfolios, projects, practical work, interviews; head teachers should develop more interest in monitoring and supporting continuous assessment in school by ensuring that teachers are provided with the necessary teaching and learning materials; school management should always prioritize activities that are more to do with learners' learning and reinforce continuous profession development meeting to capacity build teachers more on the importance of carrying continuous assessment; government should increase funding to all learning institutions so that materials required for training teachers and teaching which go with assessments are procured.



## ACRONYMS

CA	Continuous Assessment
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
MOGE	Ministry OF General Education
MESVTEE	Ministry of Education Science AND Vocational Training and Early Education
SBA	School Based Assessment
HOD	Head of department
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
JETS	Junior Engineering Technology Scientist
HEAZ	Home Economics Association of Zambia.
ZAME	Zambia Association for Mathematics of Education.
ZASE	Zambia Association for Science Education
LATAZ	Language Teachers Association of Zambia

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0 Overview**

This chapter presents the background to the study, statement of the problem; objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, and the scope of the study. Also contained in this chapter are the theoretical framework, conceptual framework, and the definitions of key terms.

### **1.1. Background of the study**

The teaching and learning process largely determine the quality of education of any nation. Quality teaching, however, goes hand in hand with assessment. Quality teaching focuses on providing meaningful learning and should be coupled with regular assessment to determine the quality of student's performance. Learners require a feedback of their assessed performance which is a very important aspect in the assessment process (Airasian and Russell 2008; Brooks, 2002).

It appears as if many educationists and researchers have written about classroom assessment activities and their importance on the learner especially in primary schools but very little on the aspect of monitoring assessment activities by the head teachers, deputy head teachers, and heads of department in secondary schools. Many studies confirm the importance of classroom assessment particularly formative assessment in raising the standards and achievement of learning (Black & William, 1998; Broadfoot, Winter and Weeden, 2002). Assessment is so important to the extent that through it the quality of education can be assured (Nenty, Adedoyi, Odili and Major, 2007) Because of the importance of assessment, Head teachers should not pay a blind eye on it leading to learners not being assessed adequately. The head teacher's role is to promote academic performance both on the part of the teacher and of course the learner. Nasongo and Lydia (2009) state that the success of what is done in the school is attributed to the head teacher. This is so because the head teacher is the pivot around which the many aspects of the school revolve being the person in charge of every detail of running the school, be it academic or administrative. It is therefore important that the school is appraised against the person who leads it (Nasongo and Lydia 2009).

Lydia and Nasongo (2009) state that; classroom assessment is a reliable and accurate tool for measuring the learner's performance during the learning process. This entails that the head teacher being a trained and qualified personnel in the management and interpretation of the curriculum should understand the importance of classroom assessment in relation to the learner's performance. It is in this regard according to Lydia and Nasongo (2009) that, the head teacher is a central factor in determining students' academic performance in the school. This is the reason that all secondary schools have similar curriculum as required by the Ministry of General Education and that all head teachers have the same job description

It is built on this ground that Head teachers ensured that learning and teaching material resources were provided and effectively used for teaching this will enable. Head teachers through monitoring and supervision provided for professional and academic guidance to the teachers

## **1.2 Statement of the problem**

Best practices in continuous assessment require teachers to assess teaching and learning regularly to scaffold learning. Different assessment needs require different assessment strategies and tools (Asuru and Agidi, 2011; Hussain 2008; Swarfield2000). When students are not rigorously assessed, they tend to perform poorly. Rigorous continuous assessments have been identified as one of the important factors that improve students' performance (winter and Weeden, 2002). The pass percentage for Solwezi district at grade 9level for 2016 was forty five percent (45%) which was lower than the previous years (ECZ, 2016). Literature indicates that head teachers play a critical role in determining the performance of the teachers and learners (Vidon and Grasseti, 2003Wamulyange 1999,). This is because they are expected to oversee all school based activities by way of management, coordination and monitoring. Despite the fact that continuous assessment is one of the most important tools that is required in the process of teaching and learning, there is no known study undertaken to establish the extent to which head teachers monitor continuous assessment activities in secondary schools in Solwezi district, hence the relevance of this study.

### **1.3. Purpose of the study**

The purpose of the study was to investigate the extent to which the headteachers monitor continuous assessment in selected secondary schools in Solwezi district.

### **1.4 Objectives of the study**

The objectives of the study were to;

- i. identify the types of continuous assessment activities undertaken in selected secondary schools in Solwezi district.
- ii. establish how often teachers conduct continuous assessment in their respective subjects.
- iii. determine the extent to which headteachers support continuous assessment activities in their schools and how.
- iv. establish challenges faced by schools in Solwezi district in undertaking continuous assessment activities.

### **1.5 Research questions**

The following were the research questions;

- i. What are the types of continuous assessment activities undertaken in selected secondary schools in Solwezi district?
- ii. How often do teachers conduct assessment in their respective subjects?
- iii. To what extent do head teachers support continuous assessment activities in their schools and how?
- iv. What challenges are do schools face in undertaking continuous assessment in the selected secondary schools in Solwezi district?

### **1.6 Significance of the study**

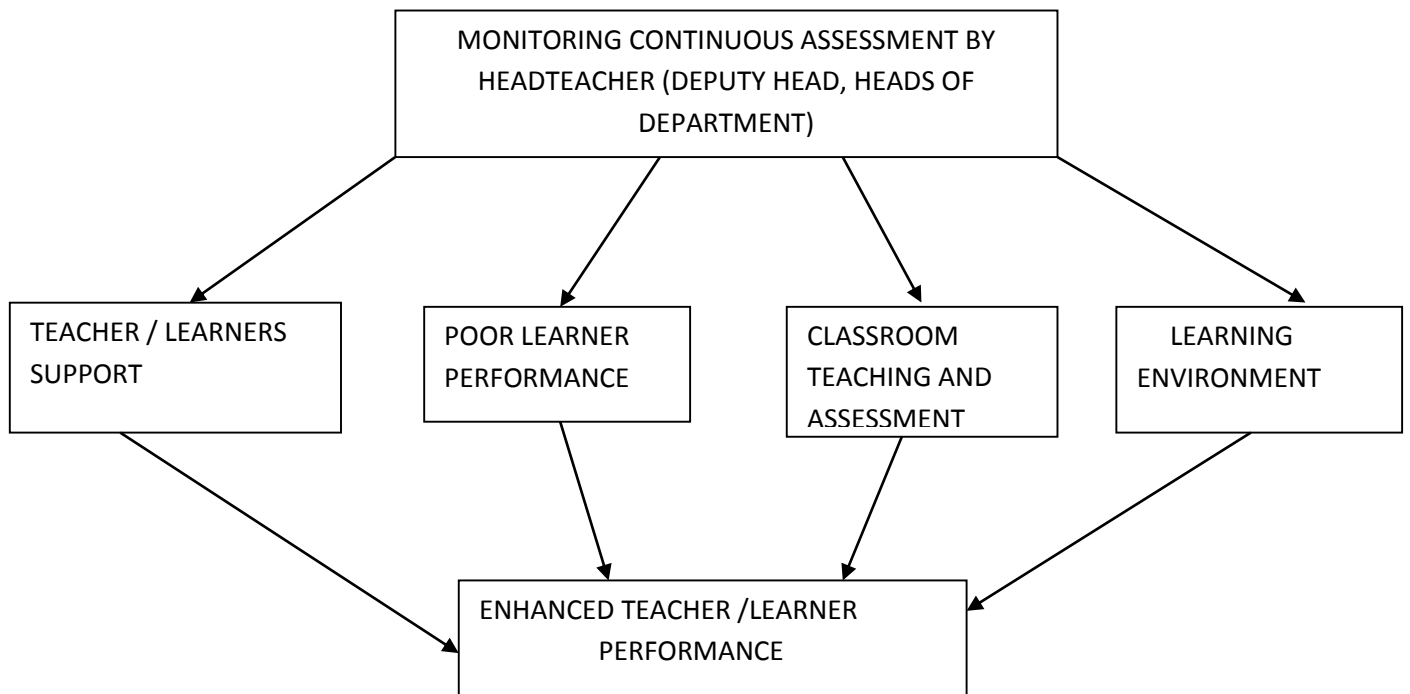
Monitoring continuous assessment is crucial as it involves finding out the performance of both the teacher and the learner. It is hoped that findings of this study will be beneficial to teachers who may

learn of various methods applied in the teaching and learning process and also try to apply them in their education delivery encounter. It may also be beneficial to head teachers and other members of the school management team as the study will reveal the strengths of monitoring the continuous assessment in schools and help them come up with strategies of improving learner performance. The Ministry of General Education may use the information to come up with training programmes in continuous assessment for teachers and monitoring for school administrators.

### 1.7 Scope of the study

The study was carried out in selected government secondary schools in solwezi district and collected data from headteachers, deputy headteachers, heads of department teachers and Grade 9 and 12 Pupils.

### 1.8 . Conceptual framework





Monitoring in the school by the head teacher and all those in administration has positive impact on both teachers and learner. Nyali (2013) states that, students' academic performance can be realized if there is good supervision of the teaching process. When the teacher is monitored by the head teacher and his/her team, they will identify the strengths and weaknesses of that teacher. The head teacher plays critical roles in determining the performance of the teachers and learners (Wamulyange 1999, Vidon and Grassetti, 2003). It may be that the teacher is lacking certain skill that can enhance teaching. A possible remedy can be put in place to support the teacher. The teacher and the learners may be lacking teaching and learning aids or materials of which after monitoring the administrators may think of providing such. And these can make learner improve in their performance. Classroom teaching and assessment if properly monitored can help improve learner performance. The head teacher will only understand the classroom and learning environment if monitoring is frequently done.

## **1.9 Theoretical framework**

This study was guided by the functional leadership theory. According to Hackman & Walton, 1986; McGrath, 1962; Adair, 1988; Kouzes and Posner, 1995, functional leadership theory is a particularly useful theory for addressing specific leader behaviors expected to contribute to organizational or unit effectiveness. This theory argues that the leader's main job is to see that whatever is necessary to group needs is taken care of. Thus, a leader can be said to have done their job well when they have contributed to group effectiveness and cohesion (Fleishman et al., 1991; Hackman and Wageman, 2005; Hackman & Walton, 1986). While functional leadership theory has most often been applied to team leadership (Zaccaro, Rittman, and Marks, 2001), it has also been effectively applied to broader organizational leadership as well (Zaccaro, 2001). Zaccaro et al. (2001), Hackman and Walton (1986), Klein, Zeigert, Knight, and Xiao (2006) observed five broad functions a leader performs when promoting the organization's effectiveness. These functions include environmental monitoring, organizing subordinate activities, teaching and coaching subordinates, motivating others, and intervening actively in the group's work.

A variety of leadership behaviors are expected to facilitate these functions. In initial work of identifying leader's behavior, Fleishman (1953) observed that subordinates perceived their supervisors' behavior in terms of two broad categories referred to as consideration and initiating structure. Consideration includes behavior involved in fostering effective relationships. Examples of

such behavior would include showing concern for a subordinate or acting in a supportive manner towards others. Initiating structure involves the actions of the leader focused specifically on task accomplishment. This could include role clarification, setting performance standards, and holding subordinates accountable to those standards.

