

**ASSESSMENT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT  
POLICY IN LOWER PRIMARY CLASSES IN SOROTI DISTRICT, UGANDA.**

**BY**

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## DECLARATION

I, Ilenyot Jennifer, do hereby declare that this research dissertation is my original work and has never been presented for the award of a degree or diploma in any university or institution of higher learning.

Signed.....

Date.....

**Ilenyot Jennifer**

## APPROVAL

We supervised the dissertation of Ilenyot Jennifer entitled, “Assessment on the implementation of Continuous Assessment Policy in lower primary classes in Kamuda, Sub-county, Soroti District”. Now the dissertation is ready for submission to the Department of Educational Planning and Management for examination. It has been submitted with our approval.

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## **DEDICATION**

I, dedicate this research study to my beloved parents Mr. Opio Clement and Mrs. Rebecca Iyogil Opio (late), my dear children Ivan, Gloria, Aaron and my husband, Mr. Epau David.

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

CA	:	Continuous Assessment
CAOs	:	Chief Administrative Officers
CCT	:	Coordinating Centre Tutor
DEO	:	District Education Officer
DES	:	Directorate of Education Standards
EFA	:	Education For All
EPRC	:	Education Policy Review Commission
ERTD	:	Examination, Research & Testing Division
MDGs	:	Millennium Development Goals
MOES	:	Ministry of Education and Sports
NAPE	:	National Assessment of Progress in Primary Education
NCDC	:	National Curriculum Development Centre
NCE	:	National Council of Education
PTA	:	Parents- Teachers Association
SMC	:	School Management Committee
UBOS	:	Uganda Bureau of Statistics
UNEB	:	Uganda National Examinations Board
UNESCO	:	United Nations Education Social Cultural Organization
UPE	:	Universal Primary Education
WVC	:	World Vision Coordinators

## ABSTRACT

The study set out to assess the implementation of Continuous Assessment (CA) Policy in Lower Primary Classes in Kamuda Sub-county, Soroti district. The study aimed to: 1. identify Continuous Assessment Policy positions, 2. examine the extent to which components of the Continuous Assessment Policy were being implemented; 3. establish factors that influence the implementation of Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes and accordingly suggested strategies that would help improve the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy. The study took on a descriptive research design, where both qualitative and quantitative approaches were employed in the data collection process, presentation, analysis and discussion of findings. Data was collected from 14 Government aided primary schools, with a total sample space of 60 respondents who were all selected purposively. These were subjected to closed ended questionnaires. The study also interviewed the District Education Officer (DEO), Centre Coordinating tutor, head teachers of respective sampled schools, and their Head of Infants. The findings of the study revealed that Continuous Assessment Policy Position was very clear, with a good vision but the implementation was still a challenge. This position was held by respondents across the spectrum from the DEO down to classroom teachers with supporting statistics hitting highs of beyond 90% for most groups of respondents. The findings further show that there were still gaps in keeping records of Continuous Assessment. The study findings also indicate that Continuous Assessment though implemented in lower primary classes was not done objectively. This was supported by 62% of the respondents from the category of the DEO, CCT and World Vision Coordinators responses, 72% of the head teachers and 75% of the teachers. Also an average of 50% of the respondents of the DEO, CCT and World Vision Coordinators responses, 56 % of the head teachers and 54 % of the teachers agreed that the identified factors influence the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in lower classes in primary schools. Meanwhile on the different factors influence the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in lower primary classes in Kamuda Sub-county, inadequate school facilities, low teachers' motivation, came out as the leading factors; and these factors formed the basis for the suggestion of strategies to improve on the implementation of Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes in Kamuda Sub County. The research concluded that a bottom-up approach starting with teachers and parents were needed to streamline implementation of Continuous Assessment. The study recommends that government of Uganda through the concerned ministry should invest more in the Continuous Assessment implementation process. Through the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Sports should plan for more resources and Professional Development workshops and seminars in order to make teachers perform their duties efficiently and effectively.

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives, research questions, scope of the study and relevance of the study.

### 1.2 Background to the Study

The quest to accelerate the rate of development, among under-developed countries has led the global community continuously formulating policies to guide the development agenda. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which came from the Millennium Declaration in September 2000 were meant to create an environment at the national and global level alike which was conducive for development and elimination of poverty. Specifically, goal number 2 aims at achieving Universal Primary Education (UPE) and targets at ensuring that, children everywhere; boys and girls alike, being able to complete a full course of Primary Education by 2015. Member countries worldwide had to commit themselves to the achievement of this goal through the Education For All (EFA) movement.

EFA is a global movement by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) which aims at meeting the learning needs of all children, youth and adults by 2015. In the World Education Forum, Dakar (2000), member countries came up with the Dakar Framework for Action where members reaffirmed their commitment to achieving Education For All by the year 2015. The EFA goals contribute to the Global pursuit of the Eight MDGs specifically, MDG2 which is on Universal Primary Education (UPE) and MDG3 which is on gender equality in Education by 2015.

Consequently, countries worldwide have had to customize the policy outcomes from these conferences to their local contexts in a bid to achieve this global agenda and the government of Uganda introduced Universal Primary Education programme in 1997.

These undertakings led to the high school enrolments and the Ministry of Education statistics indicate that because of the introduction of UPE, gross enrollment increased by 73% in one year from the pre-UPE total of 3,068,625 pupils in 1996 to 5, 303,564 in 1997. By 2003, gross enrollment in primary schools was 7,633,314 children representing an increase of 149% percent of the pre-UPE enrollment (MOES, 2013).

The ever increasing enrolment because of UPE has led to a challenge in the quality of education being offered. Little has improved over the past years. In Primary 3, only one out of ten pupils has Primary 2 level literacy and numeracy skills and even by the time they reach Primary 7, two out of ten children have not mastered these skills (Uwezo Uganda, 2012).As a result of the declining quality of education, the government of Uganda carried out a number of reforms in its education system including the introduction of the Thematic Curriculum for lower primary classes to reinforce the UPE policy.

### **1.3 The Introduction of Thematic Curriculum**

The Thematic Curriculum was initiated in 1999 and has been well received since it addresses considerations about the lack of integration and relevancy. It puts much focus on literacy and numeracy to ensure that the overall learner competency is expanded, which the previous curricular didn't address. Some other new aspects of the thematic curriculum includes the introduction of Continuous Assessment (CA), a focus on literacy, numeracy and life skills and the use of local language as the medium of instruction in the first three years of primary education. The latter resulted in English being taught as a subject in lower classes and being

used as the medium of instruction in the upper primary classes (P5-P7). Teaching in the local language in lower primary has been chosen to better facilitate early learning and better embed literacy (Wood 2008).

The Continuous Assessment policy in lower primary classes puts a lot of emphasis on assessment of learners on a continuous basis and results are used to improve upon the children's competence based learning. Therefore, the assessment guideline focuses more on what a learner can do and not what the learner knows or can remember. According to the guideline, Continuous Assessment can be done through the following; checklist, direct observation, oral work, written work and practical work.

### **1.3.1 The Continuous Assessment Question**

Following the formulation and declaration of Education for All (EFA), Kellagham and Greeney (2004) reviewed learner assessment and observed that there has to be a new mode of assessment in order to determine whether students are acquiring the essential knowledge, reasoning ability, skills and values that schools promised to deliver. Plessis (2003) as cited in Muluken (2006) observed that assessment as a system appears to rest on a well- considered theoretical underpinning and there are major short comings at the practical implementation level. As such, the current assessment and monitoring procedures and practice do not seem to contribute and inform classroom practices as optimal as originally intended, hence assessment has become a critical component of education in today's policy environment. Furthermore, Bryan and Clegg (2006) assert that assessment is changing as driven by increased class size, changing curricula, and the need to support learners better. They further argue that the assessment regulations and external quality assurance demand constraining assessment options, driven by worries about standards, reliability, validity and plagiarism. All these components put forces that push for assessment reforms in schools.

In this regard therefore, assessment is thus of central importance to students' learning; It sets parameters on what students think of as important, how they spend their time and how they see themselves as learners and even as human beings (Brown *et al.*, 1997). As emphasized in the thematic curriculum, Continuous Assessment in the teaching and learning process is aimed at improving the quality of education. This is supported by Brown, Knight (1994) and Gronlund (1981) who pointed out the essence of evaluating pupils' learning on a continuous basis by focusing on the basic instructional objectives that play an important role in maintaining the quality of education.

However, this study on Continuous Assessment policy was basically focused on Education sector. Educational assessment provides the necessary feedback we require in order to maximize the outcomes of educational efforts. The assessment of learners' learning provides objective evidences necessary in the decision-making process in education. As correctly pointed out by Brooks, V. (2002.), good measurement resulting in accurate data is the foundation of sound decision making. There is little doubt among educational practitioners about the special value of assessment as a basic condition for effective learning.

Consequently, Continuous Assessment which takes place either through formal or informal activities is seen as the process of defining, selecting, designing, collecting, analyzing, interpreting and using information to increase students' learning and development, (Irwin,1991), as cited in (Moye&Adediwura, 2010).Some scholars have broadly defined Continuous Assessment (CA) as a mechanism whereby the final grading of students in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of behavior scientifically, systematically and consistently takes account of all their performances during a given period of schooling for the purpose of assessing students' progress (Oriola, 2005; Yakubu, 2005 and Alonge, 2004).

Continuous Assessment is therefore 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. These assessments are curriculum-based tasks previously taught in class. In order to create a picture that will reflect the full range of the child's progress, attainment and development, a broad continuum of modes of assessment is necessary. Such a continuum would include; checklist, direct observation, oral work, written work , practical work· teacher designed tasks and tests, work samples, portfolios and projects, curriculum profiles, standardized tests and diagnostic tests. No single form of assessment is adequate in developing a comprehensive profile of the child; each mode of assessment should match the purpose of assessment, (Wood, 2008).

Continuous Assessment occurs frequently during the school year and is part of regular teacher-pupil interactions. Pupils are supposed to receive feedback from teachers based on their performance that allows them to focus on areas they have not yet understood. Teachers learn which students need review and remediation and which pupils are ready to move on to more complex work. Thus, the results of the assessments help to ensure that all pupils make learning progress throughout the school cycle thereby increasing their achievement levels, (Wood, 2008).

When assessment is done well, it empowers everyone because it; informs learners about what they have learned, what they still have to learn and how best to learn. It also informs teachers about how to instruct or teach more effectively and informs parents about how best to support their child's learning. When done poorly, however, assessment can lead to a misrepresentation of learning outcomes and thereby result in superficial teaching and learning. Thus, assessment should be an integral part of teaching and learning which

functions as a quality assurance mechanism to ensure good teaching and learning practice, (Brown *et al.*, 1997).

After implementing strategies, learners monitor their progress towards goals, thereby generating internal feedback about the success of their efforts, (Schunk, 1998). Monitoring the outcomes of their effort provides grounds for reinterpreting elements of the task and their engagement with it, thereby directing subsequent effort and engagement with the learning process.

Continuous Assessment enables the pupils to receive feedback from teachers based on performance which allows them to focus on topics they have not yet mastered, just as it also reduces stress on students who unavoidably missed out in one assessment to be given a parallel test on return to school, thus building pupils' confidence towards examination and thereby reducing activities that could encourage examination malpractice (Adebowale & Alao, 2008). It also promotes frequent interactions between learners and teachers which acquaint teachers with the strengths and weaknesses of learners to identify who among them need review and remediation, hence enabling teachers to assess their classroom achievement, (Adebowale & Alao, 2008).

Continuous Assessment provides parents with the opportunity to know how much learning, both in the physical, emotional and attitudinal development that has taken place in their children over time as well as giving them the opportunity to regularly interact with teachers over their children's school progress, (Adebowale & Alao, 2008).

### **1.3.2 Continuous Assessment as an Instructional Parameter**

Assessment serves as the parameter by which instructional achievement outcome can be gauged, thus enabling the school to achieve an overall objective of having a complete record

of the growth and progress of each pupil as possible so as to make unbiased judgments in the cognitive, affective and psychomotor evaluation on pupils in the classroom (Adebowale & Alao, 2008). Furthermore, students may benefit from Continuous Assessment by developing Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) behaviour in the classroom which is intended ultimately for student reflections, as 'take-home' information for self-management (Irving 2007).

Continuous Assessment therefore is an alternative or supplement to high stakes testing of pupil achievement, offers a methodology for measuring pupil performance and using those findings to improve the success of pupils. Assessment is also a powerful diagnostic tool that enables pupils to understand the areas in which they are having difficulty and to concentrate their efforts in those areas. Continuous Assessment also allows teachers to monitor the impact of their lessons on pupil understanding. Teachers can modify their pedagogical strategies to include the construction of remediation activities for pupils who are not working at the expected grade level and the creation of enrichment activities for pupils who are working at or above the expected grade level. Hence, the Continuous Assessment process supports a cycle of self-evaluation and pupil-specific activities by both pupils and teachers (Tannery and Engen-Demir, 2005),

Frequent interactions between pupils and teachers mean that teachers know the strengths and weaknesses of their learners. These exchanges foster a pupil-teacher relationship based on individual interactions. Pupils learn that the teacher values their achievements and that their assessment outcomes have an impact on the instruction that they receive. One-to-one communication between the teacher and the pupil can motivate pupils to continue attending school and to work hard to achieve higher levels of mastery, (Uchiyama, 2004).

Even though the policy emphasizes the implementation of Continuous Assessment at all educational levels, there seems to be challenges of implementation related to various factors.

Accordingly, little research has been conducted regarding the implementation of CA at different educational levels in Ethiopian, and Uganda contexts. Accordingly, Dessalage and Daniel (2003); Getchew (2008); Muluken (2004); Mulu (2005); and Abrera (2009), revealed that teachers do not use Continuous Assessment in their classrooms, despite the fact that there is an increased pressure upon teachers to provide evidence of educational activities.

Tannery and Engen-Demir (2005) argue that there are differences between the intended curricula defined by officials and the implemented curricula; how teachers translate the intended curriculum into practice is always not as required. Similarly, the joint committee on standards for educational evaluation, (2003) confirms that Continuous Assessment is still not widely used in the elementary and secondary classes, instead summative assessment is emphasized, primarily for grading and reporting (Kehr, (1999); McNair *et al.* (2003) Although the rhetoric for Continuous Assessment reform is strong, the practice is on the contrary. The way in which pupil learning is assessed is not on a regular basis due to resistance to change, especially by the teachers, Uchiyama, (2004). This is true in many education contexts. It is from this background that the research sets out to assess the implementation CA in lower primary from the Kamuda view point. This way it will help fill in the gap of CA implementation in rural setting

#### **1.4 Statement of the Problem**

Like in many countries, Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes in Uganda is one of the core activities in the on-going reforms of primary education. This is expected to ensure effective acquisition of literacy, numeracy and other skills needed for life-long learning (Bitamazire 2007). Despite these reforms, several Education reports point to poor implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in primary schools. Pupils repeat lower primary classes, dodge classes, dropout of school, and above all have poor numeracy and

literacy skills. (Okello, 2013, Nakabugo, 2013 and Nyakahuma, 2014). This study therefore, sought to establish the pitfalls in the implementation of Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes in Kamuda sub-county, Soroti district. The overall question to this study was how has Continuous Assessment policy being implemented in the lower primary classes?

### **1.5 Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study was to make an assessment of the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in the lower primary classes in Soroti District, Uganda.

### **1.6 Objectives of the study**

The objectives of this study were to:

- i) Identify Continuous Assessment Policy positions
- ii) Examine the extent to which components of the Continuous Assessment Policy are being implemented in lower primary classes.
- iii) Establish factors that influence the implementation of Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes.
- iv) Suggest strategies that would improve the implementation of Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes.

### **1.7 Research questions**

The research questions of this study were;

- i) What are the Continuous Assessment policy positions?
- ii) To what extent have the components of Continuous Assessment Policy been implemented in lower primary classes?
- iii) What factors influence the implementation Continuous Assessment policy in lower classes?

iv) What strategies would improve the implementation Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes?

### **1.8 Significance of the study**

The research will be significant because it will assess the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in lower primary classes. In this way the research will help explain the role of effective Continuous Assessment in ensuring good pupil performance and attainment of high learning outcomes. The research will specifically benefit the following categories of people:

Teaching practitioners in exploring new strategies of implementing Continuous Assessment in the lower primary classes (Primary one to Primary three), so as to improve on the literacy, numeracy and life skills levels in the learners.

Administrators, this study is important because it will bring to light the salient issues relating to Continuous Assessment of pupils and the effective implementation of the lower primary curriculum in primary schools, leading to the achievement of the UPE.

Local Government administrators, particularly, the District Education Officers, the School Management Committees, Parents Teachers Association, the head teachers and the foundation bodies will find the issues raised and the recommendations made pertinent and applicable to their own local Government situations and their institutions. More so, it will help the District Education Officials in ascertaining the factors that are responsible for the deteriorating performance of Pupils in lower primary classes and plan accordingly.

The Non-Governmental Organizations working on education improvement, development will be able to allocate their resources appropriately and developing projects based on the findings from the study.

generated facts, which are of great value to other research endeavors, policy makers and students at various levels.

Policy makers, National Curriculum Development Centre, Ministry of Education and Sports and the curriculum implementers will benefit by making appropriate policy decisions, and suggest areas that require intervention particularly on the recruitment and deployment of staff to handle thematic curriculum and harmonize the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in the thematic curriculum.

## **1.9 The scope of the study**

### **1.9.1 Geographical scope**

The study was conducted in Eastern Uganda, Soroti District, Kamuda Sub County. According to National Population Projection, Kamuda Sub County has a population of 297,154 people (UBOS, 2014). The area is mainly inhabited by the Kumam, some Langi, Iteso and the Bakenyi who stay around the lake shores. The area was purposely selected because on top of the being one of the areas implement the CA policy, the performance of learners in government aided schools continues to deteriorate. Nor do they show other attributes judged by CA like high self-esteem, team work among others proximity and convenience creating accessibility of the information for the researcher. The sub county has a total 14 Government grant aided primary schools.

### **1.9.2 Content Scope**

The research was restricted to assess the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in the lower primary classes in Uganda; specifically the research set out to identify CA policy positions in Kamuda, their implementation, as well as factors influencing the implementation

of CA policy within the lower primary section of schools in Kamuda. Even better study suggests strategies for improving on CA implementation.

### **1.9.3 Time scope**

The study considered Government aided schools. However, the implementation of Continuous Assessment in lower classes was studied from 2010 to 2014 which gave a more recent implementation status of Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes. These periods helped to establish the factors that affect the implementation of Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes in Kamuda Sub County. The research span a period of one year starting August 2014 to August 2015.

## **1.9 Definition of key terms**

**Continuous Assessment** - UNEB defines Continuous Assessment as a systematic, objective and comprehensive way of regularly collecting and accumulating information about a student's learning achievement over a period of study and using it to guide the student's learning and determine their level of attainment.

**Theme** – According to National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC), this is an approach of curriculum design where content is arranged around themes that are familiar to the learners.

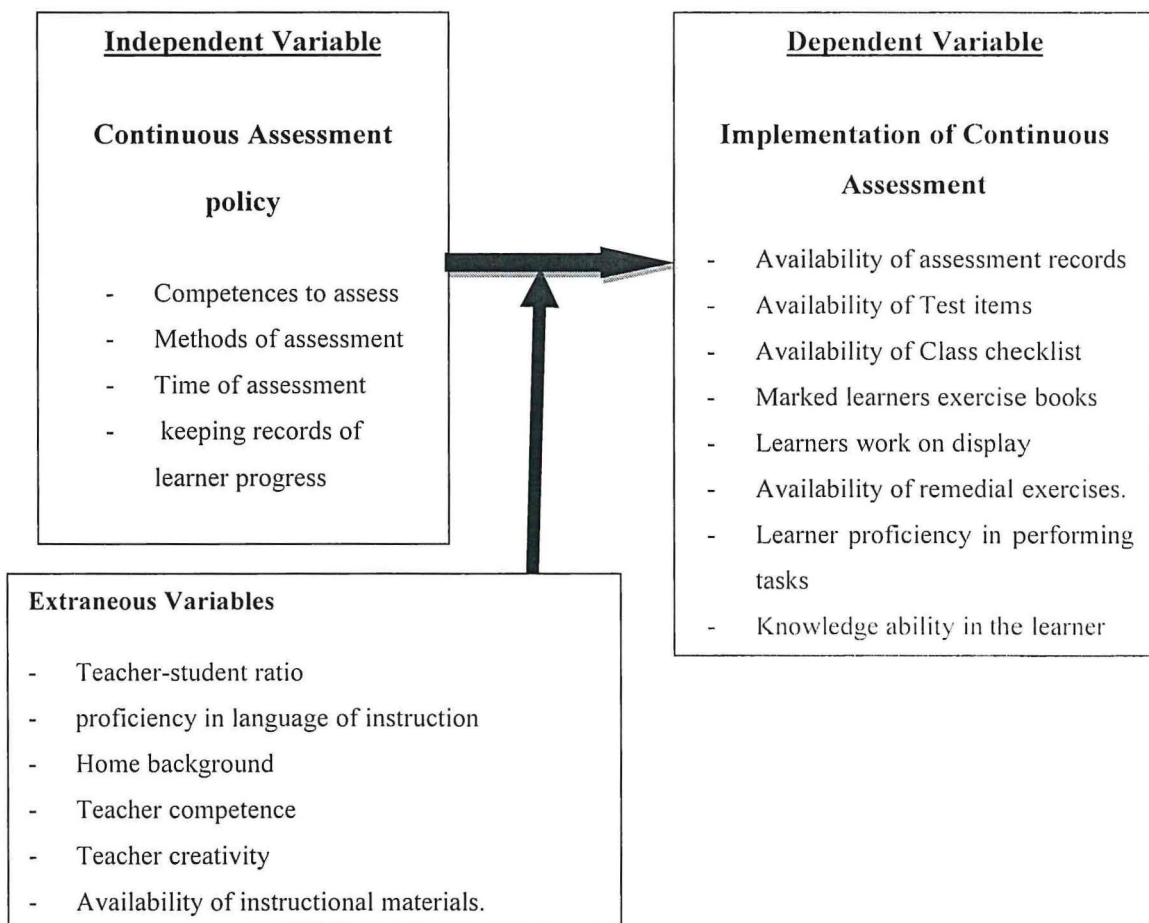
**Thematic Curriculum** – Is a Curriculum where content is organized around different themes that are familiar to the learner and the main emphasis is Numeracy, Literacy and Life skills.

**Policies** – The constitution of the republic of Uganda, 1995 defines policies as principles (be it values, interest of resources) that underline the actions that will take place to solve public issues. For this case it will be the policy statements which address issues related to Thematic Curriculum and more on Continuous Assessment of learners

**Assessment policy** -Assessment policy is more than assessment practices. It includes assessment practices, but goes beyond them as well. Assessment policy describes the approaches that are used by an organization in its assessment practices.

**Lower primary classes** – In the Ugandan education system, lower primary classes include classes from primary one to primary three.

### 1.10 Conceptual Framework



**Figure 1: Conceptual frame work on Assessment Policy and Continuous Assessment**

The conceptual framework above shows the influence of the independent variable (Continuous Assessment policy) on the dependent variable (Continuous Assessment implementation). The influence of Continuous Assessment policy on the implementation of Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes is that, the policy emphasizes on

importance of assessment, achievement of Competences, Methods of assessment, Time of assessment, keeping of assessment records and when properly implemented will lead to learner proficiency in literacy, numeracy, life skills and knowledge ability.

The model also brings out the following as extraneous variables that can easily affect the implementation of the Continuous Assessment policy: Teacher-pupil ratio, proficiency in language of instruction, Home background, teacher creativity and availability of instructional materials which for the purpose of this research the I have decided to treat as constant. The extraneous variables were controlled by sub-grouping the particular part of the population that was sampled and carrying out a pre-test on those who were not targeted by the study to prove if or if not the independent variable had an influence on the dependent variable. The conceptual model above relates to the structuralist paradigm advocated by Babbie (2007) which argues that a social entity such as an organization or a whole society can be viewed as an organism. Like other organisms, a social system is made up of parts each of which contributes to the functioning of the whole. This is illustrated by a number of factors that contribute to implementation of Continuous Assessment policy. The content model tends to emphasize the importance of learning skills and concepts within a predetermined domain of inquiry.

The research assumed that if the method prescribed by the Continuous Assessment Policy like the use of checklists, direct observation, oral, Written, and Practical work are properly exploited, then it will result in good performance which will be seen in the child's ability to count, read, and interact with the immediate environment. There are other factors about which the research has no control like the quality of teaching, availability of instructional materials, teacher to learner ratio among others pending verification.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter evaluates, summarizes, and critically analyses the literature as reviewed and cited by other scholars on the Continuous Assessment policy and its implementation in the lower primary classes. The chapter was guided by the curriculum implementation theory as it thematically follows the objectives of the study which include; identifying Continuous Assessment policy positions, examining the extent to which components of the Continuous Assessment policy are being implemented in the lower primary classes, to establish factors that influence the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in lower primary classes, and strategies that would improve the implementation of Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes..

The analysis explored relationships, major themes and gaps in the existing research, carefully synthesizing the results of the study into a concise, coherent account of what is known in the field of lower primary curriculum. And what remains to be learned, such that it addresses the specific thesis, problem, or research questions within the field of the lower primary curriculum. The chapter has made a case for further assessment and research, highlighting gaps in the existing knowledge in order to help people both in Kamuda Sub County and other parts of the country to effectively implement Continuous Assessment policy in lower primary classes.

## **2.2 Theoretical Review**

It concerned itself with the review of the literature on the identified theories. These theories provided a basis for the researcher's evaluation, highlighting and analyzing of how other researchers have used the theories and how they can be applied in today's study.

The theory of formative assessment was used to guide this study. The focus was to find out children's interest, how they think, feel, and able to do. It seeks to access this information in order to understand children's thinking and learning styles hence; chart children's progress in order to support further learning. It also focused on developmental processes rather than on content or product, provide a rich picture of the ways in which children act, think and learn (Black & William, 1998a). Such a picture focuses on the individual's learning, as built up over time and provides evidence of learning in a number of different contexts. Black & William (1998b) confirms that assessment in the context of formative assessment is all about the activities undertaken by teachers making adjustments to teaching and learning in response to assessment evidence; and by the students through self-assessment after receiving feedback about their learning with advice on what they can do to improve; and students' participation provide information useful as feedback to modify the teaching and learning activities in order to provide a better theoretical grounding for formative assessment Black & William (1998b) affirm that formative assessment triggers student learning gains, the largest gains being realized by low achievers then it could be used as educational interventions. The 'theory of formative assessment emphasizes the importance of, self- and collective efficacy, feedback and the issue of "context, such as interpersonal contacts and community norms" that create the conditions for Self-Regulated Learning (Black and William 2009). The theory is connected to volition because volitional self-regulation is essential if a learner is to remain persistent and overcome threats to self-esteem that may cause the student to divert resources

away from their active participation in the learning process ('growth track') and expend resources on efforts to avoid interaction and withdraw from the situation ('well-being track') (Black and William, 2009).

This formative assessment theory has been identified as having a number of functions as thus diagnostic, summative, evaluative and informative. The theory has enormous potential that could be used to support learning and development. So it could be utilized to make learning more interesting, enjoyable and successful for children. This theory can be used to shape and enrich the curriculum, interactions, and provision as a whole. The theory could also be used as a way of identifying what children will be able to learn next, so that we can support and extend that learning. Assessment is part of our daily practice in striving for quality.

Formative assessment theory can be used to improve standards and results in significant learning gains in all learners and especially amongst lower achievers. Under-achievement can be turned round if belief is instilled in learners that an investment in learning can lead to success. The classroom culture of chasing better marks rather than better learning can result in competition and de-motivation and disengagement amongst lower-achievers. This makes learners to sometimes just 'get by'; avoiding being spotlight, hence failing to invest in personal improvement for fear of being disappointed. 'Pupils who encounter difficulties and poor results are led to believe that they lack ability, and this belief leads them to attribute their difficulties to a defect in themselves about which they cannot do a great deal. So this theory is vital in giving an encouragement rather than making them hurt and avoiding to invest much effort in learning so as to reduce disappointment. What is needed is a culture of success, backed by a belief that all can achieve (Black and William, 1998).

Therefore, the theory maps the fundamental goal of education of equipping students with the self-regulatory capabilities that enable them to educate themselves, (Bandura 1986). Students

can benefit from this theory by developing Self-Regulated Learning (SRL) behaviors in the classroom which is valuable to students as they participate in an enhanced learning process during which SRL strategies are internalized and put into practice, (Zimmerman, 2000).

### **2.3 Continuous Assessment Policy Positions**

The history of assessment shows a long line of structural changes designed to inject quality control into education. It uses a testing system which is designed to measure students' performance and hold school accountability. In line with this argument, Rink (2006) asserted that one of the recent directions of educational reform has been the emphasis of Continuous Assessment in the teaching learning process.

Globally, Continuous Assessment is seen as a key factor in all education systems. In the Education for All (EFA) Goals for instance, Continuous Assessment is one of the key indicators for successful teaching and learning process, (Dakar World Forum on Education for All 2000). Many countries such as Spain, Australia, England and others are applying Continuous Assessment in their learning institutions.

Continuous Assessment of pupils' across Europe presents a complex picture comprising a variety of assessment instruments and methods which are internal or external, formative or summative, and assigned varied levels of importance. Despite these variations in approaches to pupil assessment, the process of assessing learning outcomes forms part of the overall structure of education systems. In most countries, Continuous Assessment of pupils' forms an integral part of teaching and learning, and thus; ultimately an instrumental factor in improving the quality of education. The process of pupil assessment is usually regulated by special legislative acts or national curricula guidelines and teacher manuals, Jan (2009). He adds that these regulations set out the basic principles of assessment, including its aims and

sometimes a range of recommended approaches. Other aspects of assessment very often covered by legislative documents are the possible grading of pupils, criteria for their progression through school, reporting arrangements and communication with parents.

The most common type of assessment used in compulsory education is known as Continuous Assessment. It involves assessing the daily classroom participation of pupils, their coursework, oral and written tests and assignments, and practical assignments or project work. It can be used for both formative and summative purposes. In all countries, formative assessment is performed by teachers on an on-going basis as an integral part of their activity throughout the school year. It is aimed at monitoring and improving the process of both teaching and learning, by providing direct feedback to teachers, and pupils alike,(Jan, 2009).

In five countries, namely Belgium (German-speaking Community), the Czech Republic, Greece, the United Kingdom (Wales) and Liechtenstein, national tests are not currently held. Instead, continuous pupil assessment is carried out internally by schools using both formative and summative types of assessment and different instruments. Its main aim is to determine learning and attainment levels. In addition, in Greece, the yearly ‘review examinations’ follow standardized guidelines designed to give obligatory directions to teachers when undertaking Continuous Assessment, (Jan, 2009).

In Nigeria Continuous Assessment as an instructional process began in 1977 as recommended by the National Council on Education (NCE) through the National Policy on Education with the idea that it would enable educators to be more involved in the overall assessment of learners and allow for diverse instructional methods. This has taken route at all levels of Nigerian education (Adebowale & Alao, 2008).

Following the paradigm shift in policies, the Revised National Policy on Education, RNPE, (1994) Continuous Assessment was introduced in all schools. The Examinations, Research and Testing Division (ERTD) in the Ministry of Education, charged with the responsibility of National Examinations, identified Continuous Assessment to be of paramount importance in the students' final grading system. All programmes at the junior secondary level incorporated it, and all the schools are charged with the responsibility of ensuring that Continuous Assessment is carried out.

The Sierra Leone Education Act 2004, also clearly states that Continuous Assessment of all primary level pupils be carried out by all primary schools alongside the lines given to schools by the Ministry in a Continuous Assessment Handbook. It is also added that Continuous Assessment scores shall be employed in the manner stipulated in that handbook.

In Namibia, following the ADEA's Biennial Meeting held in Grand Baie, Mauritius in December 2003, and this Biennial Meeting which focus on educational quality improvements in sub-Saharan Africa. Namibia now contributed to the concept of quality by showing how three models of Critical Reflection, namely Critical Inquiry, Practice-based Inquiry and Teacher Self-assessment are used in three different teacher education programs in the country. After Independence Namibia moved from a norm-referenced assessment and evaluation system, driven by tests and examinations, to criterion referencing, characterized by a combination of formative, continuous and summative assessment. Continuous Assessment and examinations are mostly school-based, except in grades 7, 10 and 12, in which national and international examinations are given.

Equally, the Government of Uganda made a review of its Education System in 1987 when it appointed the Education Policy Review Commission (EPRC). The EPRC in its Report (2008) noted among other shortcomings that the education system was examination ridden and there

were very few attempts to assess practical skills. The EPRC made recommendations to improve the Education System. On assessment and examination, the EPRC, recommended inter alia, the introduction of Continuous Assessment in primary and post - primary training institutions. The Government, in its White Paper on Education (1992), approved these recommendations in 2013. However, the implementation of Continuous Assessment still remains to be seen as what is always recommended in our country pertaining Education is hardly implemented, (Rogan and Grayson, 2003).

In its action plan, the Government of Uganda through Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB) introduced reform activities that saw the establishment of National Assessment of Progress in Education (NAPE) and Continuous Assessment (CA). It also increased higher order thinking skills questions in all its examinations and embarked on systems upgrades. The monitoring of implementation was designed to be done by responsible Ministry of Education and Sports together with agencies such as District Inspectorate, Teacher Education through Coordinating Centre Tutors (CCT) and Directorate of Education Standards (DES). UNEB was to do technical audit checks for quality control and assurance (National Curriculum Development Centre report, 2009). This seems to be still in black and white because practically, it is not doing much on the ground.

In the Early Childhood and Development Policy of 2007, which targets all children below eight years of age, entailing three definitive categories; from birth to three years, three to six years and six to eight years equally spells out the need to assess learners continuously other than subjecting them to inappropriate written examinations. Examinations may make learners to slowly move away from school in form of irregular attendance.

In today's policy environment, testing has become a critical component of education reform. Policy makers and education administrators often view test scores as a measure of educational quality and use test scores to hold schools accountable for teacher performance. However, measuring the teacher's performance using test scores might render change in pedagogy from actual teaching to drilling in order to uphold the positive reputation of such institutions.