It is with this view that head teachers are obliged to monitor the performance of teacher and the learner's. The head teacher should always as a functional leader act in support of teachers and learners through the provision of teaching and learning materials. The researcher picked on this theory as it encompasses a lot of areas that could help as the head performs his/her leadership roles. Group effectiveness and cohesion as already alluded to by Fleishman et al., 1991; Hackman and Wageman, 2005; Hackman & Walton, 1986, is very important in the promotion of teacher Continuous Professional Development (CPD) meetings in the school. The head teacher has a task of providing requisites needed for the proper facilitation of CPD meetings.

#### **1.10. Operational definition of key terms**

**Continuous Assessment:** Assessment of students' progress based on work they do or tests they take throughout the term or year, rather than on a single examination

**Monitoring:** Supervising activities in progress to ensure they are on- course and on schedule in the meeting the objectives and performance targets. The senior officer can also monitor by looking at records like the mark schedules, report forms and student records in the Guidance office.

**Ethics:** Basic concepts and fundamental principles of decent human conduct. It includes study of universal values such as the essential equality

#### **1.11. Summary**

This chapter has presented the background to the study, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, and the scope of the study. Also contained in this chapter are the theoretical framework, conceptual framework, and the definitions of key terms. The next chapter presents the literature review of the study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Overview**

This chapter examined literature relevant study. The literature review is presented under the following themes; definition of assessment, frequency of conducting continuous assessment, teacher preparedness, head teacher's support, traditional assessment and teaching strategies, learner-centred assessment and teaching strategies. In addition, challenges encountered in the process of supervision and monitor of teachers as well as policy recommendations that improve supervision and monitoring of teachers have been considered.

#### **2.1. Definition of assessment**

Assessment has been defined by different scholars, but generally agreement seem to centre on the concept of data collection, interpretation, feedback, decision making based on collected data (Airasian and Russell, 2008; Kellagh and Greaney, 2001). The role of assessment at all levels as alluded to by Gonzale and Fuggan (2012) cannot be over emphasized. In short assessment is very crucial in enhancing effective education process because effective teaching and learning that forms the basis of the education process can only be accurately determined through quality assessment. Assessment for learning has become a tool for learning as it occurs at every stage of teaching and learning. The focus of education is no longer about teachers and teaching but learners learning (Williams et al 2005). If the major functions of an education are to impact knowledge, teach new skills, develop the mind and change attitudes then assessment becomes an integral and essential component of effective learning, teaching and educational decision making (Abdulfatai 2014, Masters 2013).Umubong, Akubuiro, Akupan, and Udoh (2003) assert that the classroom assessment is an important aspect of the teaching and learning process and is aimed at:

- i. Providing information to students and parents about students' progress in acquiring knowledge, Skills and attitudes.

- ii. Providing support to teachers to modify their instructions and the learning activities of students; and
- iii. Providing information to other stake holders in making decision on education policies related to students (Angelo and Cross 2001: Bootroid, McMorrisand Pruzek,1992: Harlen 2007: McMillan 2008)

## **2.2. Frequency of conducting continuous assessment**

Continuous assessment is a classroom strategy implemented by teachers to ascertain the knowledge, understanding, and skills attained by pupils. Teachers administer assessments in a variety of ways over time to allow them to observe multiple tasks and to collect information about what pupils know, understand, and can do. Continuous assessment is also referred to as ‘Assessment for learning (Baku 2008).’ According to Baku (2008) assessment for learning sorely involves assessing students’ performance during teaching and learning process. Other researchers also refer continuous assessments as formative assessments. Formative assessments are assessments designed to monitor student progress during the learning process referred to as assessment for learning (Chappius and Stiginns 2002). This can be class exercises, topic tests and mid-term tests. Pierrie, Marion, and Gong (2007) argued that assessment issues can be clarified if assessment is defined by its purpose. From this perspective, continuous assessment is defined as assessment used by teachers and students to adjust teaching and learning as compared to interim assessment that informs policy makers or educators at the classroom, school, or district level.

MESTVEE 2015:71) Prescribe continuous assessment as formative assessment and further states that:

*“This type of assessment is conducted during the course of a programme. It gives the teacher and the learner immediate feedback on progress made by a learner on a given topic. This may involve: Class activities (both oral and written exercises), homework regular tests, assignment and project work.”*

MESTVEE (2015) further considered the importance of continuous assessment and highlighted the following:

- “Teachers should use this type of assessment to:*
- 1. Motivate learners to improve their performance.*

2. *Identify individual learners' strengths, problems and weaknesses.*
  3. *Keep parents informed about their children's work through school reports.*
- Identify weak areas in the teaching and learning process as well as devise remedial measures. This type of assessment is popularly known as continuous assessment. Current learners' performance is, in this case, ranked and compared with the previous performance of the same learners in a given area or subject."*

Anikweze (2010) defines Continuous Assessment (CA) as a formative mode of evaluation that is, in an ideal form, systematic, comprehensive, objective and guidance. He further states that, because of these characteristics, Continuous Assessment is acclaimed to be a progressive and objective method of evaluating achievement-gains from class instruction also their general developments physically, mentally, socially, morally, culturally and spiritually as well as their acquisitions of manipulative and movement skills, particularly where it is properly and fully implemented. Building on the above definition, Airasian (2001) described continuous assessment as an assessment approach which should depict the full range of sources and methods teachers use to gather, interpret and synthesize information about learners; information that is used to help teachers understand their learners, plan and monitor instruction and establish a viable classroom culture. It is a process that is continuous as it is not done once but continues up to when a child writes his /her final summative examinations. As regard to the number of times continuous Assessment should be conducted, MESTVEE (2015) broadly describes as follows;

*at the end of each key stage of a given unit or topic for the purpose of ascertaining what the learners have achieved in relation to attainment targets for that stage. The SBA scheme recently developed by MESVTEE identifies four types of assessment to be carried out on a regular basis in the school:*

1. *Daily: informal questioning, observations and small structured exercises, like quizzes and word problems.*
2. *Weekly: group-administered assessment of the week's content.*
3. *Monthly (Week 5 and Week 10): individually-administered assessment of learners' attainment of key skills over the prior month.*
4. *End-of-term: group-administered assessment of learners' attainment of key skills over the prior term.*

Akpan, Umaru, and Yato, (2014) consider continuous assessment to encompass or consider continuous assessment to be a mechanism whereby the final grading of a student in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of behavior in a systematic way of all his performances during a period of schooling. Such assessment adds variety of modes of evaluation for the purpose of and improving learning and performances of the students. Akpan, Umaru, and Yato (2014) consider that the following instruments can be used in Continuous Assessment at any level of education and these are:

- i. Teacher – Made Test (TMT)
- ii. Standardized Achievement Test (SAT)
- iii. Oral Test, e.g. Quiz
- iv. Structured Response Test, e.g. Objective test, multiple-choice tests.
- v. Essay Test or Free Response Test
- vi. Performance Tests (Assessment of skills)
- vii. Multiple Choice Test. This has key (answer) and options (distracters).It can be;  
(a) True/False, Yes/No. (b) Completion Items(c) Selection Items

## **2.2. Teacher Preparedness**

According to Ayeni (2011), teaching is a continuous process that involves bringing about desirable changes in learners through use of appropriate methods. Adunola (2011) indicated that in order to bring desirable changes in learners, teaching methods used by educators should be best for the subject matter. Furthermore, others contend that teaching methods work effectively mainly if they suit learners' needs since every learner interprets and responds to questions in a unique way (Chang, 2010). This was to say that alignment of teaching methods with learners' needs and preferred learning influence learners' academic performance.

It is very important to note that teaching, learning and assessment cannot be effectively done if the teacher has not adequately prepared. MESTVEE (2015) states that;

*“For assessment to be meaningful, a teacher should plan in such a way that individual work plans, schemes of work, weekly forecasts and lesson plans clearly indicate the statements of attainment, commonly known as specific outcomes. The statement of*

*attainment defines what a learner must know, understand and be able to do in relation to each attainment target or specific outcome.”*

Further MSVTEE (2015) further states that, Assessments should be systematically used and recorded to support learning. Therefore, teachers should always maintain a record of the performance of individual learners. On the other hand, learners should be encouraged to use results from the assessment as feedback for improving their performance. In short all the activities that that the teacher plans to do with the learners must be adequately prepared to avoid shoddy work. Preparing a child’s mind is not a simple job but, it requires a lot of commitment.

A teacher has the right to use his discretion depending on the type of assessment she or he intends to use from the above stated instruments as he gives the continuous assessments to his or her learners. The addition of continuous assessment in the instructional and testing process is intended to achieve two major purposes: to improve both the validity and reliability of the results of pupils ‘performance on tests and exercises, and secondly to help the pupil to develop effective learning and work habits. The present continuous assessment system is essentially based on frequent test taking and does not really serve the two critical purposes of continuous assessment (Kofi, 2005)

The assessment for learning could change the course of classroom interaction positively, as well as continuously improving student’s performance (Stiggins2005, Shirlee, 2011).The Ministry of basic education and culture of republic Namibia (1999) states that continuous assessment refers to the process of gathering information about the level of students on regular and continuous basis in order to improve learning and this helps the teaching learning process. Dudley-Evan and John (1998) argue that continuous assessment is important because it provides teachers and learners with the feedback and grades of the activities done in the classroom or as homework.

## **2.4 Head teacher’s support**

Monitoring according to MOGE (2016:17) is the process of checking whether or not a programme is being implemented correctly, and if not, the necessary remedial interventions are undertaken. School

Based Assessment monitoring is a process of tracking how students based assessments is implemented in classroom.

The head teacher plays critical roles in determining the performance of the teachers and learners (Wamulyange 1999, vidon and Grasseti, 2003). This is because he/ she is expected to oversee all school based assessments by way of management, coordination and monitoring. Apart from linking the school and the general society, the Head teacher is also supposed to be an actor in charge of translating policy into everyday practice as well as determining the motivating of teachers, learners and the quality of teaching (MOGE 2015). Emphasizing on the attributes of the head teacher, the head teacher as a matter of policy, should be an instrument and functional leader should enthuse teachers and learners and can establish an atmosphere that is conducive to the whole purpose of the school. Nyali (2013) also, supports that good students' academic performance can be realized if there is good supervision of the teaching process. The school head teacher would secure and sustain effective teaching throughout the school by monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and standards of students' achievements. He or she should organize the implementation of the school curriculum by instituting high learning time, variety of teaching strategies, frequent homework, assessment and feedback. On the other hand, lack of teaching supervision leads into poor quality of teaching and low standard of students' academic performance.