In 2007, Uganda implemented the Thematic Curriculum, (for lower primary classes) and in line with the above statutory documents, this curricular puts a lot of emphasis on assessing learner's achievement of competences which has to be done continuously (Assessment Guidelines for Primary One, National Curriculum Development Centre 2007). The guide line gives the following as the basic modes of assessment in lower primary classes; checklist, direct observation, oral work, written work and practical work.

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. These assessments are curriculum-based tasks previously taught in class, (Ojerinde, 2011).

Continuous Assessment, an alternative or supplement to high stakes testing of pupil achievement, offers a methodology for measuring pupil performance and using those findings to improve the success of pupils and is part of regular teacher-pupil interactions. Teachers learn which students need review and remediation and which pupils are ready to move on to more complex work. Thus, the results of the assessments help to ensure that all pupils make learning progress throughout the school cycle thereby increasing their achievement levels, (Ojerinde, 2011).

The gap seen here was that this intervention cannot be guaranteed to a higher percentage. It should also be noted that even then, children still drop out of school, for fear of being identified as losers in tests. However, students can, with difficulty, escape from the effects of poor teaching, they cannot escape the effects of poor assessment (Bond, 1995).

#### **2.4 Extent to which components of Continuous Assessment Policy is implemented**

One of the striking features of curriculum change and implementation is the perceived mismatch between the intended curriculum and the classroom reality, that is, disparity between policy and practice Rogan (2007); Chisholm and Leyendecker, (2008); Bantwini, (2010). Chisholm and Leyendecker (2008) examined the gaps between policy and practice in relation to curriculum change and argue that, while there is agreement on the aims of reforms, there is evidence of divergence in practice. They argue that in practice ideas are often re-contextualized and displaced therefore, they are often unable to meet the social development goals demanded of them. Likewise, in the most successful cases a firm national commitment to change was combined with an acceptance of diversity at the school level, an insistence on school accountability and an effective mix of dissemination strategies. Furthermore, Verspoor (1989) claims that the diversity in schools needs to be taken into account to implement large-scale changes.

Although, the practice of Continuous Assessment in Nigeria dated back to 1977 Adebowalen&Alao, (2008) but practically speaking, the different states of the federation commenced the operation/implementation at different times. For example, Ondo state was one of the foremost states in Nigeria to embrace the practice of Continuous Assessment in her schools since 1984 Orisadipe, (2005), and as indicated by Oriola (2005) and Orisadipe (2005), Continuous Assessment documents that are in use in Ondo state schools are; the class

attendance register, schemes and records of work, Continuous Assessment Dossier (CAD), school annual returns of Continuous Assessment scores (called PS4 in primary school, JSS4 in Junior Secondary and SSS4 in Senior Secondary School), transcript, Continuous Assessment class records manual and testimonial, diary, and admission register (Oriola, 2005 and Orisadipe, 2005).

In her study, Smit (2001) looked at primary school educators' experiences of policy change in South Africa, Smit states that perhaps the time has come to involve educators, who are involved in implementing the policy, to fully participate in the policy change process. According to her, in S. Africa, many educators who operate at classroom level were not involved when the new education policy was developed. They were only called for workshops in which they were told that the policy had changed and that they were to effect the changes in their classrooms. It's doubtful whether the workshops were enough to equip educators with skills to facilitate the new policy efficiently. Therefore, Sergiovanni (1998) proposes a continuum of forces of educational change. These changes consist of one side, top-down or external end of the continuum and on the other side, bottom-up or community-based end of the continuum. In contrast to the superficial top-down changes, the community-based changes are likely to be deep and enduring, (Rogan and Grayson, 2003). Therefore, it is important for the curriculum implementation process that sufficient attention is paid to the bottom-up changes that are needed for curriculum change to take root on the ground.

Developing a new curriculum has been a popular undertaking in many countries around the world, Uganda inclusive. Generally, these curricula are well-designed and possess praiseworthy aims. Nevertheless, it has been observed that the policy makers involved with developing these curricula are engaged with creating the policies, but "seldom look down the track to the implementation stage" (Rogan & Grayson, 2003). Moreover, it is argued that

large-scale changes often neglect the process of implementation and, likewise, low outcomes of educational changes are mainly the result of “poor implementation of what was essentially a good idea” (Verspoor, 2010).

Overall, the developing world has witnessed many examples of well-intentioned and well-designed curriculum reform programs that have failed to take root on the ground. One of the principal reasons, thereto, appears to be a lack of clearly worked-out implementation strategies that take the national and local context into account (Rogan & Grayson, 2011). There is now a common understanding that policy makers need to consider and plan for the implementation stage for reforms to be successful (Altinyelken, 2010). Often, the general way of thinking about curriculum implementation has been rather top-down, (Chisholm and Leyendecker, 2008). There is a critical link between the big idea and changing actual classroom practice that must be recognized. However, there is a strong belief that policies designed are hardly implemented and if at all they are implemented, it will be inadequately done.

The history of Continuous Assessment shows a long line of structural changes designed to inject quality control into education. It uses a testing system which is designed to measure students’ performance and hold school accountability. In line with this argument, Rink (2006), asserts that; “One of the recent directions of educational reform has been the emphasis of assessment in the teaching learning process”.

Kellagham and Greeney ( 2004) reviewed “ Education For All Declaration” and gave not only fresh impetus to issues related to Continuous Assessment but also made clear that there has to be a new mode of assessment in order to determine whether students are acquiring the essential knowledge, reasoning ability ,skills and values that schools have promised to

deliver. However, Plessis (2003) as cited in Muluken (2006) points out that Continuous Assessment as a system appears to rest on a well- considered theoretical underpinning and there are major short comings at the practical implementation level. As such, the current Continuous Assessment and monitoring procedures and practice do not seem to contribute and inform classroom practices as optimal as originally intended. There is need therefore, to find out whether this assertion holds water on the ground.

The components of Continuous Assessment policy that are outlined in the NCDC assessment guideline to be used in the implementation of Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes includes: checklist, direct observation, written work, oral work and practical work, National Curriculum Development Centre report, (2009).

In conformity to this, Fradd and Lee (2001) in Pierce (2002) disclosed that most teachers feel unprepared to assess in the way the institution or the department requires them to do. They further continued to argue, “Most teachers use the same type of Continuous Assessment techniques that their teachers used while they were at school”. Beside this, most teachers tend to focus their Continuous Assessment strategies on what is easy to measure rather than on what is important.

The above statement is also strengthened by other educators such as; Airasian (1997); Kellaghan et.al., (2004) who said that traditional Continuous Assessment instrument and techniques tend to measure narrowly defined characteristics, do not facilitate integration of skills or processes, and are frequently artificial in their nature that does not give the trust possible picture of each student’s knowledge, Attitudes and Skills.

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

Ellindation and Earl (1997) had this to say: 'Successful implementation of Continuous Assessment demands more work, time and responsibility on the part of teacher. If the teacher is not adequately prepared for operating the system, it may lead to a tendency to cook up scores in the name of Continuous Assessment'.

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

One of the striking features of curriculum change and implementation is the perceived mismatch between the intended curriculum and the classroom reality Rogan (2007b); Chisholm and Leyendecker, (2008); Bantwini, (2010). Chisholm and Leyendecker, (2008) examined the gaps between policy and practice in relation to curriculum change and argue that, while there is agreement on the aims of reforms, there is evidence of divergence in practice. They argue that in practice ideas are often re-contextualized and displaced and, therefore, they are often unable to meet the social development goals demanded of them. Likewise, in the most successful cases affirm national commitment to change was combined with an acceptance of diversity at the school level, an insistence on school accountability and an effective mix of dissemination strategies. However, the researcher hopes to ascertain this mismatch when this study is carried out. Preliminary research shows that the situation in Kamuda hardly reflects this commitment and this research sets out to explain this gap.

According to the institute of technology, CARLOW, Continuous Assessment of learners' includes; knowledge, skill or competence as compared with a standard based on appropriate

evidence. This includes; learners' ability in demonstrating their learning achievement, Continuous Assessment supports standards based on learning outcomes, Continuous Assessment promotes and supports both effective learning and teaching, Continuous Assessment procedures that are credible, assessment methods are reviewed and renewed as necessary to adapt to evolving requirements and learners are well informed about how and why they are assessed, (Brown et al., 1997).

Continuous Assessment consists, essentially, of taking a sample of what students do, making inferences and estimating the worth of their actions. The behaviours sampled may be specific to a course or they may be more general. They may be related to explicit or implicit criteria. Motivations and, perhaps, personality and an estimate of worth in the form of grades, marks or recommendations are made (Brown et al., 1997).

The purpose of Continuous Assessment is no longer purely to support learning / to assess what a learner has learned and to decide whether he/she can progress further through the education system.

Instead, as part of the increasing demand for education to be accountable, education systems across the world are subject to the demands of a 'performativity culture' which needs assessment results to exist, (Ball, 2003) The purpose of Continuous Assessment becomes to judge the performance of education systems, their institutions and those who work in them through the collection, recording and classification of assessment result data. The result of national exam could be used as a mapping tool to evaluate the competency and quality of Indonesian education, and could also be used as an achievement comparison tool between one school and another (Musthofiyah, 2013).

This research work therefore, sought to ascertain to what extent Continuous Assessment was implemented in Kamuda sub county of Soroti district.

## **2.5 Factors influencing the implementation of Continuous Assessment Policy**

Developing new curricula has been a popular undertaking in many countries around the world and, generally, these curricula are well-designed and possess praiseworthy aims. Nevertheless, it is claimed that the policy makers involved with developing these curricula are engaged with creating the policies, but “seldom look down the track to the implementation stage “(Rogan & Grayson, 2003).

It is argued that large-scale changes often neglect the process of implementation and likewise, low outcomes of educational changes are mainly the result of “poor implementation of what was essentially a good idea” (Verspoor, 1989).

Overall, the developing world has witnessed many examples of well-intentioned and well-designed curriculum reform programmes that have failed to take root on the ground. One of the principal reasons, thereto, appears to be a lack of clearly worked-out implementation strategies that take the national and local context into account (Rogan & Grayson, 2003).

There are many factors that influence the implementation of Continuous Assessment and the range from pupil, teacher, school and government related factors of which all influence the implementation either positively or negatively. However, many of them influence negatively.

There is now a common understanding that policy makers need to consider and plan for the implementation stage for reforms to be successful (Altinyelken, 2010). Often, the general way of thinking about curriculum implementation has been rather top-down and according to Chisholm and Leyendecker (2008) there is a critical link between the big idea and changing actual classroom practice that must be recognized.

According to the Northern Province Department of Education Policy document (2000), overcrowding in classrooms and shortage of resources are some of the problems that can be encountered during assessment in South Africa.

Killen (2003) states the following as being some of the challenges educators face when implementing Continuous Assessment; large classes, lack of facilities and multicultural classrooms. This influences the way they carry out assessment. For example some schools in South Africa are poor to an extent that they do not have water and electricity. Schools in rural areas are experiencing this challenge more than those in urban areas she added.

Malcolm (2000) argues that an educator in Mhuthlane worries about learners who do not have pencils. When he compares the South African education context with Australian education context, he indicates that in Australian classes have about 25 – 28 learners whereas in S. Africa class size is between 60- 100 learners.

Ansu (2001) additionally says that with Continuous Assessment, learners' difficulties are identified early enough and opportunities for remedial action are planned and implemented which gives credit to class work and it helps the teacher to determine the level of readiness of learners (Uganda curriculum review report 2003). The Ministry of Education Sports has a belief that Continuous Assessment has the ability to measure learning outcomes and practical skills that cannot be assessed at the end of a course through pen and paper. Barrett et al. (2006) agrees with the idea that Continuous Assessment enables assessment of both process and product, a thing that cannot be achieved by using one end of study period examination (Barrett et al., 2006).

Teachers at all levels deserve guidance and counseling, monitoring and supervision at work, coaching and mentoring, encouragement and follow-ups. All these must be done in a friendly

and collaborative manner with the CCTs, inspectors of schools and other Educational stake holders, (Arinaitwe2013). The findings of this study will either concur or reject this assertion.

Frequent interactions between pupils and teachers mean that teachers know the strengths and weaknesses of their learners. These exchanges foster a pupil-teacher relationship based on individual interactions. Pupils learn that the teacher values their achievements and that their assessment outcomes have an impact on the instruction that they receive. One-to-one communication between the teacher and the pupil can motivate pupils to continue attending school and to work hard to achieve higher levels of mastery (Adebowale & Alao, 2008).

Nitko (1995), states that any plan for Continuous Assessment is only as strong as the teacher's ability to use it appropriately. Right from the onset of the Thematic Curriculum, the Government embarked on teacher training so as to build their capacity in curriculum implementation. However, one may wonder whether the said training always adequately brings out the necessary competencies required of these teachers.

Continuous Assessment is central to the educational effectiveness of group work it requirements a great deal to establish the dynamics of student groups. Carefully designed assessment, which fairly assesses as appropriate individual contribution as well as the achievements of the group as a whole, is essential for creating productive groups. (Nitko1995). This is in line with the NAHT (2014) Report on Continuous Assessment which believes that Assessment should be part of all school development plans and should be reviewed regularly. This review process should involve every school identifying its own learning and development needs for Continuous Assessment. Schools should allocate specific time and resources for professional development in this area and should monitor how the identified needs are being met.

The report adds that pupils should be assessed against set objectives and agreed criteria rather than ranked against each other.

The implementation of Continuous Assessment strategies has not come without challenges, it has been characterized with issues of validity and reliability of its scores arising from variations in teacher competencies, inadequate findings, motivation and support from school and institution administration, shortage of teachers, frequent transfer of learners to other schools due to unavoidable reasons and inadequate support in supervision (Cree et al., 1998).

Implementation challenges for the entire Education sector, such as teacher training, inspection and supervision, examinations and assessment, financial requirements and learning materials all needed and needs to be reformed, (Juuko et al, 2007 and Ward Penny and Read, 2006).

It should also be noted that Continuous Assessment in education is a challenge for students and the teaching staff alike. Students frequently find themselves forced to leap-frog across what can seem like countless assessment hurdles in the course of their training. At the same time, teachers (lecturers, tutors and practice teachers) need to ensure that Continuous Assessment tasks are as effective and fair as possible. It has been argued that the Continuous Assessment process may either facilitate or inhibit transfer of learning, depending on its nature, systems and procedures (Falk et al., 2007).

Black and William (1998b) proposed that effective formative assessment involves teachers making adjustments to teaching and learning in response to Continuous Assessment evidence; students receiving feedback about their learning with advice on what they can do to improve; and students' participation in the process through self-assessment. They

concluded that the student learning gains triggered by formative assessment were amongst the largest ever reported for educational interventions with the largest gains being realized by low achievers. This was, and remains, a powerful argument for formative assessment.

Educational change is depicted as both slow in pace, and recursive in nature. Cuban (1990) compares the process of reform to ocean waves, and Dun et al., (2004) elaborate on this metaphor in an article on the connection between educational policy and practice. They compare educational reform to a hurricane that whips up waves across the ocean surface without disturbing the essential teaching and assessment practices that lie below. This paper is concerned with how assessment practices are influenced by six sources of information in education, which are research, evaluative inquiry, large-scale assessment, policy, professional development, and teachers' beliefs.

Few researches have been conducted regarding the implementation of CA at different educational levels in Ethiopian context such as Dessalage and Daniel ( 2003); Birhanu (2004); Getchew (2008); Hassen (1998);Muluken (2004); Mulu (2005); and Abrera (2009), revealed that teachers do not use CA in their classrooms. Despite the fact that there is an increased pressure up on teachers to provide evidence of educational activities .The truth of the matter shall be revealed when this findings will be brought to light.

Rogan and Grayson (2003) believe that assessment policy is rendered ineffective due to the fact that the creation and distribution of physical resources such as learning materials, classroom and sanitation facilities, especially in rural areas is delayed or not delivered at all. According to Nishimura and Sasaoka (2008) provision of physical resources is problematic and often deficient in Uganda since its mainly done by the government through the Ministry

of Education & Sports due to bureaucracy and corruption tendencies affecting and slowing down the implement of assessment policy (Daily Monitor 31 December, 2012).

Efforts should be stepped up to reach out these resources in time to all the schools. Ninsiima, (2007) advises that government should stop focusing on the process (procedures, bidding process, and where they can eat some money) and pay attention on the product. It doesn't matter what procedure is followed, as long as the product is of good quality (DES report, 2012).

UWEZO (2011), in their Annual Learning Continuous Assessment Report advises that the physical resources are needed for the successful implementation of the lower primary curriculum, learning materials should be availed, therefore the Government of Uganda has to mobilize the resources and buy reading materials, teaching materials so that implementation of the curriculum reforms is properly done EFA Global Monitoring Report, (2005). However, the provision of physical resources may not be credit worthy for the implementation of the lower primary Curriculum.

Tao (2010) argues that the challenges of implementing Continuous Assessment Policy in Thematic Curriculum require improved and effective monitoring and inspection of schools and their performance. UNESCO (2012) believes that monitoring of education in Uganda is mainly done through the DES, but they are not capable enough for their task. Ward, et al. (2006) affirms that without monitoring or somebody coming over to check, there is nothing going on in a lot of schools.