The head teacher should take into account the characteristics of the school as he monitors continuous assessment. Updenakker and Vandamme (2000) indicate that, the characteristics of the school such as class size, teaching staff, school facilities and teaching/learning materials and also have a bearing on the learning outcome. It is the responsibility of the head teacher to ensure that learning and teaching materials are provided to the teachers to ensure that there is the effectiveness on the delivery of education. The quality of education depends on quality and effective administration. School heads, education officers and standards officers need training in education management and supervision and various skills both technical and social in execution of their work (MOE 1996: 146). Here the prime task of the head teacher is to exercise leadership of the kind that results in a shared vision. As a committed head teacher, where the size of the school is big, he/she cannot manage to monitor the school alone. He has the powers to delegate to other members in the senior management team are given the opportunity to monitor the continuous assessment both while the head is around and when he is away. Ndyali (2013) echoed UNESCO (2011) stating that the head teacher need to ensure that



delegated tasks are actually carried out on time and in a proper manner . Therefore, the school head supervise, oversee the work in the school.

## **2.5. Traditional Assessment and Teaching Strategies**

Under this method, learners simply obtain information from the teacher without building their engagement level with the subject being taught (Boud and Feletti, 1999). The approach is least practical, more theoretical and memorizing (Teo and Wong, 2000). It does not apply activity based learning to encourage learners to learn real life problems based on applied knowledge. Since the teacher controls the transmission and sharing of knowledge, the lecturer may attempt to maximize the delivery of information while minimizing time and effort. As a result, both interest and understanding of learners may get lost. To address such shortfalls, Zakaria, Chin and Daud (2010) specified that teaching should not merely focus on dispensing rules, definitions and procedures for learners to memorize, but should also actively engage learners as primary participants. Most countries and educationalists have discouraged this type of teaching and learning process as it does not give the learners chance to think and explore new ideas.

## **2.6. Learner-Centered Assessment and Teaching Strategies**

With the advent of the concept of discovery learning, many scholars today widely adopt more supple learner-centred methods to enhance active learning (Greitzer, 2002). Most teachers today apply the learner-centred approach to promote interest, analytical research, critical thinking and enjoyment among learners (Hesson Shad, 2007). The teaching method is regarded more effective since it does not centralize the flow of knowledge from the lecturer to the learner (Lindquist, 1995).The approach also motivates goal-orientated behaviour among learners, hence the method is very effective in improving learner achievement (Slavin, 1996). The subject information produced by the learners is remembered better than the same information presented to the learners by the teacher. This study was premised on this theory that learners whose teachers used the learner centred strategies would perform better than those whose teachers used the traditional methods mainly the lecture method and summative assessments only.

## **2.7 Challenges encountered in the process of monitoring**

More recent research has confirmed this general picture. Teachers appear to be unaware of the assessment work of colleagues and do not trust or use their assessment results (Cizek et al., 1995; Hall et al., 1997). Both in questioning and written work, teachers' assessment focuses on low-level aims, mainly recall. There is little focus on such outcomes as speculation and critical reflection (Stiggins et al., 1989; Schilling et al., 1990; Pijl, 1992; BoStrage, 1996; Senk et al., 1997), and students focus on getting through the tasks and resist attempts to engage in risky cognitive activities (Duschl and Gitomer 1997). Although teachers can predict the performance of their pupils on external tests--albeit tests reflecting low-level aims- their own assessments do not tell them what they need to know about their students' learning (Lorsbach et al., 1992; Rudman, 1987).

Banda (2014) investigated the relationship between management supervision and teacher performance in the secondary schools of Kafue District, Lusaka Province. The study brought to light that Standard Officers, Head teachers, Deputy Head teachers and Heads of Department checked schemes of work, lesson plans, syllabi and learners' exercise books. Regarding challenges encountered the study findings revealed that Head teachers rarely observed lessons due to their busy schedules. Therefore, the study recommended that Head teachers as Education auditors should regularly interact with teachers to ensure that curriculum coverage are in tandem with learners' work. Furthermore, the government through the Ministry of Education should allocate adequate funds to schools for the procurement of adequate teaching and learning resources. In this regard, the current study will determine if regular interactions of Head teachers as School Administrators with teachers enhances the academic performance of pupils in secondary schools as teachers administer continuous assessments in Secondary schools.

## **2.8 Summary**

The chapter reviewed literature and the following themes were covered: definition of assessment, frequency of conducting continuous assessment, teacher preparedness, head teacher's support, traditional assessment and teaching strategies, learner-centred assessment and teaching strategies. In addition, challenges encountered in the process of supervision and monitor of teachers. The forthcoming chapter will cover the methodology of the study.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3. Overview**

The previous chapter discussed the literature review. This chapter will dwell on the methodology employed by the study following the subheadings: research design, the study population, sample, sampling techniques, data collection instruments, and ethical consideration.

#### **3.1. Research design**

A research design can be defined as a researcher's overall plan for obtaining answers to the research questions. It incorporates some of the most important methodological decisions that the researcher makes in conducting the research study (Moyo, Ncube, Gombe and Kanga 2016). Welman et al (2005:46) described a research design as the overall plan, according to which the respondents of a proposed study are selected, as well as the means of data collection or generation, while Babbie and Mouton (2010) describe research design as a plan or blueprint for conducting the research. A research design should, therefore, provide the researcher with a clear research framework to guide the methods for data collection, data analysis and interpretation.

In this study a descriptive research design was used. It enabled the researcher to enter into the field with an open mind. It is holistic and it provides a contextual understanding of the lived experiences of participants.

#### **3.2. Study population**

Population refers to the total number of elements of cases that one can investigate. This is a set of similar items or events which is of interest for some question, experiment or research (Yates, Moore

and Daren 2003).The population for this study comprised all head teachers, deputy head teachers, heads of department, teachers and Grade 9 and 12 pupils from secondary schools in Solwezi district.

### 3.2.1. Sample

Representative of the population taken to help generalize the findings and this is referred to as a sample (Moyo, Ncube, Gombe and Kanga 2016).The respondents of this study were drawn from the six(6) out of the Eleven (11) secondary schools from Solwezi District. The respondents in this research will be as broken down below. Pupils will be drawn from grade 9 and 12 classes only.

S/NO.	RESPONDENTS	SAMPLE
1	Head teachers	5
2	Deputy head teachers	5
3	Head of departments	11
4	Teachers	58
5	Pupils	101
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>180</b>

### 3.3. Sampling techniques

In this study purposive sampling was used to select all the respondents. Purposeful sampling is whereby specific targeted respondents interviewed to give required data. According to Saunders (2003), a purposive sample is a non-probability sample that is selected based on characteristics of a population and the objective of the study. Saunders(2003) further states that, it is a type of non-probability sampling in which the researcher consciously selects specific elements or subjects for inclusion in a studying order to ensure that selects the element will have certain characteristics relevant to the study.

### **3.4. Data collection instruments**

Questionnaires and semi-structured interview guides were used to collect data. Questionnaires were used to collect data from teachers and pupils. The pupils who responded to the questionnaire were sampled from grades 9 and 12 classes only. Semi- structured Interview guides were used to collect data from head teachers, deputy head teachers and heads of department.

### **3.5. Data analysis**

Quantitative data was analyzed using excel, a computer software which facilitated mathematical manipulation of data and the creation of frequency tables, tables and charts. Qualitative data on the other hand was analyzed using content analysis. The responses were categorized based on thematic areas which had been used for analysis.

### **3.5. Ethical Considerations**

Shanks, Meyer and Claire (2015) posit that ethical standards include standards relating to rights, such as the right to life, the right to freedom from injury, and the right to privacy. Such standards are considered adequate standards of ethics because they are supported by consistent and well-founded reasons. This study upheld ethical issues such as, anonymity confidentiality and obtaining of informed consent during data collection, analysis and publication of the research findings. In this regard the identity and views of participants were kept confidentially. Furthermore, all participants were informed that the data collected during the study would be used purely for academic purpose.

### **3.6. Summary**

Chapter three has discussed the methodology used and discussed under the following sub topics research design, the study population, sample, sampling techniques, data collection instruments, and finally ethical consideration. The next chapter will highlight the findings of the study.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS**

#### **4. Overview**

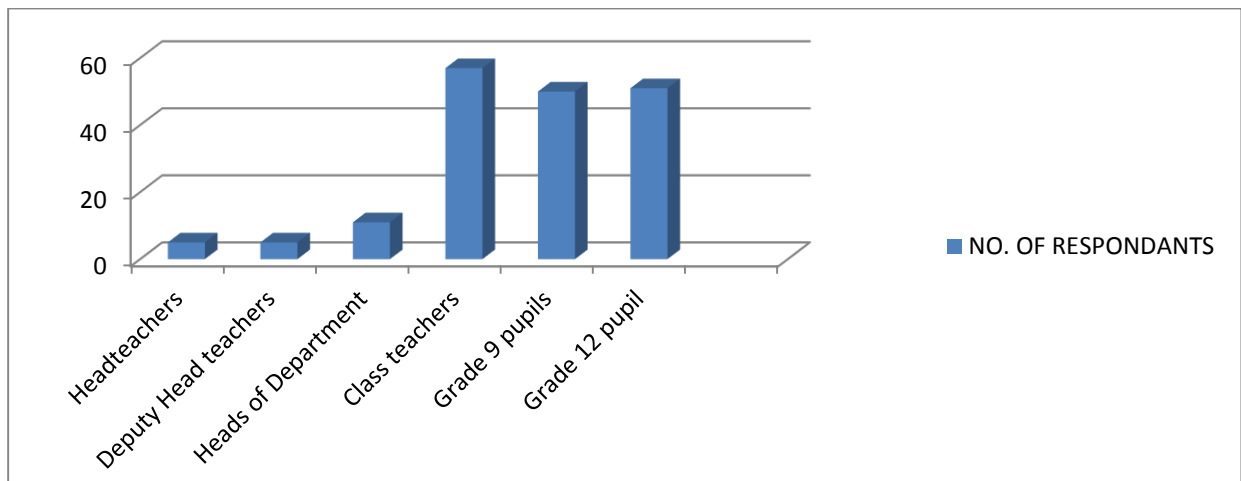
The previous chapter focused on the research methodology used in the study. This chapter presents the findings of this study. The objectives of the study were to: identify the types of continuous assessment activities undertaken in the selected secondary schools in Solwezi district, establish how often teachers conducted continuous assessment in their respective schools, determine the extent to which head teachers support continuous assessment activities in their schools and how, and finally establish the challenges faced by school in Solwezi district in undertaking continuous assessments activities. The findings were focused on the demographic data capturing the number of sampled population, qualifications, work experience, in this study. The demographic data reflects the personal characteristics of the participants of the study. The second part focused on the themes which emanated from the objectives and research questions. Charts, Tables and narrations have been used to illustrate the collected data.

## 4.1. Demographic information of participants

Below is the information on the participants of the study.

### 4.1.1 Categories of respondents

Figure 1: Number of respondents.



The graph in figure1 above illustrates the total number of sampled population that helped in the provision of this raw data. The respondents who took part in the study comprised of five(5) head teachers, five (5) deputy head teachers, eleven (11) heads of department, fifty eight(58) teachers of which thirty-seven (37) were subject teachers and twenty one (21) were Grade teachers, Fifty(50) Grade 9 and fifty(51) Grade 12 pupils. The total sampled population was one hundred and eighty (180).

#### 4.1.2. Qualifications of administrators and teachers

Figure 2. Qualification of administrators and teachers

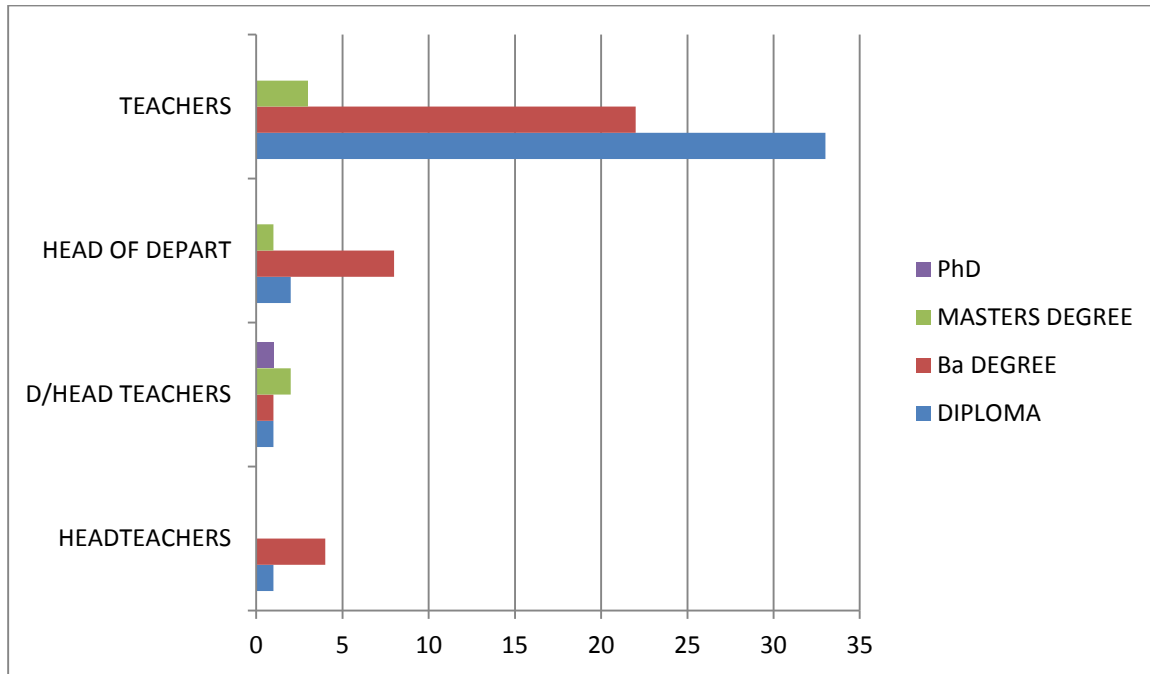


Figure 2 above illustrates and shows the qualifications of Heads teachers, Deputy Head teachers, Heads of departments, and teachers. Out of twelve administrators, 1 deputy head teacher reflecting 5% had a Doctorate; 2 had masters degrees representing 11% ; 3 had diplomas representing 17% and 12 had bachelors degree representing 67% of the the sampled administrators. Among the Headteachers one had a diploma. The qualification of teachers also were as follows; Thirty-three (33) were Diploma holders equivalent to 57% , Twenty-two (22) Bachelors Degree holderstranslating into 38.% and Three (3) with Masters Degree which is 5.%.



### 4.1.3 Work experience of administrators and teachers

It was imperative to establish work experience by all the respondents in the study.

Figure 3. Work experience of teachers

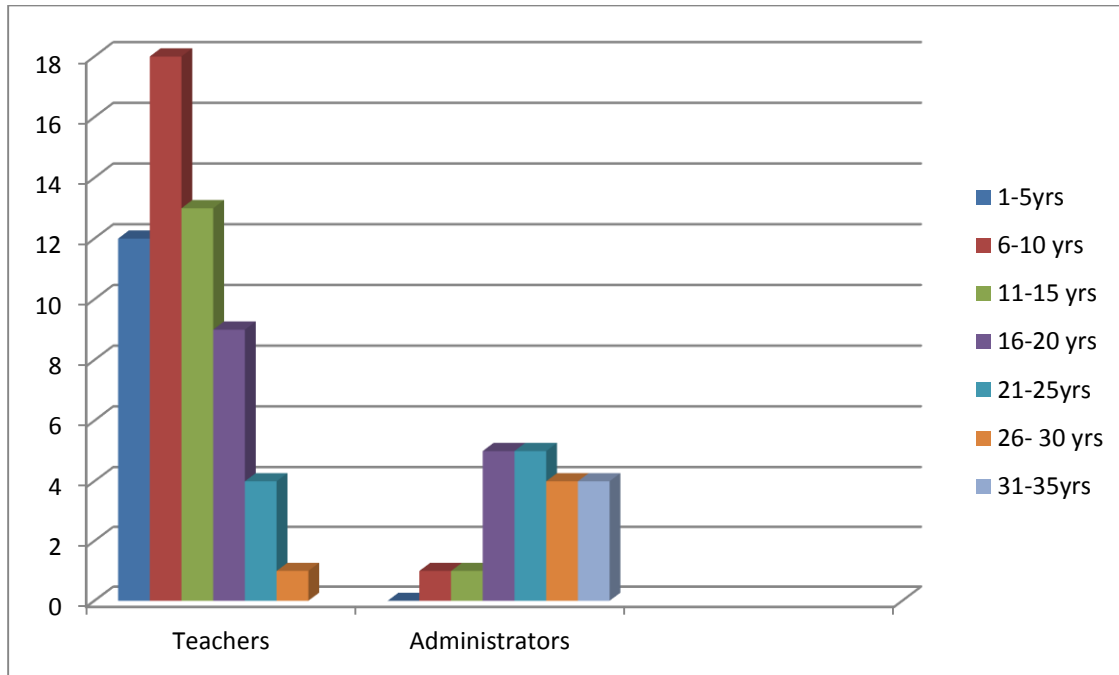


Figure 3 above illustrates the work experience for the administrators and teachers. Administrators were grouped together on the right while that for the teachers also remained on its own on the left. 12 teachers served between 1 and 5 years, 18 teachers served between 6 and 10 years, 13 between 11 and 15, 9 between 16 and 20 years, 4 between 21 and 25 years and 1 between 26 and 30 years. The Scenario for the administrators was different where no one was below 5 years, 1 was between 6 and 10, another one was between 11 and 15 years, consequently 5 were between 16 and 20, 5 also between 21 and 25, 4 were between 26 and 30, and 4 served 31 and above.

### 4.2. Types of continuous activities undertaken in selected secondary schools in Solwezi district

The study sought to identify the types of continuous assessment activities administered by teachers in their respective schools. The study established that the most prominent types of assessment

administered were tests. These tests are conducted in line with the MESVTEE 2015) guidelines which states:

*“Assessment should be conducted at the end of each key stage of a given unit or topic for the purpose of ascertaining what the learners have achieved in relation to attainment targets for that stage. The SBA scheme recently developed by MESVTEE identifies four types of assessment to be carried out on a regular basis in the school. Daily: informal questioning, observations and small structured exercises, like quizzes and word problems. Weekly: group-administered assessment of the week’s content. Monthly: (Week 5 and Week 10): individually-administered assessment of learners’ attainment of key skills over the prior month. End-of-term: group-administered assessment of learners’ attainment of key skills over the prior term. The SBA scheme also includes homework, which can be administered daily, weekly or fortnightly”.*

When Head teachers were asked on the type of continuous assessments administered by teachers in their respective schools, each school gave their response as follows;

Solwezi Technical Secondary school head said:

*“Our school is a technical school and the following are the types of continuous assessment activities done; in psychomotor fields like design and Technology, wood work, Metal work and Sciences. In other subjects, tests, homework, end of topic tests, week 5, 9 and end of term tests are also administered.”*

Solwezi School for Continuing Education run two sections and these are the Academic and Skills section. The researcher’s focus was the Secondary section in the Academic Section. The Head teachers mentioned that

*“The mandatory week 5,9 and the End of term tests are conducted as Continuous Assessment. Practical is also administered in subjects like Design and Technology, Home Economics, Art and Design and Sciences.”*

At Kyawama Secondary school, the situation was a bit different where the head teacher mentioned of class tests at the end of each topic, Homework policy was highly implemented, practical assessments in Music, Art and Design, and Home economics and Sciences. The mandatory three assessment tests were also administered. When asked about the learners' continuous assessment records, she responded by saying also that:

*“Am pretty sure the teachers do assess learners but they do not submit the continuous assessment record to this office. Sir it is a good reminder and I will ask the guidance teacher to make a follow up and update the records.”*

Tumvwananai Secondary school has a policy of which each teacher gives a continuous assessment at the end of every topic covered. This is done through class tests, homework. Assignments especially with Grade 9 and 12 classes to enable them get acquainted to essay type of questions. The three mandatory assessment tests are given to all pupils and the question papers are typed and printed. The school provides all the stationery needed.

At Kikombe secondary school emphasis was only in the three mandatory continuous assessment tests. End of term test are set in the similar format like the final Grade 12 or Grade 9 examinations. As for the other class assessment test, each department was given days when they should administer them. Of course the mandatory assessment is typed and printed using the RISO Machine for all Grade with much emphasis to Grade 9 and 12.

At Solwezi Day Secondary school the scenario was slightly different. Pupils taking Home Management, Food and Nutrition and Home Economics are allowed to be assessed twice in the Practical component. When the Head teacher was asked as to why the arrangement was like that, his response was;

*“The number of times has been reduced due to high costs of the ingredients used. They are assessed during the 5<sup>th</sup> week and the end of term assessments. Other subjects and the theory part are assessed with other subjects in the 4<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> week and the end of term tests. We type and print for all grades.”*

Their emphasis was on week 5, 9, and end of term tests. All the five head teachers emphasized on the three mandatory assessments given to all pupils at the school. These three named continuous assessment are very well planned for and are reflected in each teacher's individual work plan including the head teacher's. It was very interesting that even pupils were able to give out the types of continuous assessment activities given to them. Pupils were asked a question: "What type of work do teachers give you for them to know that you have known what you were learning about." This question was asked so simply so that at least all could understand what it was looking for. The responses were as follows; one grade 9 pupil at Kikombe secondary school said;

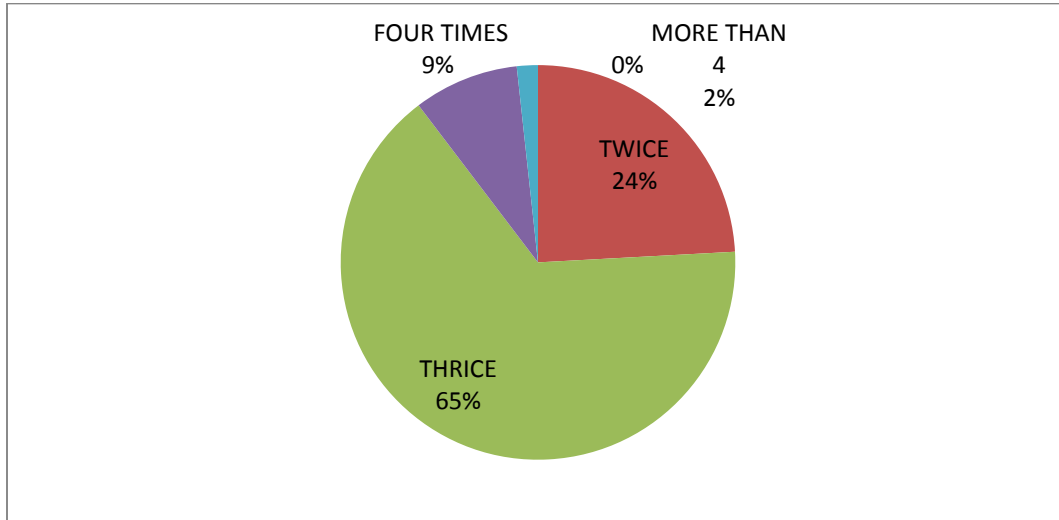
*"They give us exercises to test us if we know what we are learning or we don't know. The exercises are marked in class and at times the teachers asks us to exchange the books and write the answers on the board and we mark the work especially multiple choice and one word answers."*

Many more answers were given coming from both teachers and pupils. The most prominent answers were; monthly tests, quizzes debates homework, revision, individual and group work these are the tests emphasized by the Ministry of General Education to be administered in all schools in week 4, week 9 and end of term. Only three pupils mentioned assignments.