Winkler and Gershberg (2003) are convinced that Africa still has issues to do with facilitation and logistics in monitoring which cripples school inspectors. And because effective

implementation of Thematic Curriculum demands or requires them to reach each and every school, they should be facilitated to reach the schools they need to monitor.

Ssewamala, et al. (2011), claim that the system of the curriculum implementation and monitoring process is totally not working without facilitation of the Inspectors of schools and CCTs.

UNEB (2012) reports corruption as one of the serious challenges failing monitoring. The lack of capacity of the inspection, combined with the extra pressure on the CCTs, has caused corruption with the official school inspection reports. Sergiovanni (2005) talks of absence of basic necessities for inspection, together with the large area the inspectors have to cover, cause leakages in the system. Sergiovanni(2005) advises that there is need for inspectors to be availed with motorcycles, and facilitated with fuel, so that they can be able to verify head teachers' reports to avoid a situation where the inspection report becoming a 'commodity' that is, practices of schools paying an inspector to write a positive report, for example increase in numbers of enrolment. Furthermore, Verspoor (2003) claims that diversity in schools needs to be taken into account to implement large-scale changes.

According to Balogun (1995) factors that limit effective curriculum implementation in Nigeria include inadequate planning, syllabus overloading or unrealistic goals, insufficient teachers and lack of adequate resources. Others are lack of in-service training, lack of commitment from both government and teachers, and lack of adequate monitoring and evaluation in the education system. Agba (2007) who all observes that factors that limit the effective implementation of curriculum in Nigeria include – inadequate planning, insufficient teachers, syllabus overloading, incessant strikes, lack of infrastructural facilities among others concurs with this claim.

Odongo (2001), Salehe and Alute (2001) reveal that class teachers who are handicapped by large class size and inadequate facilities produce unreliable scores which they return to examination bodies as CA scores, to which these examinations have expressed doubts about the reliability of these scores. However this premise remains to be validated.

Matome (2010) cites School Managers challenges such as absenteeism, learners' disciplinary problems, and learners' attitude towards education, learners' language barriers, and late supply of pacesetters by the District office, insufficient resources, and limited curriculum services as a result of lack of the curriculum advisors particularly for Mathematics and Accounting in the district. However, the lack of adequate training and the high illiteracy levels of parents may also be associated with this. These research findings are to bring positive judgments to the said claims raised here.

Teachers face challenges while they assess students' work in an educational setting where they have not enough access to the type of assessment information that will enable them to carry out the assessment accurately and fairly. In conformity to this, Fradd and Lee (2001) in Pierce (2002) disclosed that most teachers feel unprepared to assess in the way the institution or the department requires them to do. They further continued, for instances, to argue: "Most teachers use the same type of assessment techniques, especially those that their teachers used while they were at school".

Beside this, most teachers tend to focus their Continuous Assessment strategies on what is easy to measure rather than on what is important. The above statement is also strengthened by other educators such as Wuest and Lombordo, (1998); Airasian, (1997); Kellaghan et.al, (2004). Traditional Continuous Assessment instrument and techniques tend to measure narrowly defined characteristics, do not facilitate integration of skills or processes, and are

frequently artificial in their nature that does not give the true picture of each student's knowledge, Attitude and Skills (KAS).

If a school is in disarray and not functioning well, innovation cannot or will not be implemented. The leadership and management role of the head teacher is critical in reform implementation. Then, the teachers are the ones eventually executing the policy in the classrooms; their role is considered essential in reform processes (Shawer, (2010); Chan, (2010); Bantwini, (2010). Factors such as their background, training, subject matter knowledge, motivation, commitment to teaching, and attitudes towards proposed innovation influence their capacity and willingness to implement change. Finally, the strengths and constraints of the students are also essential for change to take place in the classroom. The background of the students influences their capacity to learn. A range of issues influence student attitudes to learning and ability to respond to changes, such as their home environments, parental commitment to education, health and nutrition, and proficiency level in the language of instruction. The researcher hopes that an agreement may be reached when data is collected.

Finally, the Profile of curriculum implementation in essence, contributes to understanding, analyzing and expressing the extent to which the objectives of the curriculum are put into practice. It assumes that there is at least a vaguely defined notion of what constitutes 'good practice' and what this looks like in the classroom. The sub-constructs of the Profile of Implementation are: the coverage of learning areas, the language of instruction, classroom interactions and assessment practices. In addition, it also recognizes that there can be different levels at which implementation might be said to occur: there will be as many ways of putting a curriculum into action as there are teachers teaching it (Altinyelken, 2010; Rogan and Grayson, 2003).

This study was therefore intended to prove whether these were the same factors affecting the implementation of Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes of Kamuda sub county of Soroti district.

## **2.6 Strategies that can improve the implementation Continuous Assessment Policy**

There is now a common understanding that policy makers need to consider and plan for the implementation stage for reforms to be successful (Altinyelken, 2010). Often, the general way of thinking about curriculum implementation has been rather top-down and according to Chisholm and Leyendecker (2008) there is a critical link between the big idea and changing actual classroom practice that must be recognized.

Efforts should be stepped up to reach out these resources in time to all the schools. Ninsiima, (2007) advises that government should stop focusing on the process (procedures, bidding process, and where they can eat some money) and pay attention on the product. It doesn't matter what procedure is followed, as long as the product is of good quality (DES report, 2012).

UWEZO (2011), in their Annual Learning Continuous Assessment Report, advises that the physical resources are needed for the successful implementation of the lower primary curriculum, learning materials should be availed, therefore the Government of Uganda has to mobilize the resources and buy reading materials, teaching materials so that implementation of the curriculum reforms is properly done EFA Global Monitoring Report, (2005). However, the provision of physical resources may not be credit worthy for the implementation of the lower primary Curriculum.

Tao (2010) argues that the challenges of implementing Continuous Assessment Policy in Thematic Curriculum require improved and effective monitoring and inspection of schools and their performance. UNESCO (2012) believes that monitoring of education in Uganda is mainly done through the DES, but they are not capable enough for their task. Ward, et al. (2006) affirms that without monitoring or somebody coming over to check, there is nothing going on in a lot of schools.

Winkler and Gershberg (2003) are convinced that Africa still has issues to do with facilitation and logistics in monitoring which cripples school inspectors. And because effective implementation of Thematic Curriculum demands or requires them to reach each and every school, they should be facilitated to reach the schools they need to monitor.

Ssewamala, et al. (2011), claim that the system of the curriculum implementation and monitoring process is totally not working without facilitation of the inspectors of schools and CCTs.

UNEB (2012) reports corruption as one of the serious challenges failing monitoring. The lack of capacity of the inspection, combined with the extra pressure on the CCTs, has caused corruption with the official school inspection reports. Sergiovanni (2005) talks of absence of basic necessities for inspection, together with the large area the inspectors have to cover. cause leakages in the system. Sergiovanni (2005) advises that there is need for inspectors to be availed with motorcycles, and facilitated with fuel, so that they can be able to verify head teachers' reports to avoid a situation where the inspection report becoming a 'commodity' that is, practices of schools paying an inspector to write a positive report, for example increase in numbers of enrolment.

Furthermore, Verspoor (2003) claims that the diversity in schools needs to be taken into account to implement large-scale changes. Therefore, Sergiovanni (2000) proposes a

continuum of forces of educational change. These changes consist of the one side, top–down or external end of the continuum and on the other side, bottom–up or community-based end of the continuum. In contrast to the superficial top-down changes, the community-based changes are likely to be deep and enduring (Rogan & Grayson, (2003). Therefore, it is important for the curriculum implementation process that sufficient attention is paid to the bottom-up changes that are needed for curriculum change to take root on the ground. This is in line with successful approaches used for Policy implementation of any category.

## **2.7 Summary of literature review**

In summary, the literature reviewed above shows that Continuous Assessment forms an integral part of teaching and learning thus ultimately an instrumental factor in improving the quality of education. It's not a new phenomenon; many countries worldwide are implementing it at different levels of education and it implemented using many methods depending on the lesson objectives and outcomes. Continuous Assessment shows a long line of structural changes designed to inject quality control into education and used as a test system which is designed to measure students' performance and hold school accountability.

Continuous Assessment comes to judge the performance of education systems, their institutions and those who work in them through the collection, recording and classification of assessment result data.

There are many factors that influence the implementation of Continuous Assessment and they range from pupil, teacher, school and government related factors of which all influence the implementation either positively or negatively.

Factors such as the teachers' background, training, subject matter knowledge, motivation, commitment to teaching, and attitudes towards proposed innovation influence the teachers' capacity and willingness to implement change.

The implementation of Continuous Assessment strategies has not come without challenges; it has been characterized with issues of validity and reliability of its scores arising from variations in teacher competencies, inadequate findings, motivation and support from school and institution administration, shortage of teachers, frequent transfer of learners to other schools due to unavoidable reasons and inadequate support in supervision.

Continuous Assessment Policy in Thematic Curriculum require improved and effective monitoring and inspection of schools and their performance

A number of strategies can be employed for successful implementation of the Continuous Assessment policy; governments to focus of product other than the process, physical resources are needed for the successful implementation of the lower primary curriculum, learning materials should be availed, therefore the Government of Uganda has to mobilize the resources and buy reading materials, teaching materials so that implementation of the curriculum reforms is properly done, monitoring , education change to cater for diversity in schools. It's very clear that the strategies given above are general on curriculum implementation; little has been said on effective strategies of implementing Continuous Assessment policy in government UPE schools.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter covers the research design, study area, methods used in data collection, study population, sample size, sampling techniques, data analysis and presentation and ethical considerations.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

A research design is a detailed outline of how an investigation will take place (Opedun, 2013). A research design typically includes how data is collected, instruments employed, how the instruments are used and the means for analysing data collected. A descriptive research design was used. This was because the topic together with the objectives was more focused in the description and explanation of the Continuous Assessment policy situation on the ground. According to Amin (2005) this is one of the most commonly used research designs in social sciences and is used to gather data from a sample of a population at a particular time. In this study, qualitative techniques were majorly employed in data collection process, analysis, presentation and discussion of findings. This was because the topics together with the objectives are more focused in the description and explanation of the Continuous Assessment policy situation on the ground. However, quantitative techniques were also employed to ease data analysis and interpretation. Qualitative approaches enabled the researcher to capture the respondents' attitudes, behaviour and experience regarding the phenomena under study.

#### **3.3 Area of the Study**

The study was conducted in Eastern Uganda, Soroti District, Kamuda Sub County. According to National Population Projection, Kamuda Sub County has a population of 297,154 people

(UBOS, 2014). The area is mainly inhabited by the Kumam, some Langi, Iteso and the Bakenyi who stay around the lake shores. The area was purposely selected because it is implementing education strategies like the thematic curriculum, CA, yet the performance continues to degenerate year after another. Kamuda Sub County is 14 kilometers from the District headquarters. It borders Arapai and Soroti Sub Counties in the East, Atiira and Asuret Sub Counties in the South, Kaberamaido District in the West and Katine Sub County in the North.

### **3.4 Target Population**

Kamuda Sub County has a total population of 297,154 people (UBOS, 2014). However, the target populations were primary school teachers in lower primary classes in Kamuda sub county, District Education Officer, CCT of Kamuda Sub County, head teachers of the respective primary schools and organizations implementing education programs in Kamuda Sub County.

### **3.5 Sampling Techniques**

Purposive sampling technique was employed for this study. The choice of the sampling technique enabled the investigator to select the most appropriate sample for the study.

#### **3.5.1 Purposive Sampling**

The District Education Officer, Coordinating Centre tutor, World vision staff , head teachers' and teachers' were chosen using purposive sampling because their information was believed to be credible basing on the fact that they at the helm of implementation of Continuous Assessment within the District. Koul (2007) defines purposive sampling as a type of sampling where the investigator uses his/her own judgment to select the participants of his study. Judgment in purposive sampling, as used in this present study, was based on the purpose of the study and the appropriateness of participants to answer the research questions

(Koul, 2007). Brewer (1993) argues that with purposive sampling, the number of people interviewed is less important than the information needed from them and the kind of criteria used to select them.

### 3.6 Sample Size

Sample size of 60 is in conformity with Roscoe’s (1975) rule of thumb, sample size between 30 and 500 being sufficient.

**Table 1: Sample size and sampling techniques**

S/N	Category	Population	Sample Size	Sampling Strategy
1	District Education Officer	01	01	Purposive
2	Coordinating Centre Tutor	01	01	Purposive
3	Head teachers	14	14	Purposive
4	Teachers	112	42	Purposive
5	World vision staff	05	02	Purposive
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>132</b>	<b>60</b>	

**Source: Field data, March, 2015**

### 3.7 Sources of Data

The researcher used both primary and secondary data sources. The field data was got from the respondents’ while the secondary data was used to justify the primary data.

#### 3.7.1 Primary data

The researcher gathered data from the field through questionnaires and interviews from the DEO, head teachers, teachers, CCT, World vision education coordinators purposely selected from the primary schools of Kamuda Sub-county, Soroti district.

#### 3.7.2 Secondary data

The researcher collected data from class assessment records, end of term reports, copies of class report cards, learners note books, reports from education implementing partners, District

Inspection Reports and the Agora CCT's reports which were used to further justify and confirm data from the field.

### **3.8 Research Instruments**

The researcher collected data using both questionnaires and interview guide. Questionnaires helped the researcher to get relevant information on Continuous Assessment policy implementation in lower primary classes. The interview guides helped in probing of some interesting and unexpected behavior/responses. This approach enhanced data got from the questionnaires and was used to supplement and/ or fill the gaps or unclear items.

#### **3.8.1 Questionnaires**

The researcher used closed ended questionnaires as a data collecting instrument to obtain information regarding the topic under study. Closed ended questionnaires were used to enable the researcher collect data on specific aspects of Continuous Assessment policy in the education sector. The questionnaires were designed according to the theme and objectives of the research. It contained close ended questions and was based on the 5-point Likerts Scale format. The scale has different values of degrees ranging from 1 to 5. That is to say; (5) strongly agree (4), agree (3), uncertain (2), disagree (1) strongly disagree. This enabled the respondents to agree or disagree on specific aspects of Continuous Assessment policy in the education sector.

The questionnaires were administered to all the respondents: District Education Officer, Coordinating Centre tutor, World vision staff, head teachers and teachers).

The researcher designed questions pertaining to the research topic which were answered by the respondents during data collection. The questions were self-administered to 14 head teachers, (9 males, 5 females) 42 teachers (11 males, 31 females) that are implementing

Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes within the Sub County, 1 District Education Officer (male), the Coordinating Centre Tutor (female) of Kamuda Sub County and finally two staff members of World Vision (1 male and 1 female) working in Kamuda Sub County. The questionnaires were answered by ticking in the appropriate boxes and these were later collected by the researcher. Questionnaires were used so as to reduce bias in that the researcher's own opinion would not influence the respondent to answer questions in a certain manner. Bryman, (2001) argues that questionnaires are handy in reducing bias because there are no verbal or visual clues that influence the respondent.

### **3.8.2 Interview Guide**

This approach was guided by the consideration that interview method of gathering information can be used to get opinions and suggestions of the respondents. It was also used as a means of probing of some interesting and unexpected behavior came up during the questionnaire analysis process (Silverman, 2001). This approach enhanced data got from the questionnaires and was used to supplement and/ or fill the gaps or unclear items.

This involved face to face interaction between the researcher and selected 30 key informants who were: The District Education Officer, the Coordinating Centre tutor, 14 head teachers , (9 males, 5 females) and 14 Head of infants ( all females) who were purposively selected and interviewed one at a time for purposes of confidentiality. These were used in order to get detailed qualitative data that was linked to the research questions. Interviews provided an in-depth data that would not be possible to get in a questionnaire. Creswell (2007) argues that interviews provide room for probing details and classifications, the questions were mainly open-ended and a few semi-structured ones. The data got from interviews were written down in the note books by the researcher for easy reference during data analysis.

### **3.9 Measurement of Variables**

The variables were measured using Rensis Likerts Summated scale which is for measuring ordinal attributes like attitudes (Krishna Swami, 1993). The five (5) degrees of agreement ranging from strongly agree, agree, uncertain, disagree, and strongly disagree were used. Different values for degrees ranged from 1 to 5. that is to say; (5) strongly agree (4), agree (3), uncertain (2), disagree (1) strongly disagree. The researcher used 5 point Likerts scale to enable the respondents to agree or disagree on specific aspects of Continuous Assessment policy in the education sector.

### **3.10 Data Management and Analysis**

The responses to the close-ended items in the data collection instruments were assigned codes and labels. Frequency counts of the responses was obtained to generate descriptive information about the respondents who participated in the study and to illustrate the general trend of findings on the various variables that were under investigation. The data was analyzed using computer programme called SPSS version 20.00. This involved the use of percentages and tables because according to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) they help to summarize large quantities of data whilst making the report reader friendly. Responses from the questionnaires were tabulated after obtaining frequency counts.

Each interview schedule was edited before leaving each respondent to cross check for uniformity, accuracy, completeness and consistency of information.

### **3.11 Validity and Reliability of research instruments**

This section discussed how instruments used in the study were tested for validity and reliability.