#### **4.3 How often teachers conduct continuous assessment in their respective subjects**

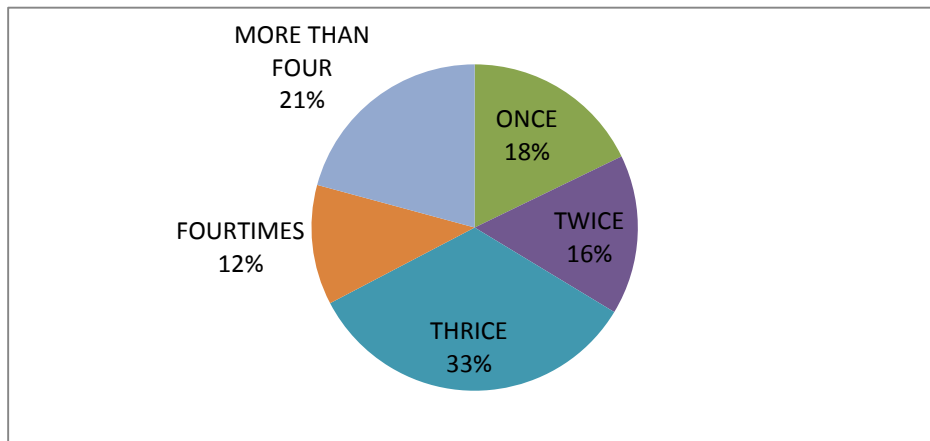
As regards to how often teachers conducted continuous assessments, all the head teachers indicated that they conducted continuous assessments three times in the term. One head teacher said that besides the three well known week 4, 9 and end of term tests, teachers conducted their own other continuous assessments except that one could not tell the number of time since it appeared as if they did not record the marks.

**Figure 4: Number of time continuous assessment were conducted by teachers**



The chart above illustrates the number of times teachers indicated they conducted continuous assessment in a term. From the total number of fifty(58) teachers fourteen(14) teachers indicated they conducted the assessment twice indicating 24%, then thirty eight (38) indicated they conducted three times interpreting 65%, five(5) showed four times resulting into 9% and one (1) more than 5 times giving 2%. When Head teachers were asked about the number of times their teachers conducted continuous assessment, they all said three times, that is the mandatory ones conducted in the Fifth week, Ninth week and the end of term planned for tests.

**Figure 5: Number of times pupils were tested in Mathematics in a term**



The pie chart above illustrates when the pupils were asked about the number of times they were assessed in Mathematics to just assess whether they understood what assessments was, the following responses were given. It was discovered that 18 pupils indicated that they were tested once, 16 indicated twice, 34 reflected thrice while 12 indicated Four time and 21 were for more than four times.

#### **4.4 Extent to which headteachers supported continuous assessment activities**

The headteacher plays a critical role in continuous assessments. When teachers were asked on the type of feedback and support they received from head teachers, they gave a number of responses. One teacher indicated that the response was positive but did not specify what that positive response was. One of teachers said: *the head or deputy head teachers did not make any comment in our preparation documents but only indicated 'checked' date stamp then the signature.* Other teachers said they were given verbal advice, had comments written such as *'this is good, keep it up.* Only two teachers said they were called and advised on how to locate time to the parts of the lesson plan.

As regards to continuous assessment, most teachers indicated that the headteachers were very supportive especially on the three mandatory assessment tests for week 4, 9, and end of term test where stationary like paper, RISO ink and master rolls running the tests were adequately provided. At Solwezi Boys Technical Secondary School, the head teacher funded the Industrial Arts department so that as they were conducting practicals in metalwork, they welded enough desk frames to help alleviate the problem of sitting arrangements during the times for tests. Besides practical materials the teachers were also provided with teaching files and lesson preparation books.

At Kyawama secondary school, outstanding pupils in academic performance were given awards. Some pupils were allowed to pay half the school fees for the term while others were given light tasks during the holidays especially those vulnerable so that they are motivated to work hard and in the end pay for their school fees.

Some head teachers, despite numerous challenges, were reported to have directly or indirectly monitored the teachers. By the time the researcher had gone to monitor, All the head teachers had not monitored classroom teaching except for heads of department. Teachers said it was quite

motivational support whenever the administrators monitored their teaching and when they were conducting assessments.

**Fig 6: Times teachers were monitored in 2016**

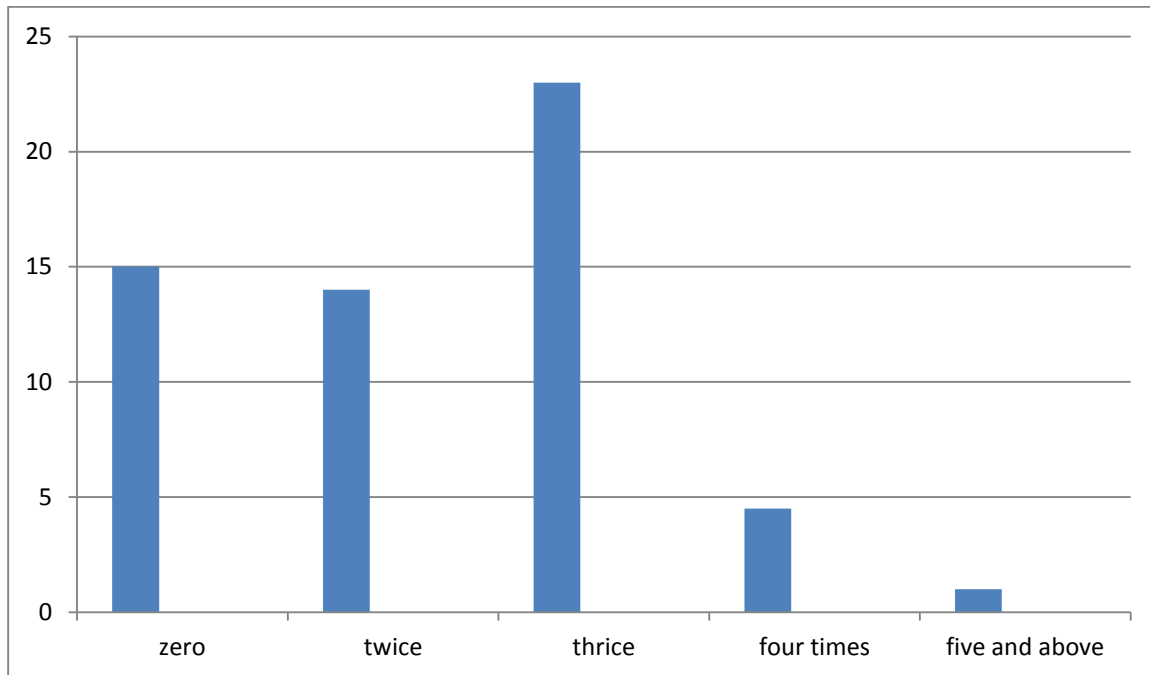


Fig 5 above shows the number of teachers who responded to the questionnaire indicating how many times they were monitored by their administrators in the year 2016. Fourteen Teachers indicated that they had been monitored twice, 23 teachers indicate thrice, 5 teachers indicated four times 1 indicated above five times while 15 teachers indicated that they were not monitored in any way.

#### **4.5. Challenges faced by schools in undertaking continuous assessment activities**

The study identified numerous challenges that were faced by head teachers, teachers and pupils in undertaking continuous assessment. This section presents challenges under three headings namely, challenges faced by head teachers, challenges faced by teachers, and challenges faced by pupils.

#### **4.5.1. Challenges faced by head teachers**

Head teachers brought out a number of challenges. They stated that for a school to run well, it requires adequate financial resources. The Head teacher for Solwezi Technical Secondary School said: *“It is not easy for me to monitor some departments where I know we have failed to supply their requisite for practical fearing to be challenged by the teachers who are just too open.”* Another head teacher within the town school complained bitterly about poor funding. These were his words; *“I believe you people who are even moving about interviewing us have been given a lot of money. To tell you the truth even school fees were not forthcoming as parents were failing to pay especially in the second and third term. Much of the finances collected in First term were spent towards extra-curricular activities and Sports, JETS, NASAAZ and various associations. A good number of pupils under Social Welfare are not being paid for due to poor funding”*.

The study also established that not all the teachers prepare their lesson plans. They tended to give excuses as to why they fail to prepare lesson plans for all the lessons.

The head teacher at Kyawama secondary school said, *“It is difficult for me to know exactly whether the teachers are assessing since they do not record the results of their assessments they give to learners besides the mandatory well known assessments in week5, 9 and end of term. Other assessments given to pupils are not recorded”*. She further stated, that *“the stationary for other assessments are not provided to teachers except for the mentioned three assessments as they are well budgeted for”*.

The other challenge raised was that, schools with large number of classes and teachers are posing a big challenge for the Head teacher to monitor each and every teacher. For example The Head teacher at Kikombe secondary school with more than 70 teachers planned to monitor at least 20 teachers per term but failed to meet the target due to various meetings and other external involvements. She said that even teachers fail to adequately conduct continuous assessments due to over-crowding in classes.

Cross-cutting issues such as unplanned meetings with the District Education Board Secretary were major deterrents to the implementation of the planned activities and were hence a challenge. The head Solwezi Day Secondary School stated that it was very difficult for him to meet the targets of the planned for activities as there were a lot of other activities cropping out which also need to be attended as well.



At one school some specialized subject teachers refused to be observed by the administrators who were not qualified in their subjects of specialization. They would rather ask for a teacher or HOD who was qualified in that subject area. Whenever the Head teacher tried to arrange to observe these particular teachers, they would give a lot of excuses.