#### **3.11.1 Validity of research instruments**

As described by Amin (2005), validity is the degree to which a test measures what it is supposed to measure. To ensure validity of research instruments; pilot testing of copies of questionnaires was carried out. This helped to assess the appropriateness of sentence construction, comprehensiveness of instruments, language clarity, ability to tap information

from respondents, acceptability in terms of length and ethical considerations for the respondents. Comments were received on the acceptability of the instruments vis-à-vis, length and the privacy of respondents. These comments were helpful in designing the final instruments that were used to generate data.

In order to establish content validity, two experts in research (Mrs. Ongorok and Mr. Okello Everest) were requested to judge items in the instruments in order to discover their validity where the items in the instruments were judged as relevant or irrelevant. The results of the judgment were summarized as in Table 2 below.

**Table 2: Rating of validity of the instruments**

<b>Instrument</b>	<b>Judge 1</b>	<b>Judge 2</b>
Relevant	27	28
Irrelevant	4	3

**Source: Field data, March, 2015**

Results from the ratings were used to compute content validity index (CVI) using the following formula:

$$CVI = \frac{\text{Average number of items judged relevant by both experts}}{\text{Total number of items in the instruments}} \times 100$$

Total number of items =31

Judge 1= 27,

Judge 2=28

$$\text{Average number of items judged relevant} = \frac{27 + 28}{2}$$

$$= \frac{55}{2}$$

=27.5

$$CVI = \frac{28}{31} \times 100$$

Content Validity Index = 90%

Since CVI percentage was more than 50%, the instruments were effective, valid and relevant.

Qualitative validity of instruments was guaranteed by processing data into manageable proportions through editing, coding, and tabulation methods. Data collected was checked while still in the field to ensure that all questions were answered. Contradictory information was removed whenever found. By coding, answers to each item on the questionnaire were classified into meaning full categories. Tallying and Tabulation was used to obtain frequencies and percentages of each item.

### **3.11.2 Reliability of Research Instruments**

Reliability of an instrument being the consistency of an instrument in measuring what it is intended to measure was established using the Inter-rater reliability index (IRRI) after the items in the instruments were ranked by different rater. The rater was given the scale for rating items as Very good 5, Good 4, fairly 3, Weak 2 and Very weak 1. Results of the rating were summarized in Table 3.

**Table 3: Ranking of items in the instruments to determine reliability**

Item	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Rater I	5	4	4	5	5	3	3	3	2	4	5	5	3	3	2	3	5	5	4	3	5	4	5	4	5	4	4	5	5	3	3

**Source: Field data, March, 2015**

Very good	-	12
Good	-	08
Fairly Good	-	09
Weak	-	00
Very Weak	-	00
Total	=	29

The reliability was calculated using the formula given below:

$$IRRI = \frac{\text{Number of items given similar ranking}}{\text{Number of items in the instruments}} \times 100$$

Total number of items in with similar ranking = 29

Total number of items in the instrument = 31

$$IRRI = \frac{29}{31} \times 100$$

$$IRRI = 94\%$$

Since the IRRI was 94%, the instruments used in the study were reliable because it was above average.

### **3.12 Procedure for Data Collection**

The research was conducted using the following procedure:

The researcher asked for and obtained an introductory letter from the Head of department Educational Planning and Management, Kyambogo University which introduced her to the respective school managers. This enabled the researcher to carry out research in respective schools. With permission from the DEO and head teachers, the researcher circulated questionnaires to the respondents. The researcher also conducted interviews with the respondents in each of the schools that participated in the study.

The researcher made a pre-visit to the respective schools to introduce herself, got the consent of the would be respondents and made appointments with them. Later the researcher distributed questionnaires to the respondents which were retrieved after they were filled. The DEO, CCT and the World Vision staff were served with questionnaires in their respective offices which the researcher collected later. For each of the categories of respondents, the researcher would thank them for their participation in the study.

To corroborate and get detailed information from the key informants, the researcher scheduled and conducted individual interviews with the DEO, CCT and Head of infants since they directly supervise and monitor Continuous Assessment implementation in schools. The researcher first explained to each interviewee the purpose of the research and assured them that their responses would be kept confidential and it would exclusively, be used for the purpose of research only. A few minutes of the interview were spent on exchanging general views on education so as to establish rapport. Questions were spelt out by the researcher as the interviewees gave their responses. The responses were written by the researcher in a note book. However, to know that the correct responses were written, the researcher re-read the responses written to the respondent to confirm whether the right responses had been written

and corrections were done immediately. At the end of the interview the researcher thanked each of the interviewees for their participation in the study.

### **3.13 Ethical Considerations**

The researcher before administering the questionnaires and conducting interviews fully explained the objectives of the study to all the respondents. In addition, their consent was sought and their right to confidentiality assured before interviewing and distributing questionnaires. Furthermore, the researcher fully observed their right to privacy and anonymity by neither asking them to write nor mention their names and names of the schools to which they belonged. The researcher thanked the respondents for their participation in the study.

### **3.14 Limitations of the Study**

The research study was expensive because it required typing, printing questionnaires, reports and weekly transport costs from Soroti to Kampala to meet the supervisors, and collecting of data from the field thus being costly. This challenge was addressed by getting a loan from Soroti Teachers Savings and Credit Cooperative Societies (SACCOs). The bad state of roads to schools and collusion of research work with office activities was so challenging. The researcher had to expend on special hire services and walked in most instances, the researcher had to do a lot of planning so as to be able to do research and as well carry out office work.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study. The study was carried out to assess the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in the lower primary classes in Kamuda Sub-county, Soroti District. The study was centered on the responses to the four research questions; however, background information about the respondents was presented because it was important in interpreting the data collected. The findings were presented in tables and summarized in charts. Therefore, this chapter is divided into three sub sections namely response rate, background information about the respondents, and research questions that the study sought to answer.

#### 4.2 Response Rate

Interviews were conducted with 28 respondents out of the expected 30 respondents. One Head-teacher and one Head of Infants from one primary school sampled were not interviewed as they had gone to attend the burial of a teacher near their school during the time of data collection. The DEO, CCT and Head-teachers were interviewed.

A total of 60 questionnaires were presented to the respondents. Questionnaires returned with responses were 56 and 4 were returned without responses (One Head-teacher and 3 infant teachers from one primary school sampled could not fill as they had gone to attend the burial of a teacher near their school during the time of data collection). The summary of return rate of questionnaires is presented in the table 4 below:

**Table 4: Questionnaires Distributed to the Participants.**

Category of respondents	Questionnaires presented	Questionnaires returned with responses	percentage (%)	Questionnaires returned without responses	percentage (%)
DEO	01	01	100	00	00
CCT	01	01	100	00	00
World Vision Education Coordinators	02	02	100	00	00
Head teachers	14	13	92.9	01	7.1
Teachers	42	39	92.9	03	7.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>AVARAGE. 97.6</b>	<b>04</b>	<b>AVARAGE. 2.8</b>

**Source: Field data, March, 2015**

Table 4 above shows that the average number of questionnaires returned with responses was 97.6 % which is a high representation of the opinions of the targeted respondents.

In summary out of 60 respondents targeted, views from 56 were obtained. This represented 93% of the respondents and this gives a very high presentation of the opinions of the target population.

#### **4.3 Background Information about the Respondents**

Relevant information about the respondents who participated in the study related to their gender, age bracket, Qualification attained, and work experience. These helped to explain the extent to which respondents were knowledgeable in the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in the lower primary classes in Soroti District.

### 4.3.1 Respondents by Gender

The responses of the respondents based on their gender are summarized as shown in table 5 below.

**Table 5: Distribution of respondents who participated in the study by gender**

Variable	Category	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	31	55.4
	Male	25	44.6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field data, March 2015

In table 5, more females participated in the study (55.4%) as compared to males (44.6%).

### 4.3.2 Respondents by age

The respondents were also requested to fill in the questionnaires their age bracket to show their ages and the results were summarized as given in table 6 below.

**Table 6: Distribution of respondents by age bracket**

Variable	Category	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
Age bracket	(46 above)	19	33.9
	(36-45)	18	32.1
	(31-35)	12	21.4
	(26-30)	3	5.4
	(20-25)	4	7.1
	<b>Total</b>		<b>56</b>

Source: Field data, March, 2015

Table 6 shows that a cross-section of respondents with different age brackets were involved in the study. A majority of respondents (33.9%) were 46 and above years, followed by (32.1%) of the respondents who were at the age bracket of 36-45 years, (21.4%) of the respondents who were at the age bracket of 31-35 years, (7.1%) of the respondents were at

the age bracket of 20-25 years, and (5.4%) of the respondents were at the age bracket of 26-30 years. This implies that the conclusions based on the data that they provided were trustable and credible since they were generated from different respondents with different age bracket. Clearly a substantial part of the responses represented the thought partner of older, more experienced teachers. This is in line with the reality on the ground since there is a tendency to deploy older, more experienced teachers to handle infants.

### 4.3.3 Respondents by qualification

In order to know the qualification of the respondents, they were asked to fill in questionnaires qualification and the results were summarized as in Table 7 below.

**Table 7: Respondents by qualification**

Variable	Category	Frequency (F)			Percentage (%)
		Male	Female	Total	
Qualification	Grade III Certificate	10	27	37	66.1
	Diploma	9	6	15	26.8
	Degree	3	0	3	5.4
	Post Graduate Degree	1	0	1	1.8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field data, March, 2015**

In table 7, it is clear that a majority of the respondents involved in the study had attained at least Grade III Certificate as reported by (66.1%) of the respondents, (26.8%) of the respondents had attained at least a diploma, (5.4%) of the respondents had attained at least a degree, (1.8%) of the respondents had attained at least a master. This clearly indicates that the majority of the respondents were Grade III and Diploma graduates whose interface with

CA has been mainly through short term trainings and workshop. This, to some extent explains the low levels of implementation the CA policy in lower primary in Kamuda.

#### 4.3.4 Respondents by working experience

The researcher also took interest in the working experience of respondents. Table 8 below gives a summary of the respondents experience in the field of primary education.

**Table 8: Distribution of respondents by working experience**

Category	Gender			working experiences and percentage							
	Male	Female	Total	<1 Year	%	1 Year	%	2-4 Years	%	05 Years and above	%
DEO	1	0	01	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	100
CCT	1	0	01	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	100
World Vision Coordinator	1	1	02	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	100
Head-teachers	9	5	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	13	100
Teachers	9	29	37	02	5.1	-	-	11	28.2	26	66.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>02</b>	<b>3.6%</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>19.6%</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>76.8%</b>

**Source: Field data, March, 2015**

In Table 8 above, it is notable that most of the respondents had different working experiences. A majority of the respondents (76.8%) had a working experience of 5 years and above, this was followed by very few of respondents (19.6%) who had a working experience of 2-4 years and other respondents (3.6%) had a working experience of less than 1 year. This reinforces the expectation that the data they provided is dependable since they were largely experienced educationist

#### **4.4 Presentation of findings**

This section presents data from all the instruments used starting with data from the questionnaire and followed by data from the interview respectively. Data coming from the questionnaires has been tabulated and frequencies and percentages indicated. Though the likert scale separates Strongly Agree, and Agree, on the one hand, and Strongly Disagree, and Disagree on the other, these two categories have been combined for purposes of analysis. The notes below the tables accordingly discuss the data in three categories: Agree, Uncertain, and Disagree.

##### **4.4.1 Research Question One: What are the Continuous Assessment Policy positions?**

To find out the Continuous Assessment policy positions in primary schools in Kamuda Sub-county, Soroti District, the researcher administered questionnaires to DEO, CCT, World Vision Education Coordinators, Head-teachers and teachers. Interviews were also administered to the DEO, and CCT, Head-teachers and Heads of Infants. The responses were summarized according to the categories of respondents as given in table 9 to 11

#### 4.4.1(a) Responses of DEO, CCT, and World Vision Education Coordinators

**Table 9: distribution of DEO, CCT and World Vision Education Coordinators' staff responses (n=04).**

Item	Strongly Agree		Agree		Uncertain		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Continuous Assessment is a policy issue in lower primary classes.	3	75	1	25	-	-	-	-	-	-
Continuous Assessment has policy guidelines to be followed by teachers	2	50	2	50	-	-	-	-	-	-
Continuous Assessment is competence based	3	75	1	25	-	-	-	-	-	-
Continuous Assessment should be done objectively	2	50	1	25	-	-	1	25	-	-
Continuous Assessment has various methods to be used	2	50	2	50	-	-	-	-	-	-
Continuous Assessment is on-going throughout the year	2	50	2	50	-	-	-	-	-	-
Continuous Assessment is theme based	1	25	3	75	-	-	-	-	-	-
Continuous Assessment requires good record management	3	75	1	25	-	-	-	-	-	-
Continuous Assessment is done both in and outside the classroom	3	75	1	25	-	-	-	-	-	-
Continuous Assessment has replaced summative examinations	2	50	-	-	-	-	2	50	-	-
<b>An average percentage</b>	<b>Strongly agreed and Agreed 92.5%</b>				<b>Uncertain -</b>		<b>Disagreed 7.5%</b>			

**Source: Field data, March, 2015**

The results in Table 9 show that on average 92.5% of the respondents agreed that there is Continuous Assessment policy positions in primary schools while only an average of 7.5% of the respondents disagreed.

Specifically, respondents scored from 50% to 100% on Continuous Assessment policy positions in primary schools except on 'where Continuous Assessment in lower primary

classes should be done objectively’ and ‘Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes has replaced summative examinations’ were areas respondents disagreed at a level of 25% and 50% respectively. However, knowing Continuous Assessment a policy position in primary schools does not mean effective implementation by the Administrators and teachers in Primary schools.

#### **4.4.1(b) Head-teachers’ responses**

To generate more information on the Continuous Assessment policy positions in primary schools in Soroti District, Head-teachers were asked to show the level of agreement on the Continuous Assessment policy positions in primary schools. The findings were summarized as in table 10.

The findings from the responses to questionnaires, and interview guides conducted for question one on the Continuous Assessment policy position in primary schools showed that Continuous Assessment policy position is very clear, with a good vision but the implementation is a challenge or not effective, especially to the classroom teachers, learners, administration and the parents. This explains why Continuous Assessment policy is not well implemented in some schools in Kamuda Sub-county.

#### **4.4.2 Research Question Two: To what extent has the Continuous Assessment Policy been implemented in Lower Primary Classes?**

This research question inquired into the extent to which components of Continuous Assessment Policy have been implemented in lower primary classes in Kamuda Sub-county, Soroti District. To determine the extent to which components of Continuous Assessment Policy have been implemented in lower primary classes, questionnaires were administered to the DEO, CCT, World Vision Education Coordinators, Head-teachers, and Teachers. Interviews were also administered to the DEO, CCT, Head-teachers and Heads of Infants. The responses were summarized according to the categories of respondents as given in Table 12 to 14.

#### 4.4.2 (a). Responses of the DEO, CCT and World Vision Education Coordinators'

**Table 12: the distribution of DEO, CCT and World Vision Education Coordinators' responses on the implemented of CA policy in lower primary classes (n=04).**

Item	Strongly Agree		Agree		Uncertain		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Continuous Assessment follows competences to be achieved	01	25.0	02	50.0	1	25.0	-	-	-	-
Continuous Assessment is carried out objectively	-	-	2	50.0	1	25.0	1	23.0	-	-
Continuous Assessment is conducted using various methods	-	-	3	75.0	1	25.0	-	-	-	-
Continuous Assessment is carried out throughout the year	1	25.0	2	50.0	1	25.0	-	-	-	-
Continuous Assessment is carried out basing on themes	-	-	3	75.0	1	25.0	-	-	-	-
Continuous Assessment records are available	-	-	2	50.0	-	-	2	50.0	-	-
Continuous Assessment is carried out both in and outside the classroom	1	25.0	2	50.0	1	25.0	-	-	-	-
Summative assessment is no longer carried out	1	25.0	-	-	-	-	2	50.0	1	25.0
<b>An average percentage</b>	<b>Agreed 62.7%</b>				<b>Uncertain 18.8%</b>		<b>Disagreed 18.5%</b>			

**Source: Field data, March, 2015**

Table 12 shows that an average of 62.7% of the respondents agreed that Continuous Assessment Policy have been implemented in lower primary classes as compared to 18.5% of the respondents who disagreed and those that were uncertain were 18.8% of the respondents. It was shown in the responses that Continuous Assessment Policy have been implemented in lower primary classes in different ways such as: 'following competences to be achieved' as agreed by 75% of the respondents; 'objectively' as agreed by 50% of the respondents; 'various methods' as agreed by 75% of the respondents; 'throughout the year' by 75% of the respondents; 'assessment basing on themes' as agreed by 75% of the respondents; 'in and

outside the classroom’ as agreed by 75% of the respondents. This implies that they are aware of the Continuous Assessment Policy positions in lower primary classes. ‘The records of Continuous Assessment are not up to date’ as supported by the 50% of the respondents, ‘those that had up-to-date records, were not done objectively’ as supported by 23% of the respondents who disagreed, and ‘some schools were using summative assessment for lower primary classes’ as supported by 75% of the respondents who disagreed.