The other challenge that came out was that of newly established secondary are lacking specialized rooms such as laboratories, workshops, libraries, guidance offices including room for the HODs. This has made it difficult for HODs to follow up the teachers as they had nowhere to sit and meet them. The only temporal rooms created were the staff rooms and no teacher was willing to discuss with the HOD in the presence of other teachers.

#### **4.5.2. Challenges faced by teachers in the process of conducting continuous assessment**

This section highlights the various challenges that teachers encountered in the course of teaching and administering of continuous assessment in their respective classes and schools. Among the various challenges were; absenteeism of learners, over enrolment resulting into congested classes, too many periods and handling of several classes by one teacher and inadequate infrastructure and these are discussed below.

##### **4.5.2.1 Absenteeism of pupils**

Continuous assessment means that there should be continuity in all circles. Among the challenges raised by the teachers was absenteeism of learners both for lessons and during the time of conducting continuous assessment. One of the teachers said:

*“The little I know about assessment is that assessment has to do with constant collection of information about the learner’s performance on the regular basis. It is this information which will help me to make a decision on how I should move with that pupil. Does he need remedial work or he requires individualized attention. It really becomes difficult to assist without the results.”*

This came out vividly from a large number of teachers who even said that pupil stayed away from tests, especially when they found themselves not prepared enough to face tests. Some pupils were not deliberately absent but were chases because they failed to pay school fees or came late to school. However, even pupils who had been absenting themselves from lessons were called to come and write tests. This resulted in a lot of pupils failing and teachers were being rebuked for the failure of pupils.

#### **4.5.2.2 Inadequate materials**

The study established that lack of adequate materials for teaching and learning was also a challenge affecting teachers. Assessment of learners compounded with insufficient stationary forced teachers to relax in giving the learners assessments besides the mandated three assessments conducted in week 5, 9 and end of term tests. One teacher complained:

*Due to non-provision of stationary, we are forced to write the assessment tests and other exercises on the board. Though were taught and encouraged to improvise and use our initiative, it has just become too much for me to be dipping into my pocket to be buying teaching materials and stationery for my class. Much of the school money is channeled to sports and un known meetings.*

#### **4.5.2.3 Over- enrolment**

Among the interviewed teachers some, where grade teachers and gave the following data of pupils of the classes they handled.

At Kyawama secondary school, the following numbers were captured from the grade teachers who among others responded to the questionnaires: 45+ 66+ 47+ 58+ 57+ 68+ 38+ 51+ 81+ 69+42+106+54+35+45+48+97+64+69+45+58 =1243 pupils from 21 classes.

At Tumvwananai Secondary 55+ 57+50+45+52+57+60 = 376 pupils from 7 classes.

At Solwezi Boys Technical Secondary School 36+33+69+28+38+31+52+67+47+39+35+38 gave a total number of 513 Pupils from 12 classes.

At Solwezi Skills they were  $50+ 73 = 123$  pupils from 2 classes

At Kikombe they were  $79+ 64+58+33 = 234$  pupils from 4classes

At Solwezi day they were  $52+54+ 54+ 80 = 240$  pupils from 4 classes

This data was presented in the tabular form to indicate the number of classes and the enrolment level in grouped data.

**Table 1. Number of classes and their enrolment**

Class	Number of classes per secondary school as provided by grade teachers						
	Kyawama	Solwezi Technical	Kikombe	Solwezi Day	Solwezi skills	Tumvwananai	Total
20 - 30		1					1
31 - 40	2	7	1				10
41 - 50	6	1				1	8
51 - 60	5	1	1	3	1	6	17
61 - 70	5	2	2	1			10
71 - 80					1		1
81 - 110	3						3
Total	21	12	4	4	2	7	50

**Table.2 Number of pupils in the class against the standard enrolment**

SCHOOL	Number of classes	Total enrolment	Average enrolment by school	Approved enrolment per class	Standard deviation
Kyawama	21	1243	59.2	35	24.2
Solwezi Tech	12	572	42.75	35	8.25
Kikombe	4	234	58.0	35	23
Solwezi day	4	240	60.0	35	25
Solwezi Skills	2	123	61.5	35	26.5
Tumvwananai	7	376	55.2	35	22.2

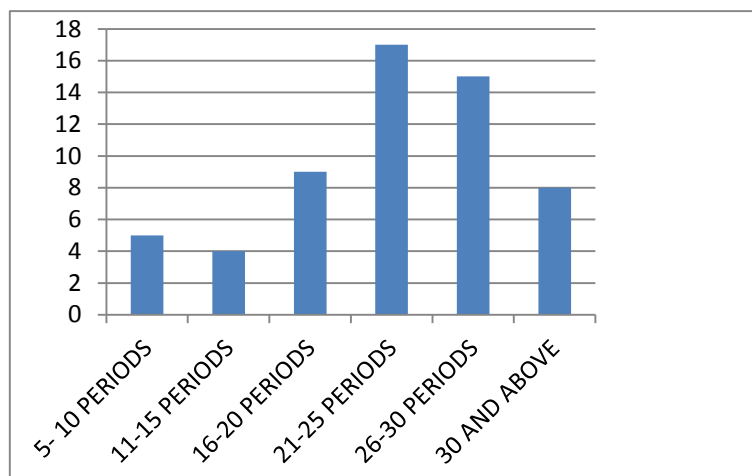
Total number of classes Sampled	<b>50</b>	<b>2788</b>	<b>55.76</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>20.78</b>
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The tables above show the number of classes as captured from the grade teachers. The total number of number of pupils in a class against the standard enrolment; the average enrolment per school; the approved number of pupils per class MESTVEE (2015) and finally the standard deviation. In this case marking of work for big classes renders the teacher to be seen to be slow and ineffective. Due to over enrolment, there is a general tendency of insufficiency of desks especially during the times when all classed are writing. The pupils are forced to sit two or three on one test, causing the learners to copy from each other. Teachers complained of lack of tools and apparatus during science, Home Economic and technology studies. One teacher said, “Pupils in this era require hand on practice and not only seeing the teacher demonstrating all the time. “

#### 4.5.2.4 Number of periods per Teacher

The teachers were asked to state the number of periods they were allocated on their school time tables. The following were the responses.

Fig.7



The data has been grouped since the number of teachers was 58. Out of 58 those who had 5 to 10 periods were 5, those with 11 to 15 were 4, those who had 16 period to 20 were 9 while those with periods between 21 and 25 were the largest and were 17, those with between 26 to 30 were 15 and then

the last but not the least where those with more than 30 periods who were 8. The bar graph above represents this data. Teachers with more than twenty five periods complained of inadequate time to mark and prepare lesson plans.

### **5.3 Challenges faced by pupils**

The study also highlighted challenges faced by learners during continuous assessments in the selected secondary schools. Some of the challenges brought out by teachers were also echoed by pupils. The following were the challenges; insufficient infrastructure and furniture, inadequate syllabus coverage, insufficient tools, apparatus, and stationery, pupils being sent away for failure to pay school fees and coming late to school and many more. One pupil complained and said: *“Teachers like going out to talk on cell phones and when he or she comes in will start asking ‘where did we end?’ and then moves out again when the call comes. A lot of time is wasted and because of that he would only give one question for the class exercise”*

The other challenge dwelt on more was the insufficient rooms and desks. Pupils complained that the classrooms do not have enough desks, and few classrooms to be used during the time for assessments. Pupils are forced to sit two or three per desk as they write the assessments. In the end, pupils end up copying from each other making the results being unreliable. Insufficient classrooms was also a challenge because desks have been spread in all rooms to allow pupils sit one per desk, rooms become scarce as a result pupils non testing classes are sent away only to come on their timetabled days for the test and those who were being tested previously also stay away. Worse still most schools do not have enough equipment and apparatus to use for practical tests or simply experiments. Pupils are forced to only observe the teacher demonstrate or wait to take turns. The challenge on the part of pupils was that pupils were not given a chance to conduct the experiments hence lacked hands-on practice.

Pupils were asked to comment on the sitting arrangements during continuous assessments and below are the findings.

**Figure 8: Sitting arrangement during assessments**

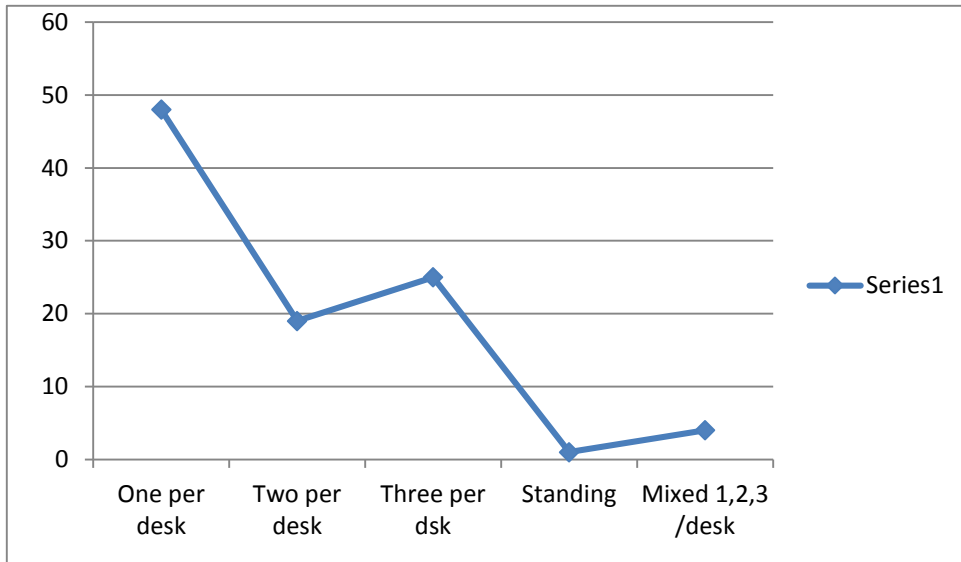


Figure 8 above shows the sitting arrangement during continuous assessment in the sampled schools in general. Forty eight (48) pupils indicated that they sit one per desk, nineteen (19) pupils indicated two per desk, twenty five (25) indicated three per desk, four (4) pupils indicate that a class will have either 2, 3 or even one per desk within the class and only one (1) indicated some pupils standing while writing the test. Pupils also complained of the compacted time table leaving them with no enough time to adequately prepare themselves.

#### **4.5.3 Inadequate syllabus coverage**

One among the challenges pupils highlighted was inadequate syllabus coverage. Pupils attributed this challenge to time allocated to individual subjects and teachers' attitude towards teaching and assessments. One pupil lamented that teachers were not consistent with time when assessing the learners. They fail to cover the syllabus bring the questions from the topics which they had not taught. Some teachers whose names were mentioned have a tendency of beating pupils even for simple mistakes developing fear into pupils who later failed to answer or ask questions when they did not understand. Some pupils expressed some disappointment over teachers who even failed to invigilate

the pupils leaving them on their own and pupils ended up making noise and discussing the questions. Other challenges were that teachers did not provide answer sheets and forced pupils to pull papers from their exercise books.

Other challenges were to do with inadequate text books where a teacher or a pupil would be reading aloud for others and some make a lot of mistakes as they are reading. Pupil book ratio varies between 1: 6 or even 1: 10. This makes it difficult for the learners who are fast and are forced to trail at the same rate with slow learners. Teacher spending a lot of time talking to a pupil who comes late to school. Time for learning is reduced. Teachers sending pupils out who had no pens and one pupil complained: *“even when am not writing, I can understand what the teacher is taking about than chasing me to go outside. Being punished during learning time, we miss what others are learning. “One pupil also said: “I dose in class because I walk a long distance to school and arrive very tired. So I miss a lot”*.

#### **4.6 Summary**

This chapter has presented the findings of the study in line with the themes and objectives of the study. The next chapter presents the findings of the study.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS**

#### **5.1. Overview**

The previous chapter presented the findings of the research. This chapter will discuss issues raised in the previous chapter which dwelled on the findings. Discussions of findings are presented in line with the specific objectives of this research in this order; to identify the types of continuous assessment activities undertaken in selected secondary schools in Solwezi district, to establish how often teachers conduct continuous assessment in their respective subjects, to determine the extent to which headteachers support continuous assessment activities in their schools and how and to establish challenges faced in undertaking continuous assessment activities in selected secondary schools in Solwezi district.

#### **5.1. Types of continuous assessment**

The first objective sought to identify the types of continuous assessment activities undertaken in selected secondary schools in Solwezi district. Under this objective the general outcome was almost similar. All head teachers emphasized on the three tests administered in week 4, 9 or 10 and the end of term tests. Although they are called continuous assessment tests, they are actually semi summative test. It appears as if most head teachers do not understand what continuous assessment is. According to Aggarwal cited in Mwebaza (2010) continuous assessment is not simply continuous testing. Continuous assessment does not solely depend on formal tests. Adeneyo, Babajide (2013) state that continuous assessment involves every decision made by the teacher in class to improve student achievement. These can be done through continuous assessment in order to collect more data on the performance of the learner so that where the learner is not performing to the expected standards, remediation is done.

During planning, head teachers include in their individual annual work plan the key result area of monitoring. It becomes difficult for them to fulfill their plans due to diverse external forces. An incidence occurred during the time the Head teacher Solwezi Technical Secondary was being



interviewed, when phone call from the Provincial Education Officer demanding that he immediately joins him to meet the District Administrative Officer to discuss issues of encroachment in the school land by the two nearby church authorities. The head teacher suggested to researcher that he continued the interview with the deputy head teacher. The researcher humbly requested that he would come to continue with him later at a convenient time. The Head teacher left and drove to join the Provincial Education Officer.

Despite the fact that the head teachers had planned to monitor teachers conducting continuous assessment or generally classroom teaching, where a component of assessment can be monitored, they paid more attention to outside programmes like district sports, JETS, HEAZ, ZAME, ZASE, ETAZ and other co-curricular activities, they lacked the art of delegation. Such activities can be delegated to Deputy Head teachers or Heads of Departments who are the specialists. They failed to do so because those activities are sources of income to fatten their pockets.

From the findings it clearly showed that head teacher's perceived continuous assessments as the three programmed assessments by the ministry of Education where even the analysed results are forwarded to the District Education Board Secretary to enable the district or province establish the general performance of the learners. Head teachers still believed in assessment of learning which more of summative nature was is. Assessment for learning involves assisting students' performance during the teaching learning process (Baku, 2008). However, Wiggins (1998) believes that the core premise of assessing students is to improve their performance. The assessment of learning outcomes should be an on-going process with the after- the-classroom interaction to improve teaching and learning. Assessment for learning could change the course for classroom interaction positively, as well as improving student's performance (Stiggins, 2005; Shirlec, 2011). It is important to note that head teachers do not only concentrate on programmed semi- summative tests ignoring classroom continuous assessments that are oriented for learner improvement. According to Nwana (2003), Continuous assessment practices guide classroom teaching, motivate learners, improve learning /masterly and student's progression.

## **5.2. How often teachers conduct continuous assessment in their respective subjects**

The findings show that teachers including the heads of department, deputy head teachers and head teachers are all indicated that continuous assessment was conducted during three times as outlined in the Standard Guideline. The MESTVEE just gave a guide line to be assessing learners in week 4, 9 and end of term for the sake of uniformity and help determine the progression of the learner's performance. This is a big challenge because they seem not to understand that continuous assessment is a continuous classroom activity which is done frequently to assess how learners' progress during the learning episode. Airasian and Russell (2008), Kellaghan and Greaney (2001), state that classroom assessment (continuous assessment) is a purposeful process which enables teachers to give feedback to students about the quality of their learning on one hand and the quality of teaching on the other hand. It is developed with a focus of assessing skills, knowledge or attitudes or generally assessment of learning. This entails that conclusion about the quality of students learning are not drawn from a single tool but multiple tools (Asuru and Ogidi 2011; Hussain 2008) in short assessments given to learners need to be focused and relevant to the assessed components.

Teachers may know the existence of continuous assessment but may not be implementing it full. Broadfoot, Winter and Weeden, 2002: 36 state, " Merely knowing how much the pig weighs does not necessarily make it weigh more unless it is accompanied by an accompanied feeding program that will make it weigh more." Similarly, merely knowing how poorly our desirable students perform will not be helpful unless that knowledge is accompanied by an introduction of a programs to improve the teaching and learning process.

## **5.3. Extent to which head teachers support continuous assessment activities in their schools and how**

The study revealed that Head teachers supported continuous assessment. They provided stationary for the printing the mandated three assessments and providing some teaching materials. This was not enough because supporting has also to do with monitoring which all head teachers sampled did not do. Monitoring according to MOGE (2016:17) is the process of checking whether or not a programme is being implemented correctly, and if not, the necessary remedial interventions are undertaken. School Based Assessment monitoring is a process of tracking how students based assessments is

implemented in classroom. The major role of the head teacher is to ensure that all is going well in the school. The head teacher cannot be in the school if there are no learners. Equally the teachers cannot be in the class if there are no learners. It is in this respect that the head teacher should ensure that the activities of a learner are fully supported. They can only be supported if at all the head teacher goes full throttle ensuring that learning is taking place and done in the correct way. From the findings, the study established that head teachers paid much attention to the semi summative type of assessment ignoring the core daily, homework, and class exercises which are the major yard stick of the pupil/teacher performance.

All head teachers said that they assisted in the typing and printing the of the mandatory week 4, week 9 and the end of term assessment test papers, that was a plus but the head teachers needed to go farther than that. Continuous assessment does not only end on those three tests. Teachers need to be supported with materials to effectively teach all the subjects in their relative domain i.e. Psychomotor, cognitive and affective domains. One head said they only allow learners do practical in Home economics, Food and fashions and Home management twice in a term. That was not healthy. In Science, pupils complained that it was only teachers who demonstrated during experiments while they were only watching and were not given hand on practice. How do you assess learners who were not given hand on practice? The school head teacher should have provided the necessary material to facilitate learning. Head teachers plays critical roles in determining the performance of the teachers and learners (Wamulyange 1999, vidon and Grasseti, 2003). This is because he/ she is expected to oversee all school based assessments by way of management, coordination and monitoring. Apart from linking the school and the general society, the Head teacher is also supposed to be an actor in charge of translating policy into everyday practice as well as determining the motivating of teachers, learners and the quality of teaching (MOGE 2015).

There are many key players in the school such that the head teacher should not tire himself up monitoring every teacher in the school. The head teacher should delegate to the deputy head teacher and the heads of department to be monitoring the learning and teaching and then give a feedback to the head teacher even on weekly basis or fortnightly. By delegating, the other officers will be motivated and enthusiastically be monitoring and find ways of supporting both the teachers and learners.

#### **5.4. Challenges faced in undertaking continuous assessment activities**

The study indicated that despite the fact that head teachers had planned to monitor their teachers, they failed to various reasons. Some of the challenges were; Failure to delegate resulting into the Head teachers attending all external meetings including escorting pupils for extracurricular activities outside the school or district. The other challenge was failure to prioritize academic activities against extra- curricular or sporting activities. The third challenge coming out was poor funding in secondary schools. It is easier to monitor departments or teachers who have been supported adequately with teaching and learning materials. The other challenge that came out was insufficient desks and classrooms. Classrooms may be very difficult to construct as they fall under capital projects but desks can be worked on by the industrial arts departments.

A visionary leader is expected to be a leader who plan and prioritize the activities of the school programmes. Before any other activity is budgeted for the head and his team should study the trend of the inflow of financial resource in the school. He should understand the core business of the school. Before sports, and other extra - curricular activities are brought on board, the school management should think of the teaching and learning resources. The biggest challenge is that Head teachers want to attend every meeting, sports activities at district, Province or National level just for monitory gain.

Absenteeism of learners from continuous assessment tests was another challenge raised. Indeed absenteeism from both lessons and assessments is a drawback on the part of the learner and disturbs the teacher's planning and ways of helping the inconsistent learner. Ramalape and Zengele (2014), supports this notion by stating that, Learners' behavioral problem such as absenteeism can negatively impact on the smooth implementation of continuous assessment and learning since there are many tasks or activities to be administered to learners on daily basis. Teachers can also be a source of problem in terms of absenteeism.

Teachers should find the best way of handling pupils who come from different back ground. Some parents do not manage to give learners everything they need hence the need for the teacher who happens to be a counselor to see how he or she can assist.

Another challenge was of overcrowded classes affecting the smooth running of continuous assessment. This problem can be controlled by the Head teacher as they enroll learners in Grade 8

and 10. The MESVTEE (2015) clearly state that secondary school classes should only enroll 35 pupils per class. Unfortunately, the school administrators pay a blind eye to this. The reasons behind this are that the more pupils they have the more they will collect as school fees from the pupils. The second reason may be political but still if the number can only go up to 45 maximum then teachers can be helped to assess the learners effectively and efficiently. Overcrowding has a lot of implications such as shortage of desks and other unhealthy conditions.

From the findings it came to light that the teachers were not varying different the types of assessments. Teachers were just using testing and if at all other methods were used they never recorded the results. Much interest was driven to testing as the main tool for assessing learners. This method is good but does not cover all the aspects of the domains necessary for a heuristic type of assessment. Domains like psychomotor was not very much exposed to learners. Practical and some form affective areas were not fully utilized except for the cognitive one.

## **5.5 Summary**

This chapter has presented the discussion of the findings. The next chapter presents the conclusion and recommendations of the study.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **6.0. Overview**

This chapter presents the conclusion and recommendations of the study. The objectives of the study were to: identify the types of continuous assessments administered in selected secondary schools of Solwezi in district, establish how often teachers conduct continuous assessment in their respective schools, determine the extent to which head teachers support continuous assessment activities in their schools and how, and establish the challenges faced in Solwezi district in undertaking continuous assessment activities.