#### 4.4.2(b) Head-teachers’ responses

The Head-teachers who participated in this study were asked to indicate the extent to which the components of Continuous Assessment Policy have been implemented in lower primary classes and the findings were summarized as in table 13

**Table 13: The Head-teachers’ responses towards the extent to which components of Continuous Assessment Policy has been implemented in lower primary classes (n= 13)**

Item	Strongly Agree		Agree		Uncertain		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Continuous Assessment follows competences to be achieved	7	53.8	6	46.2	-	-	-	-	-	-
Continuous Assessment is carried out objectively	3	23.1	7	53.8	1	7.7	2	15.4	-	-
Continuous Assessment is conducted using various methods	5	38.5	8	61.5	-	-	-	-	-	-
Continuous Assessment carried out through the year	5	38.5	6	46.2	1	7.7	1	7.7	-	-
Continuous Assessment carried out basing on themes	6	46.2	5	38.5	2	15.4	-	-	-	-
Continuous Assessment records are available	1	7.7	4	30.8	3	23.1	5	38.5	-	-
Continuous is Assessment carried out both in and outside the classroom	5	38.5	4	30.8	2	15.4	1	7.7	1	7.7
Summative assessment is no longer carried out	1	7.7	2	15.4	4	30.8	4	30.8	2	15.4
<b>An average percentage</b>	<b>Agreed 72.1%</b>				<b>Uncertain 12.5%</b>		<b>Disagreed 15.4%</b>			

Source: Field data, March, 2015

Table 13 confirms that on average 72.1% of the respondents agreed that Continuous Assessment Policy has been implemented in lower primary classes compared to 15.4% of the respondents who disagreed and those that were uncertain were 12.5% of the respondents.

It was shown in the responses that Continuous Assessment Policy have been implemented in lower primary classes in different ways such as ‘following competences to be achieved’ as agreed by 100% of the respondents, ‘Objectively’ as agreed by 76.9% of the respondents, ‘various methods’ as agreed by 100% of the respondents, ‘throughout the year’ agreed by 84.7% of the respondents, ‘assessment basing on themes’ as agreed by 84.7% of the respondents, ‘in and outside the classroom’ as agreed by 69.3% of the respondents.

This means that Continuous Assessment Policy have been implemented in lower primary classes differently but the ‘records of Continuous Assessment are not as available whenever required as reported by the 38.5% of the respondents who disagreed, ‘some those who had theirs were not done objectively’ as supported by 15.4% of the respondents, and ‘some schools were using summative assessment in lower primary classes’ as supported by 46.2% of the respondents (Head-teachers).

This concurs with the level of agreement on records, objectivity of the assessment, use of summative assessment in lower primary classes and Continuous Assessment Policy implementation levels in lower primary classes by the DEO, CCT and World Vision Education Coordinators in Table 13 above.

#### **4.4.2(c) Teachers’ responses**

39 teachers were assessed on the extent of implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in lower primary classes. Their responses were grouped as shown in table 14.

**Table 14: The teachers' position towards how the components of Continuous Assessment Policy have been implemented in lower primary classes (n= 39)**

Item	Strongly Agree		Agree		Uncertain		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Continuous Assessment follows competences to be achieved	16	41.0	20	51.3	1	2.6	2	5.1	-	-
Continuous Assessment carried out objectively	08	20.5	19	48.7	2	5.1	9	23.1	1	2.6
Continuous Assessment is conducted using various methods	17	43.6	17	43.6	2	5.1	3	7.7	-	-
Continuous Assessment is carried out throughout the year	18	46.2	18	46.2	2	5.1	1	2.6	-	-
Continuous Assessment basing is based on themes	19	48.7	16	41.0	2	5.1	2	5.1	-	-
Continuous Assessment records are available	14	35.9	16	41.0	2	5.1	6	15.4	1	2.6
It is assessed both in and outside the classroom	17	43.6	16	41.0	2	5.1	4	10.3	-	-
Summative assessment is no longer carried out	8	20.5	12	30.8	2	5.1	15	38.5	2	5.1
<b>An average percentage</b>	<b>Agreed 74.6%</b>				<b>Uncertain 4.8%</b>		<b>Disagreed 20.6%</b>			

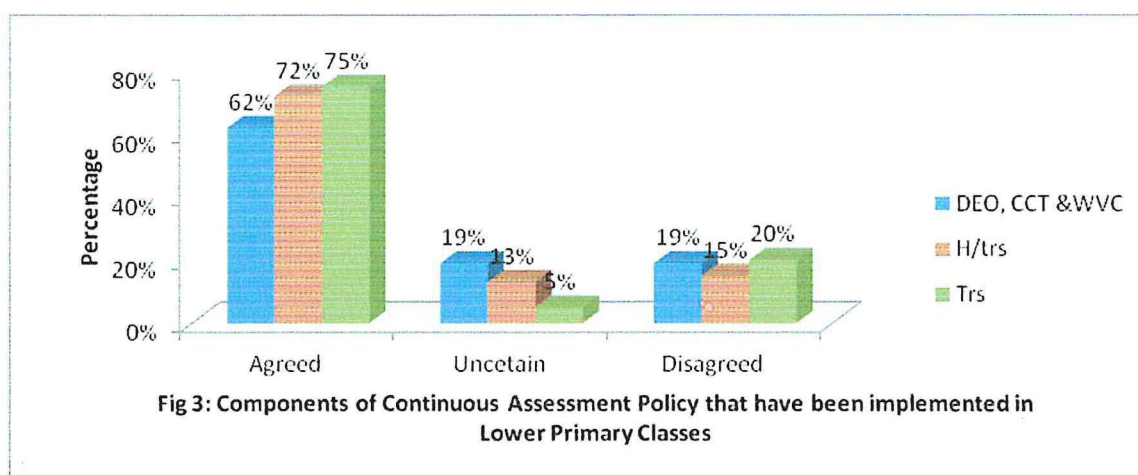
Source: Field data, March, 2015

Table 14, confirms that on an average, 74.6% of the respondents agreed that Continuous Assessment Policy has been implemented in lower primary classes compared to 20.6% of the respondents who disagreed and those that were uncertain were 4.8% of the respondents (teachers).

It was shown in the responses that Continuous Assessment Policy has been implemented in lower primary classes in different ways such as: 'following competences to be achieved' as agreed by 92.3% of the respondents, 'Objectively' as agreed by 69.2% of the respondents,

'various methods' as agreed by 87.2% of the respondents, 'throughout the year' 92.4% of the respondents, 'assessment basing on themes' as agreed by 89.7% of the respondents, 'in and outside the classroom' as agreed by 84.6% of the respondents. This means that Continuous Assessment Policy has been implemented in lower primary classes but the 'records of Continuous Assessment are not available whenever asked' as supported by the 38.5% of the

**Figure 3: A graph showing the Agreement of respondents on the components of Continuous Assessment policy implementation**



**Source: Field data, March, 2015**

On average 62% of the respondents (DEO, CCT World Vision Coordinators responses), 72% of the head teachers and 75% of the teachers agreed that Continuous Assessment Policy has been implemented in lower primary classes. While 19% of the respondents, (DEO, CCT World Vision Coordinators responses), 13% of the head teachers and 5% of the teachers were uncertain. On the other hand, 19% of the respondents (DEO, CCT World Vision Coordinators responses), 15% of the head teachers and 20% of the teachers disagreed.

In the interviews that were conducted, the DEO, CCT, Head-teachers and Heads of Infants were asked to give their perception on how Continuous Assessment Policy has been implemented in lower primary classes. Their views were summarized as, 'there is very little impact of Continuous Assessment policy realized because teachers are not implementing it as

expected'; 'they are still on summative mode of assessment'; 'learners are still doing tests/examinations'; 'teachers assess anything they wish and not the respective competences following the themes and sub themes spelt out in Continuous Assessment books'; 'assessment records are never kept', lack of instructional materials are also a serious problem.

A head of infants had this to say:

*“Unmotivated teachers will never bother about assessment; some of them will just sit down and guess the marks because there is pressure from above.”*

She added that all the charts and text books that were supplied by the Ministry of Education to facilitate the teaching of the thematic curriculum are all in pieces.

*“The books were not bound properly,”* she said.

On the other hand, where a teacher tries to do assessment, learners are able to express themselves freely in the local language and participate actively in lesson activities.

The level of implementation of Continuous Assessment Policy was at 49%.

The findings from the responses to questionnaires, and interview guides conducted for question two showed that Continuous Assessment Policy has been implemented in lower primary classes but there are still gaps for example records of Continuous Assessment are not available whenever asked, continuous assessment was not done objectively, and most schools were using summative assessment. Lack of instructional materials in lower primary classes was also seen as a big impediment to effective learning. All these are contrary to the Continuous Assessment Policy. It is for this reason that the respondents interviewed reported that there is very little impact of Continuous Assessment policy realized thus far.

To establish factors that affect Continuous Assessment policy in Kamuda Sub-county, Soroti District, data was collected from the DEO, CCT, World Vision Education Coordinators, Head-teacher, and Teachers using questionnaires. Interviews were also administered to the DEO, and CCT, Head-teachers, and Heads of Infants. The responses were summarized according to the categories of respondents as given in Table 15-17.

#### **4.4.3 (a) DEO, CCT and World Vision Education Coordinators' responses**

The findings on the factors that influence the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in lower classes were summarized as in tables below

**Table 15: DEO, CCT World Vision Coordinators' responses on factors influencing the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in lower classes (n=04)**

Item	Strongly Agree		Agree		Uncertain		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Adequate school facilities influences positively	2	50	1	25.0	-	-	1	25	-	-
Availability of teacher accommodation influences positively	1	25.0	1	25.0	-	-	2	50	-	-
Teachers motivation influences positively	2	50	2	50	-	-	-	-	-	-
Teachers competence in carry out Continuous Assessment influences positively	2	50	2	50	-	-	-	-	-	-
Teacher and pupil absenteeism influences positively	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	50.0	2	50
High enrolment influences positively	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	50.0	2	50
The class teacher system influences positively	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	50.0	2	50
Teachers knowledge of Special Needs Education influences positively	2	50	1	25.0	-	-	-	-	1	25.
Teachers frequent teacher transfers influences positively	1	25.0	-	-	-	-	1	25.0	2	50
Availability of adequate Instructional materials in lower primary classes influences positively	3	75.0	1	25.0	-	-	-	-	-	-
Teachers attitude influences positively	2	50	2	50	-	-	-	-	-	-
Schools administrators style of management influences positively primary classes	1	25.0	2	50	1	25.0	-	-	-	-
Other factors can also influence positively	1	25.0	3	75.0	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>An average percentage</b>	<b>Agreed 50%</b>				<b>Uncertain 3%</b>		<b>Disagreed 47 %</b>			

Source: Field data, March, 2015

In Table 15, the findings show that there were different factors influencing the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in lower classes in primary schools. On average 50% of the respondents agreed that the identified factors influence the

implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in lower classes in primary schools. Averages of 2.5% of the respondents were uncertain, while on average 47.5% of the respondents disagreed.

The major factors which influence Continuous Assessment positively include: 'adequate school facilities' as agreed to by 75% of the respondents, 'Teachers' motivation' as agreed to by 100% of the respondents, and 'Teachers competence in carrying out Continuous Assessment' as agreed by 100% of the respondents, 'Teachers' attitude' as agreed to by 100% of the respondents, 'Schools administrators style of management' as agreed to by 75% of the respondents, and 'other factors' as agreed to by 100% of the respondents (DEO, CCT World Vision Coordinators).

On the other hand, those factors that influence negatively the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in lower primary classes include; 'both teachers and pupils' absenteeism' as agreed to by 100% of the respondents, 'high enrolment' as agreed to by 100% of the respondents, and 'the class teacher system' as agreed by 100% of the respondents (DEO, CCT World Vision Coordinators).

#### **4.4.3(b) Head-teachers' responses**

Head-teachers were also asked to identify the factors that influence the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in lower classes and their responses were summarized as shown in table 16.

**Table 16: Head-teachers' responses on factors that influence the implementation Continuous Assessment policy in lower classes (n=13)**

Item	Strongly Agree		Agree		Uncertain		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Adequate school facilities influences positively	7	53.8	3	23.1	3	23.1	-	-	-	-
Availability of teacher accommodation influences positively	5	38.5	5	38.5	1	7.7	2	15.4	-	-
Teachers motivation influences positively	6	46.2	5	38.5	-	-	1	7.7	1	7.7
Teachers competence in carry out Continuous Assessment influences positively	6	46.2	6	46.2	1	7.7	-	-	-	-
Teacher and pupil absenteeism influences positively	-	-	4	30.8	-	-	6	46.2	3	23.1
High enrolment influences positively	5	38.5	3	23.1	1	7.7	3	23.1	1	7.7
The class teacher system influences positively	1	7.7	3	23.1	-	-	5	38.5	4	30.8
Teachers knowledge of Special Needs Education influences positively	4	30.8	2	15.4	2	15.4	5	38.5	-	-
Teachers frequent teacher transfers influences positively	1	7.7	3	23.1	-	-	6	46.2	3	23.1
Availability of adequate Instructional materials in lower primary classes influences positively	7	53.8	4	30.8	1	7.7	1	7.7	-	-
Teachers attitude influences positively	6	46.2	6	46.2	-	-	1	7.7	-	-
Schools administrators style of management influences positively	4	30.8	7	53.8	1	7.7	1	7.7	-	-
Other factors can also influence positively	6	46.2	6	46.2	1	7.7	-	-	-	-
<b>Average percentage</b>	<b>Agreed 56%</b>				<b>Uncertain 15 %</b>		<b>Disagreed 29%</b>			

Source: Field data, March, 2015

In Table 16 findings show that there were different factors influencing the implementation of Continuous Assessment Policy in lower classes in primary schools. On average 55.7% of the respondents (DEO, CCT World Vision Coordinators responses) agreed that the identified factors influence the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in lower classes in primary schools. Averages of 15.4% of the respondents were uncertain, while on average 28.9% of the respondents disagreed.

The major factors which influence positively the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in lower classes in primary schools include: 'adequate school facilities' as agreed by 76.9% of the respondents, 'Teachers motivation' as agreed by 84.7% of the respondents, and 'teachers' competence in carry out Continuous Assessment' as agreed by 92.4% of the respondents, 'Teachers attitude' as agreed by 92.4% of the respondents, 'Schools' administrators' style' as agreed by 84.6% of the respondents, and 'other factors' as agreed by 92.4% of the respondents (head-teachers).

On the other hand those factors that influence negatively the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in lower classes in primary schools include: Teacher and pupil absenteeism as disagreed by 69.3% of the respondents, High enrolment as disagreed by 30.8% of the respondents, and the class teacher system as disagreed by 69.3% of the respondents (head-teachers).

#### **4.4.3 (c) Teachers' responses**

To fill in the gaps of the first series of respondents, the teachers were also asked to identify the factors that influence the implementation Continuous Assessment policy in lower classes. The results were summarized in table 17.

**Table 17: Teachers' responses on factors influence the implementation Continuous Assessment policy in lower classes (n=39)**

Item	Strongly Agree		Agree		Uncertain		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Adequate school facilities influences positively	13	33.3	17	43.6	2	5.1	7	17.9	-	-
Availability of teacher accommodation influences positively the implementation of Continuous Assessment in the lower primary classes	12	30.8	19	48.7	1	2.6	6	15.4	1	2.6
Teachers motivation influences positively	15	38.5	18	46.2	4	2.6	3	7.7	2	5.1
Teachers competence in carry out Continuous Assessment influences positively	17	43.6	12	30.8	1	2.6	8	20.5	1	2.6
Teacher and pupil absenteeism influences positively	6	15.4	10	25.6	2	5.1	10	25.6	11	28.2
High enrolment influences positively	5	12.8	4	10.3	4	10.3	15	38.5	11	28.2
The class teacher system influences positively	6	15.4	11	28.2	-	-	16	41.0	6	15.4
Teachers knowledge of Special Needs Education influences positively	8	20.5	9	23.1	-	-	16	41.0	-	-
Teachers frequent teacher transfers influences positively	3	7.7	16	41.0	1	2.6	13	33.3	6	15.4
Availability of adequate Instructional materials in lower primary classes influences positively	17	43.6	10	25.6	2	5.1	8	20.5	2	5.1
Teachers attitude influences positively	9	23.1	18	46.2	4	10.3	7	17.9	1	2.6
Schools administrators style of management influences positively	6	15.4	25	64.1	-	-	4	10.3	4	10.3
Other factors can also influence positively	3	7.7	30	76.9	-	-	6	15.4	-	-
<b>Average percentage</b>	<b>Agreed</b>				<b>Uncertain</b>		<b>Disagreed</b>			
	<b>54%</b>				<b>5%</b>		<b>41%</b>			

**Source: Field data, March, 2015**

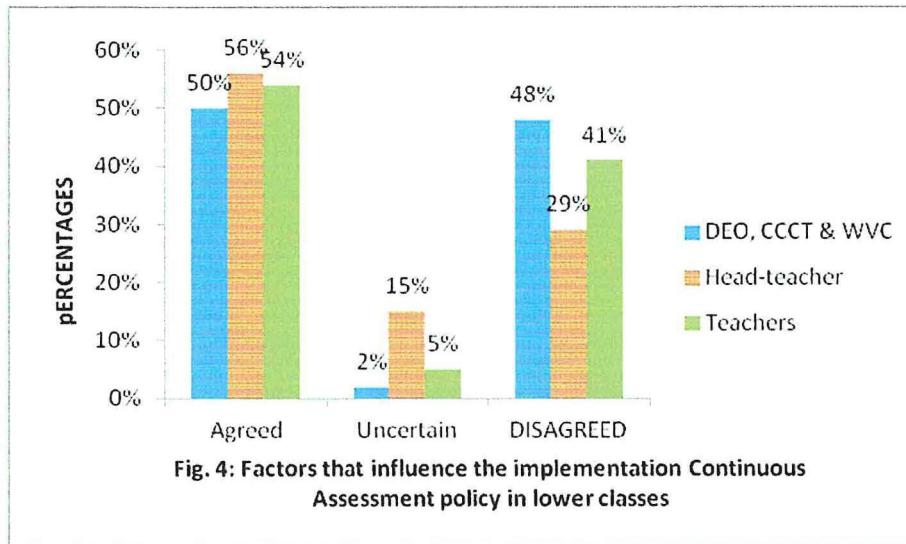
In Table 17, findings show that there were different factors influencing the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in lower classes in primary schools. On average 54.3% of the

respondents (DEO, CCT World Vision Coordinators responses) agreed that the identified factors influence the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in lower classes in primary schools. Averages of 4.6% of the respondents were uncertain, while on average 41.1% of the respondents disagreed.