#### **6.1. Conclusion**

This study concluded that, almost all schools have concentrated on the programmed semi summative assessments of giving tests in week 4, 9 and 13. Other continuous assessment activities like home work, class exercises are rarely given and if any, they are not even recorded. The study has also concluded that very few teachers besides the mandatory three tests give out the home work activities to learners and if at all given they are not marked but may ask the pupils to exchange their books and the teacher dictates the answers.

The other issue that was investigated in the study was to examine the frequency of conducting the continuous assessments. It was unfortunate that the schools quite alright followed the out lined three continuous assessment which appeared Three times in the term. The first two are conducted in the fourth and ninth weeks of the term conclude with the end of term tests. Continuous Assessment does not only assess learners three times in the term but learners should be vividly assessed within the time that learning and teaching are taking place. Continuous assessment evaluates both teaching and learning this entails that the teacher assesses his methods and contents while the learner's performance is being assessed as well. Restricting the assessment to only three was unhealthy.

The third aspect was the actual monitoring by the head teacher and how exactly the administration or the head assisted the teachers and learners as continuous assessment was being implemented. The head teachers in general expressed having not adequately done any monitoring within the term. The excuses of external interference were not very correct. The core business was first to teach and the other extra-curricular activities come latter. The head teachers paid more attention to sports and subject associations where they were able to make allowances and fatten their pockets on the expense of the child. The only people who much of monitoring where the Heads of department.

Finally the study concluded that the challenges faced by schools in the excursion of continuous assessment were due to poor funding by the government treasury, and failure on the part of head teachers to prioritize the academic activities against extra-curricular activities. Overcrowded classes, in adequate furniture and infrastructure in newly constructed schools, absenteeism of pupils during continuous assessment and inadequate learning and teaching resources.

## **6.2. Recommendations**

Arising from the findings and discussion of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Teachers should be encouraged to use a variety of assessment strategies such as portfolios, projects, practical work, interviews, class exercises, homework and observations in order to have a broader understanding of their students hence helping them improve their learning.
2. Head teachers should develop more interest in monitoring and supporting continuous assessment in school by ensuring that teachers are provided with the necessary teaching and learning materials.
3. School management should always prioritize activities that are more to do with learners' learning than spending more funds on extracurricular activities like sports which only benefit a few learners and staff.
4. Administrators should reinforce continuous profession development meeting to capacity build teachers more on the importance and how to carry out continuous assessment.
5. The government should employ more teachers in order to decongest classes and enable them to conduct effective teaching and assessment.

6. Government should increase funding to all secondary schools so that relevant and adequate materials required for teaching and learning are procured.



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**APPENDICES.**

**APPENDIX A: Interview Guide for School Administrators**

SECTION A: BACKGROUND INFORMATION			
NUMBER	QUESTIONS	CODES/RESPONSES	FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY
1	What position do you have in school? a. Headteacher b. Deputy Headteacher c. Head of Department(HOD)	[ ] [ ] [ ]	[ ]
2.	How long have you been in service? a. 10 years and below b. 11-20 years c. 21-30 years d. Above 30years.	[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]	[ ]
3.	What is your current educational qualification? a. Certificate b. Diploma c. Bachelors Degree d. Masters Degree e. Doctorate	[ ] [ ] [ ] [ ] [ ]	[ ]
SECTION B: INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK			
4.	What types of continuous assessment activities do you undertake in your school		
5.	How often is continuous assessment conducted in your school and how is it conducted?		
6.	How do you determine when monitoring of continuous assessment should be conducted?		

7.	How often is monitoring of teachers conducted per term?
8.	Do you manage to supervise and monitor all the Teachers in the School as per plan?
9.	If the response to question 9 above is 'No', what are the reasons?
10.	Are there guidelines that regulate the effective execution continuous assessments in the school?
11.	If your answer to question 11 is 'yes,' how are these guidelines executed?
12.	What capacity building mechanisms have you put in place to ensure effective continuous assessment?
13	Are the continuous assessment results analysed and by who?
14	How do you make use of the analysed results?
15	Who analyses the final examinations' results?
16	Are there any relationships between the continuous assessment results and the final examinations results?
SECTION C: METHODS OF SUPERVISION AND MONITORING OF TEACHERS	
17	How is supervision and monitoring of teachers conducted in order to foster quality education in your school?
18.	What things do you look for during supervision and monitoring to determine teacher effectiveness?
19	What professional support do you offer when supervising and monitoring teachers?
20.	Do you check pupils' work/books and determine their academic performance during class visits/when you supervise and monitor a teacher?

21.	What do you think is the impact of monitoring continuous assessment on pupils' academic performance?
SECTION D: CHALLENGES FACED BY SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS THE MONITORING OF TEACHERS	
22.	What challenges do you face as a school administrator in executing your work in the supervision and monitoring of teachers?
SECTION E: RECOMMENDATIONS	
23	What do you think should be done to improve monitoring of continuous assessment?
24	What do you think should be done to mitigate the challenges faced by School administrators in supervision and monitorings?

**APPENDIX B: Questionnaire for Teachers**

Dear respondent,

My name is Chiyenge Frank, a post graduate student at University of Zambia/ Zimbabwe Open University, pursuing a Master of education degree programme in Education Administration and Management. I am currently undertaking a research on the Extent to which Head teachers monitor Continuous Assessment in selected Secondary Schools in Solwezi.

You have been randomly selected to participate in this undertaking by providing the information sought. You are assured that this study is purely for academic purposes and that the information you are going to provide shall be treated with confidentiality and you will be kept anonymously.

Your co-operation will be highly appreciated.

1. Sex: .....
2. What is your highest professional qualification? .....
3. Age.....
4. Years in service.....
5. Are you a Grade teacher?(responsible for a particular class).....
6. How many pupils do you have in this class?  
Boys..... Girls..... Total.....
8. How many classes do you teach in a week?.....
9. How many periods are you allocated on the school time table?.....
10. How many lesson plans do you prepare in a week?.....
  
11. How many times have you been supervised and monitored in this academic year by School Administrators?.....
12. What things do school administrators expect from you during supervision and monitoring?  
.....  
.....  
.....
13. How frequent do School administrators supervise and monitor your teaching?  
.....

14. How frequent do School administrators check your teaching file/ preparation books?  
 .....  
 ..... 15
15. What kind of feedback, if any, do you receive?.....
16. What professional support do School administrators offer to you in supervision and monitoring of continuous assessment?  
 .....  
 .....
17. Do School Administrators check pupils' work and determine their academic performance?  
 .....
18. Do you have the performance Assessment records for your class.  
 .....
19. How often do you conduct Continuous Assessments in a term.....
20. Do you give the learners feedback after assessing them. Yes.... No..... If yes, How long does it take to give them?.....
21. What do you think is the impact monitoring of continuous assessment by the head teacher on lesson delivery?  
 .....  
 .....
22. What challenges do you face in the process of conducting continuous assessment?  
 .....  
 .....  
 .....
23. What do you think should be done to make monitoring of continuous assessment more effective?.....  
 .....
23. Do you analyse the continuous assessment results  
 .....

*THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION*



## **APPENDIX C:**

### **PUPILS' QUESTIONNAIRE**

My Dear Boys/Girls,

#### **INTRODUCTION BY FACILITATOR**

Hello, my name is Chiyenge Frank .I am a postgraduate student at the University of Zambia/Zimbabwe Open University, currently undertaking a research in selected secondary schools in Solwezi district of North Western Province of Zambia.

Thank you for taking the time to participate in responding to this questionnaire on the extent Head teachers monitor continuous assessment in secondary schools.

You are pupils who are learning here and have either taken classes for the purpose of advancing your career and future prospects. I would like to hear from you about the way the Head teacher and his team are meeting your needs, and also the changes you would suggest so that they could *better* meet your academic needs through monitoring continuous assessment.

Answer all questions and please keep in mind that there are no “right” or “wrong” answers to any of the questions. The purpose to help me get your opinions of everyone in the school. I hope you will be comfortably and honestly share your ideas.

All the information provided is purely for academic use only and will be treated with strictest confidentiality. Your cooperation and support will be highly appreciated.

PLEASE DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME.

PUPIL'S QUESTIONNAIRE.

1. What time do you report in class when you come to school?  
.....
2. Do teacher also report early or late.....
3. If it is late, by how many minutes?  
.....
4. What type of work do teachers give you for them to know that you have known what you were learning?  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....
5. Who prepares the tests that you write in the school?  
(a) The subject teacher (b) The HOD (c) The examinations committee in the school (d) the HOD and the subject teacher
6. Does the Head teacher/Deputy head teacher/Head of Department and his team check on you and your teachers when you are writing the continuous assessments?  
(a) Yes (b) No (c) Not every day.
7. Do the head /Deputy Head teacher/Head of Department move round the school checking how you are learning?  
(a) Yes (b) No (c) Not every day.
8. Do all your teachers give you continuous assessment tests in their subjects?  
1. Yes 2. No
9. How many times are you tested in mathematics this term?  
(a) 1. (b) 2. (c) 3 (d). 4 (e) More than 4 times.
10. Does the Head teacher /Deputy Head teacher/Head of Department check on you and your teachers when you are writing the continuous assessments?

1. Yes 2. No.

11. What does your Head teacher /Deputy head teacher/Head of Department do when they come to your classes during learning time?

1. Asks for pupil's exercise books. 2. Asks for teachers' file 3. Just walks around and walk out.4. Sits and listens to the teacher as he is teaching.

12. How do you sit when writing class tests?

1. on each desk. 2. on each desk. 3. on each desk. 4. Standing

13. What are the things that the head teacher does to help you learn better?

14. What are your problems when you are writing tests?

.....  
.....  
.....

15. What are your problems during learning time?

.....  
.....  
.....

16. What can we do to solve such problems?

(i). When writing tests

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

(ii). During learning time

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

## APPENDIX D

May 23 (10 days  
ago)

**moses.changala@unza.zm**

to me

Many thanks. Proceed with your data collection and writing of the report. However, remember to keep a record of the responses generated by the instruments from your field work as I will need to sample them. For example, keep recordings of the interviews you will hold with you respondents, but do not ask them for their names.

Changala.

## APPENDIX E

All correspondences should be addressed to The District Education Board Secretary and not individuals.

Telephone:0218- 821457

In reply please quote:.....



### REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

Ministry of General Education

Office of the District Education Board Secretary

P.O. Box 110070

SOLWEZI.

3<sup>rd</sup> June, 2017

THE HEADTEACHER,

Kikombe Secondary School  
Tumwan'anai Secondary school  
Solwezi Technical Secondary school  
Kyawama Secondary School  
Solwezi Day Secondary School  
SolweziSkills( School for Cont. Education)

Dear Sir/Madam

**RE: Introductory Letter: Mr. Chivenge Frank. Student No: 715805743.**

This letter serves to introduce to you the above named student, studying with the the University of Zambia in collaboration with Zimbabwe Open University, wishing to collect information for his research at your institution.

The information he is collecting is purely for academic purpose only.

Kindly give him all the co operation required for him to successfully achieve his mission.

Kayuka Jonathan  
District Education Standards Officer.  
For/ District Education Board Secretary  
SOLWEZI.