The major factors which influence positively the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in lower classes in primary schools include: ‘adequate school facilities as agreed by 76.9% of the respondents’, ‘teachers’ motivation’ as agreed by 79.5% of the respondents, and ‘teachers competence in carrying out Continuous Assessment’ as agreed by 74.4% of the respondents, teachers attitude as agreed by 69.3.4% of the respondents, ‘schools administrators style of management’ as agreed by 79.5% of the respondents, and ‘other factors’ as agreed by 84.6% of the respondents (teachers).

On the other hand those factors that influence negatively the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in lower classes in primary schools include: teacher and pupil absenteeism as disagreed by 53.8% of the respondents, high enrolment as disagreed by 66.7% of the respondents, and the class teacher system as disagreed by 54.4% of the respondents (teachers).

**Figure 4: Respondents agreement on factors that influence Continuous Assessment policy**



**Source: Field data, March, 2015**

On average 50% of the respondents (DEO, CCT World Vision Coordinators responses), 56 % of the head teachers and 54 % of the teachers’ agreed that the identified factors influence the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in lower classes in primary schools. While 2% of the respondents, (DEO, CCT World Vision Coordinators responses), 15% of the head teachers and 5% of the teachers were uncertain. On the other hand, 48% of the respondents (DEO, CCT World Vision Coordinators responses), 29% of the head teachers and 41% of the teachers disagreed.

The findings in research question three showed that there were different factors influencing the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in lower classes in Kamuda Sub-county including: school facilities, teachers’ motivation, teachers’ competences, teachers and pupils attendance, pupils’ enrolment, teachers’ attitudes, head-teachers’ leadership styles and other factors.

In the interviews that were conducted, the DEO, CCT, Head-teachers and Heads of Infants were asked to give their perception on other different factors influencing the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in lower classes. Their views were summarized as, language barrier for some teachers and pupils, lack of Continuous Professional Developments for lower primary teachers, high pupil teacher ratio of an average of 150:1, late (towards mid-term) provision of teachers preparatory tools due to delay of UPE funds, frequent changing of schools by the pupils and lack of classrooms hence nowhere to display instructional materials. On management of IMS, one head teacher had this to say,

*“When wind comes, it tears some of the charts and throws the portable chalkboard on the learners who will be seated on the floor. It's a big challenge, Government should think.”*

One of the head of infants lamented that,

*“The teachers' houses are leaking and whenever it rains they have to dry their property including pupils' books. Many houses are attacked by termites which have also eaten the teachers' food. Will you expect such teachers to carry out your Continuous Assessment?”*

Another head of infants from another school added that,

*“We are suffering from here, we just have to look for books, the books that are to be marched with the curriculum are not there.”*

The various challenges as reported above as a serious drawback to the teachers hence affecting the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in lower primary classes.

The findings from the responses to questionnaires, and interview guides conducted for question three on the factors influencing the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in lower classes showed that there were different factors influencing the

implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in lower classes and they include; school facilities, teachers motivation, teachers competences, teachers and pupils attendance, pupils enrolment, teachers attitudes, head-teachers leadership styles, language barrier for some teachers and pupils, lack of Continuous Professional Development courses for lower primary teachers, high pupil-teacher ratio of an average of 150:1, late( towards mid-term) provision of teachers preparatory tools due to delay of UPE funds delay, lack of teachers accommodation and frequent change of schools by the pupils.

#### **4.4.4 Research Question Four: What Strategies can improve the implementation of Continuous Assessment?**

To find out the strategies that can improve the implementation of Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes in primary schools in Kamuda Sub-county, Soroti District, the researcher administered questionnaires to DEO, CCT, World Vision Education Coordinators, Head-teachers and teachers. Interviews were also administered to the DEO, and CCT, Head-teachers, Heads of Infants. The responses were summarized according to the categories of respondents as given in table 9(a)-(c).

##### **4.4.4 (a) DEO, CCT and World Vision Education Coordinators' responses**

The findings on the factors influence the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in lower classes were summarized as in tables 12(a) – (c).

**Table 18: DEO, CCT and World Vision Coordinators' strategies that can improve the implementation of Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes (n=04)**

<b>Strategies that can improve the implementation of Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes</b>	Frequency	%
There is need to have continuous support supervision by the Inspectors, CCTs, DEO and Head-teachers	02	50
There is need to train the head-teachers, DEO CCT, and Inspector on continuous assessment policy in primary schools- CPDS	01	25
There is need to have adequate facilities in schools such as desks, stationary and classrooms	01	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>04</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field data, March, 2015**

In Table 18, the findings show that there were strategies that can improve the implementation of Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes. They include; the need to have continuous support supervision by the Inspectors, CCTs, DEO and Head-teachers as suggested by 50% of the respondents, the need to train the head-teachers, DEO CCT, and Inspector on continuous assessment policy in primary schools, need for CPDs as suggested by 25% of the respondents, need to have adequate facilities in schools such as desks, stationary and classrooms as suggested by 25% of the respondents.

#### **4.4.4 (b) Head-teachers' responses**

Head-teachers were also asked to identify the Strategies that can improve the implementation of Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes and their responses were summarized as shown in table 18.

**Table 19: Head-teachers' responses on strategies that can improve the implementation of Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes (n=13)**

<b>Strategies that can improve the implementation of Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes</b>	Frequency	%
All head-teachers should be trained and parents on thematic curriculum including continuous Assessment policy for easy monitoring of the whole process	05	38.5
There is need to design mark sheets to ease the teachers work and enough instructional materials	05	38.5
There is need to secure cupboards for all lower primary classes. This will help keep all the records involving continuous Assessment	03	23.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field data, March, 2015**

In Table 19, findings show that there were different suggestions on strategies that can improve the implementation of Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes. They include; all head-teachers should be trained on thematic curriculum including continuous Assessment policy for easy monitoring of the whole process as suggested by 38.5% of the respondents, there is need to design mark sheets to ease the teachers work and enough instructional materials as suggested by 38% of the respondents and there is need to secure cupboards for all lower primary classes. This will help keep all the records involving continuous Assessment as suggested by 23% of the respondents.

#### 4.4.4 (c) Teachers' responses

To generate more information the teachers were also asked to identify the strategies that can improve the implementation of Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes. The results were summarized in table 20.

**Table 20: Teachers' responses on Strategies that can improve the implementation of Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes (n=39)**

<b>Strategies that can improve the implementation of Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>%</b>
There is need to design mark sheets to ease the teachers work and provision of enough instructional materials, and facilities such as classrooms and desks	21	53.8
There is need to increase the number of teachers in lower primary classes at least two per stream/class	10	25.6
Lower primary teachers need to be motivated by way of increasing their salary	06	15.4
All lower primary classes should have adequate and appropriate writing materials	02	5.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Source: Field data, March, 2015**

In Table 20, findings show that there were different strategies that can improve the implementation of Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes. They include; the need to design mark sheets to ease the teachers work, provision of enough instructional materials, and facilities such as classrooms and desks as suggested by 53.8% of the respondents ,the need to increase the number of teachers in lower primary classes at least two per stream/class as suggested by 25.6% of the respondents, lower primary teachers need to be motivated by

way of increasing their salary as suggested by 15.4% of the respondents, and all lower primary classes should have adequate and appropriate writing materials as suggested by 5.2 % of the respondents.

The findings in research question four showed that there were different suggestions on strategies that can improve the implementation of Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes in Kamuda Sub-county.

In the interviews that were conducted, the DEO, CCT, Head-teachers and Heads of Infants were asked to give their perception on other different strategies that can improve the implementation of Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes.

The DEO had these to say, *“Continuous Assessment is a very good intervention to ensure that our children are learning, however, as a department we need to strengthen, support supervision of teachers’ right from the school level.”*

The CCT had these to say, *“There is need for Continuous Professional Development trainings for teachers’, this will help them manage the implementation of Continuous Assessment well”*

One head teacher had this to say,

*“The government needs to recruit more teachers so as to reduce the current high pupil teacher ratio otherwise will just remain a song on paper with no practical implementation.”*

A head of infants lamented that,

*“Give us two teachers per class so that as one is assessing, the other will be teaching otherwise....”*

Another head of infants added that,

*“All lower primary classes should be learning in classrooms and not under trees. We also need cupboards in our classrooms to keep the assessment records”*

The findings from the responses to questionnaires, and interview guides conducted for question four on strategies that can improve the implementation of Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes and they include: Conducting CPDs for different stakeholders, the DEO,CCT, Inspector of schools and the head-teachers should have always continues Support supervision, More teachers should be added to lower primary classes, more facilities such as classrooms, cupboards and desks should be availed to schools, lower primary teachers should be given extra motivation by increasing their salary.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, presents discussions, conclusion and recommendations to the study.

#### 5.2 Discussion of Study Findings

The discussion was based on the three objectives of the study. Therefore, the section was subdivided into the following subsections: Identify Continuous Assessment Policy positions; examine the extent to which components of the Continuous Assessment Policy are being implemented in lower primary classes and establish factors that influence the implementation of Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes in Kamuda, Soroti District.

##### 5.2.1 Continuous Assessment Policy positions

On average 98% of the respondents (DEO, CCT and World Vision Education Coordinators), 90% of Head-teachers, and 84% of Teachers agreed that there are Continuous Assessment policy positions in primary schools. While 3% of the respondents (head teachers), 6% of the teachers were uncertain. None among the DEO, CCT and World Vision Education Coordinators was uncertain. On the other hand, 8% of the respondents (DEO, CCT and World Vision Education Coordinators), 7% of the head teachers and 10% of the teachers disagreed on the existence of Continuous Assessment policy positions in primary schools

Therefore, the findings of the study revealed that Continuous Assessment policy position is very clear, with a good vision but the implementation is a challenge especially to the classroom teachers, learners, administration and the parents. This explains why Continuous Assessment Policy is not well implemented in most schools in Kamuda Sub-county, Soroti District, more especially in the use of mother tongue for planning and as a medium of

instruction. The history of assessment shows a long line of structural changes each designed to supplant the quality control in education, used before it. It uses a testing system which is designed to measure students' performance and hold school accountable. In line with this argument, Rink (2006) asserts that one of the recent directions of educational reform has been the emphasis of Continuous Assessment in the teaching learning process. Globally, Continuous Assessment is seen as a key factor in all education systems.

The study established that Continuous Assessment policy has guide lines as agreed by 100% of DEO, CCT and World Vision education coordinators, 100% of the head teachers and 87.1% of the teachers. In most countries, Continuous Assessment of pupils forms an integral part of the teaching and learning process and thus, ultimately, an instrumental process in improving the quality of education. The process of pupils' assessment is usually regulated by special legislative acts or National Curricula Guidelines and Teacher Manuals, Jan (2009), which stipulates regulations setting out the basic principles of assessment, including its aims and sometimes a range of recommended approaches. Other aspects of assessment very often covered by legislative documents are the possible grading of pupils, criteria for their progression through school, reporting arrangements and communication with parents. In addition, the guideline gives the following as the basic modes of assessment in lower primary classes: checklist, direct observation, oral work, written work and practical work (National Curriculum Development Centre (2007).

The study findings also revealed that Continuous Assessment policy positions require teachers to be in the lead for good record management as agreed by 100% of DEO, CCT and World Vision education coordinators, 100% of the head teachers and 92.3% of the teachers. Similarly, Adebowale&Alao (2008) disclosed that Continuous Assessment as an instructional process in Nigeria started way back in 1977 as recommended by the National Council on

Education (NCE) through the National Policy on Education with the idea that it would enable educators to be more involved in the overall assessment of learners and allow for diverse instructional methods. This has taken route at all levels of Nigerian education system.

The study findings confirmed that Continuous Assessment has to be carried out throughout the year as agreed by 100% of DEO, CCT and World Vision education coordinators, 92.3% of the head teachers and 89.7% of the teachers. Also, in the Early Childhood and Development Policy of 2007, this targets all children below eight years of age, entailing three definitive categories: from birth to three years; three to six years and six to eight years equally spells out the need to assess learners continuously other than subjecting them to inappropriate written examinations. Examinations may make learners to slowly move away from school in form of irregular attendance. It involves assessing the daily classroom participation of pupils, their coursework, oral and written tests and assignments, and practical assignments or project work. It can be used for both formative and summative purposes. In all countries, formative assessment is performed by teachers on an on-going basis as an integral part of their activity throughout the school year. It is aimed at monitoring and improving the process of both teaching and learning, by providing direct feedback to teachers and pupils alike.

These study findings confirmed that Continuous Assessment should be carried out basing on themes as agreed by 100% of DEO, CCT and World Vision education coordinators, 92.3% of the head teachers and 91.8% of the teachers. Similarly (Assessment Guidelines for Primary One, National Curriculum Development Centre (2007) observed that Uganda implemented the Thematic Curriculum, (for lower primary classes) and in line with the above statutory documents, this curricular puts a lot of emphasis on assessing learners' achievement of competences which has to be done continuously. 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. These assessments are curriculum-based tasks previously taught in class (Ojerinde, 2011).

Continuous Assessment, is an alternative or supplement to high stakes testing of pupil achievement, it offers a methodology for measuring pupil performance and using those findings to improve the success of pupils and is part of regular teacher-pupil interactions. Teachers learn areas in which students need review and remediation and which pupils are ready to move on to more complex work. Thus, the results of the assessments help to ensure that all pupils make learning progress throughout the school cycle thereby increasing their achievement levels, (Ojerinde, 2011).

### **5.2.2 The Extent to which Components of the Continuous Assessment Policy are being implemented in Lower Primary Classes**

On average 62% of the respondents thus DEO, CCT and World Vision Coordinators responses, 72% of the head teachers and 75% of the teachers' agreed that Continuous Assessment Policy have been implemented in lower primary classes. While 19 % of the respondents, thus DEO, CCT and World Vision Coordinators responses, 13% of the head teachers and 5% of the teachers were uncertain .On the other hand, 19% of the responses by DEO, CCT, and World Vision Coordinators responses, 15% of the head teachers and 20% of the teachers who disagreed.

Therefore, the findings confirmed that Continuous Assessment Policy has been implemented in lower primary classes in Kamuda Sub-county but there are still gaps in the implementation especially in: records of Continuous Assessment are not available whenever asked for and those that had their records were not done objectively, and some schools were using

summative assessment in lower primary classes contrary to the Continuous Assessment Policy. It is for this reason that the respondents interviewed reported that there is very little impact of Continuous Assessment policy realized and the level of implementation was 49%.

One of the striking features of curriculum change and implementation is the perceived mismatch between the intended curriculum and the classroom reality, that is, disparity between policy and practice (Rogan 2007; Chisholm and Leyendecker, 2008; Bantwini, 2010). Similarly, Chisholm and Leyendecker (2008) examined the gaps between policy and practice in relation to curriculum change and argued that, while there is agreement on the aims of reforms, there is evidence of divergence in practice. They argue that in practice ideas are often re-contextualized and displaced and, therefore, they are often unable to meet the social development goals demanded of them. Likewise, in the most successful cases a firm national commitment to change was combined with an acceptance of diversity at the school level; an insistence on school accountability and an effective mix of dissemination strategies. Furthermore, Verspoor (1989) claims that the diversity in schools needs to be taken into account to implement large-scale changes.

In her study, Smit (2001) looked at primary school educators' experiences of policy change in South Africa, Smit (2001) states that perhaps the time has come to involve educators, who are involved in implementing the policy, to fully participate in the policy change process. According to her, in South Africa, many educators who operate at classroom levels were not involved when the new education policy was developed. They were only called for workshops in which they were told that the policy had changed and that they were to effect the changes in their classrooms. It's doubtful whether the workshops were enough to equip educators with skills to facilitate the new policy efficiently. Therefore, Sergiovanni (1998) proposes a continuum of forces of educational change. These changes consist of, on the one

side, top–down (or external) end of the continuum and on the other side, bottom–up [or community-based] end of the continuum. In contrast to the superficial top-down changes, the community-based changes are likely to be deep and enduring according to Rogan and Grayson (2003). Therefore, it is important for the curriculum implementation process that sufficient attention is paid to the bottom-up changes that are needed for curriculum changes to take root on the ground.

Rogan & Grayson (2003) argued that large-scale changes often neglect the process of implementation and, likewise, low outcomes of educational changes are mainly the result of poor implementation of what was essentially a good idea (Verspoor, 2010). Overall, the developing world has witnessed many examples of well-intentioned and well-designed curriculum reform programs that have failed to take root on the ground. One of the principal reasons, therefore, appears to be lack of clearly worked-out implementation strategies that take the national and local context into account (Rogan & Grayson, 2011). There is now a common understanding that policy makers need to consider and plan for the implementation stage for reforms to be successful (Altinyelken, 2010). Often, the general way of thinking about curriculum implementation has been rather top-down and according to Chisholm and Leyendecker, (2008). There is a critical lack of link between the big idea and changing actual classroom practice that must be recognized. However, there is a strong belief that policies designed are hardly implemented and if at all they are implemented, it will be inadequately done.

However, Plessis (2003) as cited in Muluken (2006) points out that Continuous Assessment as a system appears to rest on a well- considered theoretical underpinning and there are major short comings at the practical implementation level. As such, the current Continuous Assessment and monitoring procedures and practice do not seem to contribute and inform

classroom practices as optimally as originally intended. There is therefore, need to find out whether this assertion holds water on the ground. Teachers face challenges while they assess students' work in an educational setting where they have not enough access to the type of assessment information that will enable them to carry out the assessment accurately and fairly.

In conformity to this, Fradd and Lee (2001) in Pierce (2002) disclosed that most teachers feel unprepared to assess in the way the institution or the department requires them to do. In relation to this, Ellindation and Earl (1997:97) had this to say:

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

### **5.2.3 Factors that Influence the implementation of Continuous Assessment in Lower Primary**

On average 50% of the respondents (DEO, CCT World Vision Coordinators responses), 56 % of the head teachers and 54 % of the teachers agreed that the identified factors influence the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in lower classes in primary schools. While 2% of the respondents, (DEO, CCT World Vision Coordinators responses), 15% of the head teachers and 5% of the teachers were uncertain .On the other hand, 48% of the respondents (DEO, CCT World Vision Coordinators' responses), 29% of the head teachers and 41% of the teachers who disagreed.

Therefore, the study established that there were different factors influencing the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in lower classes in Kamuda Sub-county, Soroti District.

This study finding revealed that school facilities affect the implementation of Continuous Assessment with up to 75% of the DEO, CCT World Vision Coordinators in acceptance; 76.9% of the head-teachers and 76.9% of the teachers also agreed to this. Similarly, 100% of the respondents, (DEO, CCT World Vision Coordinators) 30.8% of the head-teachers and 53.8% of the teachers disagreed with the statement that high enrolment influences positively the implementation of Continuous Assessment.

According to the Northern Province Department of Education Policy document (2000), overcrowding in classrooms and shortage of resources are some of the problems that can be encountered during assessment in South Africa. Similarly, Killen (2003) states the following as being some of the challenges educators face when implementing Continuous Assessment: large classes, lack of facilities and multicultural classrooms.

It was also found in the study that teachers' attitudes, head-teachers leadership styles, language barrier for some teachers and pupils, frequent change of schools by the pupils, teachers and pupils attendance, teachers motivation, teachers competences, as they lack Continuous Professional Developments for lower primary teachers, and late (towards mid-term) provision of teachers preparatory tools due to delay of UPE funds delay and influence the implementation of Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes. This is why Rogan & Grayson, (2003) asserted that overall; the developing world has witnessed many examples of well-intentioned and well-designed curriculum reform programmes that have failed to take root on the ground. One of the principal reasons, thereto, appears to be a lack of clearly worked-out implementation strategies that take the national and local context into account. However, the Continuous Assessment has been characterized with issues of validity and reliability of Continuous Assessment scores arising from variations in teacher competencies, inadequate findings, motivation and support from school and institutional administration;

shortage of teachers, frequent transfer of learners to other schools due to unavoidable reasons and inadequate support in supervision (Cree et al. 1998).

According to Balogun (1995) factors that limit effective curriculum implementation in Nigeria include inadequate planning, syllabus overloading or unrealistic goals, insufficient teachers and lack of adequate resources. Others are lack of in-service training, lack of commitment from both government and teachers, and lack of adequate monitoring and evaluation in the education system. Agba (2007) who all observes that factors that limit the effective implementation of curriculum in Nigeria include – inadequate planning, insufficient teachers, syllabus overloading, incessant strikes, lack of infrastructural facilities among others concurs with this claim.

Matome (2010) cites School Managers challenges such as absenteeism, learners' disciplinary problems, and learners' attitude towards education, learners' language barriers, and late supply of pacesetters by the district offices, insufficient resources, and limited curriculum services as a result of lack of the curriculum advisors particularly for Mathematics and Accounting in the District. However, the lack of adequate training and the high illiteracy levels of parents may also be associated with this. These research findings are to bring positive judgments to the said claims raised here.

In conformity to this, Fradd and Lee (2001) in Pierce (2002) disclosed that most teachers feel unprepared to assess in the way the institution or the department requires them to do.

In addition, Bantwini, (2010) observed that factors such as their background, training, subject matter knowledge, motivation, commitment to teaching, and attitudes towards proposed innovation influence their capacity and willingness to implement change. Finally, the strengths and constraints of the students are also essential for change to take place in the

classroom. The background of the students influences their capacity to learn. A range of issues influence student attitudes to learning and ability to respond to changes, such as their home environments, parental commitment to education, health and nutrition, and proficiency level in the language of instruction

#### **5.2.4 Strategies to improve the implementation of Continuous Assessment in lower primary**

The findings in research question four showed that there were different suggestions on strategies that can improve the implementation of Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes in Kamuda Sub-county and they include:

Conducting CPDs for different stakeholders, such as the DEO,CCT, Inspector of schools, head-teachers and teachers.

The findings suggest that the DEO, CCTs Inspectors among others should always conduct continues Support supervision. The findings agree with Tao (2010) that the challenges of implementing Continuous Assessment Policy in Thematic Curriculum require improved and effective monitoring and inspection of schools and their performance. UNESCO (2012) believes that monitoring of education in Uganda is mainly done through the DES, but they are not capable enough for their task. Ward, et al. (2006) affirms that without monitoring or somebody coming over to check, there is nothing going on in a lot of schools. In addition, Winkler and Gershberg (2003) convinced that Africa still has issues to do with facilitation and logistics in monitoring which cripples school inspectors. And because effective implementation of Thematic Curriculum demands or requires them to reach each and every school, they should be facilitated to reach the schools they need to monitor.

The findings showed that more teachers should be added to lower primary classes, more facilities such as classrooms, cupboards and desks should be availed to schools. This is in line with DES report,(2012) who observed that efforts should be stepped up to reach out these resources in time to all the schools. Ninsiima, (2007) advises that government should stop focusing on the process (procedures, bidding process, and where they can eat some money) and pay attention on the product. It doesn't matter what procedure is followed, as long as the product is of good quality. UWEZO (2011), in their Annual Learning Continuous Assessment Report advises that the physical resources are needed for the successful implementation of the lower primary curriculum, learning materials should be availed, therefore the Government of Uganda has to mobilize the resources and buy reading materials, teaching materials so that implementation of the curriculum reforms is properly done EFA Global Monitoring Report, (2005). However, the provision of physical resources may not be credit worthy for the implementation of the lower primary Curriculum.

On the other hand the findings suggest that lower primary teachers should be given extra motivation by increasing their salary. Sergiovanni (2005) advises that there is need for inspectors to be availed with motorcycles, and facilitated with fuel, so that they can be able to verify head teachers' reports to avoid a situation where the inspection report becoming a 'commodity' that is, practices of schools paying an inspector to write a positive report, for example increase in numbers of enrolment.

### **5.3 Conclusions from the Study**

This study was conducted to assess the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in the lower primary classes in Kamuda Sub-county, Soroti District in Eastern Uganda, so as to improve the quality of learning in lower primary classes.

In objective one, it was found that Continuous Assessment policy position is very clear, with a good vision, and identified stakeholders were aware of it but the implementation is a challenge especially to the classroom teachers, learners, administration and the parents. This explains why Continuous Assessment policy is not well implemented in most schools in Kamuda Sub-county, Soroti District.

In objective two, it was established that Continuous Assessment Policy has been implemented in lower primary classes but there are still gaps as up-to-date records of Continuous Assessment are not available whenever asked and those that had their records were not done objectively, and some schools were using summative assessment in lower primary classes in contrary to the Continuous Assessment Policy.

In objective three, it was discovered that school facilities and pupils' enrolment where high pupil teacher ratio is of an average of 150:1 which results to overcrowding of pupils in the classrooms and shortage of resources in schools hence affecting the implementation of Continuous Assessment Policy in lower primary classes in Kamuda Sub-county, Soroti District. It was also found in the study that teachers' attitudes, head-teachers' leadership styles, language barrier for some teachers and pupils, frequent change of schools by the pupils, teachers and pupils attendance, teachers motivation, teachers competences as they lack Continuous Professional Developments for lower primary teachers, and late (towards mid-term) provision of teachers preparatory tools due to delay of UPE funds delay influence the implementation of Continuous Assessment Policy in lower primary classes in Kamuda Sub-county, Soroti District.

Objective Four: the study findings revealed that different strategies can improve the implementation of continuous assessment in lower primary classes. Such strategies include; the need to design mark sheets to ease the teachers work, provision of enough instructional

materials and facilities such as classrooms and desks, reducing the teacher pupils' ratio, increasing salaries for lower primary teachers and strengthening support supervision of teaching and learning in schools.

In conclusion, there is an attempt by teachers and parents to implement the Continuous Assessment policy but there are still gaps as it's not implemented as per the policy guidelines due to some hindering factors which require different strategies to be put in place.

On the other hand, right from the onset of the implementation of the Continuous Assessment Policy in lower primary classes, the Government embarked on teacher training so as to build their capacity in curriculum implementation but, one may wonder whether the said training has adequately brought out the necessary competencies required of these teachers.

#### **5.4 Recommendations made from the study**

This study made the following recommendations:

There is need to have capacity building on implementation strategies through regular workshops and or seminars for the District Education Officers, Inspectors, Head teachers, teachers and parents on the lower primary curriculum.

There is need for government through the Ministry of Education Science, Technology and Sports to plan for proper training of teachers' on Continuous Assessment Policy. Trainers who are experts and well qualified in the area of Continuous Assessment should be used to equip teachers with practical skills of Continuous Assessment.

There is need for policy makers in the Ministry of Education, Technology, Science and Sports to revisit the pupil-teacher ratio and the class teacher system. This will enable a teacher to teach and assess a manageable number of learners more effectively and efficiently.

## **5.5 Areas of further research**

The following areas are suggested for further research:

1. The relationship between Thematic Curriculum trainings and teacher competencies to handle Continuous Assessment in primary schools.
2. The impact of Continuous Assessment policy implementation in lower primary classes.

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**APPENDICES**

**Appendix A**

**QUESTIONNAIRE FOR DEO, HEAD TEACHERS, CCT & TEACHERS**

Dear Participant,

Please take a few minutes to complete this questionnaire. Feel free to provide as much information as you can. All the information provided shall be confidential and will only be used for academic purposes.

**SECTION A: Background information.**

**Name** : .....( Optional)

**Institution**..... **Position**.....

**Gender**

a. Male                       b. Female

**Age bracket**

a. (20-25)                       b. (26-30)                       c. (31-35)   
d. (36-45)                       e. (46 above)

**Qualification:**

Grade III Certificate   
Diploma   
Degree   
Post Graduate

**Work experience**

(a) Less than a year   
(b) One year

(c) More than two years

(d) More than five years

**SECTION B: Continuous Assessment policy positions**

In this section, use the following scale to indicate the best option that reflects your opinion on each of the statements. You may tick or circle the number that best describes your opinion on each of the statements. For example, if you strongly agree with the statement, circle or tick number 1 against that statement.

1. Strongly agree                      2. Agree                      3. Uncertain  
4. Disagree                      5. Strongly Disagree

No.	Item	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Continuous Assessment is a policy issue in lower primary classes.					
2	Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes has policy guidelines to be followed by teachers					
3	Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes is competence based					
4	Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes should be done objectively					
5	Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes has various methods to be used					
6	Continuous Assessment is ongoing in the lower primary classes throughout the year					
7	Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes is theme based					
8	Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes requires good record management					
9	Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes is done both in and outside the classroom					
10	Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes has replaced summative examinations					

11. In your opinion how can we improve Continuous Assessment practices?

.....  
.....

**SECTION C:** Extent to which components of the Continuous Assessment Policy is being implemented in lower primary classes

No.	Item	1	2	3	4	5
1	Teachers in lower primary classes implement Continuous Assessment following competences to be achieved					
2	Teachers in lower primary classes carryout Continuous Assessment objectively					
3	Teachers in lower primary classes carryout Continuous Assessment using various methods					
4	Teachers in lower primary classes carryout Continuous Assessment through the year					
5	Teachers in lower primary classes carryout Continuous Assessment basing on themes					
6	Teachers in lower primary classes have all records on Continuous Assessment					
7	Teachers in lower primary classes carry out Continuous Assessment both in and outside the classroom					
8	Teachers in lower primary classes no longer carryout summative assessment					

9. In your opinion how can we improve Continuous Assessment practices?

.....

.....

**Section D: Factors that influence the implementation of Continuous Assessment in the lower primary classes.**

No.	Item	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Adequate school facilities influences positively the implementation of Continuous Assessment in the lower primary classes					
2.	Availability of teacher accommodation influences positively the implementation of Continuous Assessment in the lower primary classes					
3.	Teachers motivation influences positively the implementation of Continuous Assessment in the lower primary classes					
4.	Teachers competence in carry out Continuous Assessment influences positively the implementation of Continuous Assessment in the lower primary classes					
5.	Teacher and pupil absenteeism influences positively the implementation of Continuous Assessment in the lower primary classes					
6.	High enrolment influences positively the implementation of Continuous Assessment in the lower primary classes					
7.	The class teacher system influences positively the implementation of Continuous Assessment in the lower primary classes					
8.	Teachers knowledge of Special Needs Education influences positively the implementation of Continuous Assessment in the lower primary classes					
9.	Teachers frequent teacher transfers influences positively the implementation of Continuous Assessment in the lower primary classes					
10	Availability of adequate Instructional materials in lower primary classes influences positively the implementation of Continuous Assessment					
11	Teachers attitude influences positively the implementation of Continuous Assessment in the lower primary classes					
12	Schools administrators style of management influences positively the implementation of Continuous Assessment in the lower primary classes					
13	Other factors can also influence positively the implementation of Continuous Assessment in the lower primary classes					

14. In your opinion how can we improve Continuous Assessment practices?

.....  
.....

**Section D: Strategies that can improve the implementation Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes.**

What strategies can be put in place to improve the implementation Continuous Assessment in lower primary classes?

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

**Thank You for your time!**

**Appendix B**  
**INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR KEY INFORMANTS**  
(DEO, CCT, Head-Teachers and Head of Infants)

I want to thank you for taking the time to meet with me today. My name is **Ilenyot Jennifer, Education policy, planning and management master’s degree student at Kyambogo University**. I would like to talk to you about your experiences participating in the implementation of the lower primary curriculum. Specifically, I am assessing the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in schools. The interview should take less than thirty minutes. I will be taking notes because I don’t want to miss any of your comments.

All responses will be kept confidential. This means that your interview responses will only be used for academic purposes. The information that will be reflected in the research report will not identify you as the respondent. Remember, you don’t have to talk about anything you don’t want to.

**Position:**.....

**Designation:**.....

**Gender:** .....

1. What is the perception about Continuous Assessment policy?
2. Which stakeholders is the Continuous Assessment policy targeting?
3. Why is the Continuous Assessment policy targeting the stakeholders you have listed above?
4. What shows that the above listed stakeholders are aware of the Continuous Assessment policy?

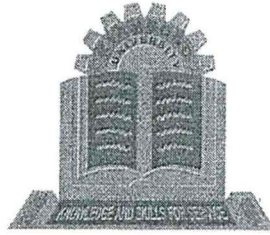
5. What is the level of implementation of Continuous Assessment Policy lower primary classes?
6. What is the impact of the implementation of the Continuous Assessment policy in lower primary classes?
7. What other factors influence the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in lower primary classes?
8. How do the above listed factors influence the implementation of Continuous Assessment policy in lower primary classes?
9. In your opinion how can we improve Continuous Assessment practices?

**Thank you very much for your time**

Appendix C

INTRODUCTORY LETTER FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL  
PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT-KYAMBOGO UNIVERSITY

**KYAMBOGO**



**UNIVERSITY**

P. O. BOX 1 KYAMBOGO, KAMPALA - UGANDA  
Tel: 041 - 285211 Fax: 220464  
www. Kyambogo.ac.ug

*Department of Educational Planning Management*

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Date: 12<sup>th</sup> February 2015

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

This is to certify that **ILENYOT Jennifer, Reg. No. 12/U/083/GMED/PE**, is a student in our department pursuing a Master's Degree of Education in Policy Planning and Management. She is carrying out research as one of the requirements of the course. She requires data and any other information on this topic entitled:

***Assessment of the Implementation of Continuous Assessment Policy in Lower Primary Classes in Uganda. A Case of Kamuda, Soroti District***

Any assistance accorded to her is highly welcome. She is strictly under instructions to use the data and any other information gathered for research purposes only.

