

The Promise and Failure of Continuous Assessment in SADC

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Abstract

This study investigates the implementation of continuous assessment (CA) in higher education within the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, addressing the challenges educators face and the potential benefits of this approach. Grounded in the Constructivist Learning Theory, which emphasises active engagement and knowledge construction, the research highlights how CA can enhance student learning outcomes through ongoing feedback and tailored teaching strategies. A desktop review methodology was employed, analysing 30 relevant studies, reports and policy documents published between 2020 and 2023. Key findings revealed that while teachers recognised the value of CA in promoting student engagement and improving learning, they often feel unprepared to implement it effectively due to inadequate training, infrastructural challenges and socio-economic factors affecting both educators and students. The findings from the desktop review revealed that teachers in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region have mixed experiences with the implementation of continuous assessment (CA). Many educators recognise the potential benefits of CA, such as promoting student engagement and providing ongoing feedback to enhance learning outcomes. The study underscores the need for targeted professional development, improved resource allocation and supportive school leadership to facilitate the successful adoption of continuous assessment practices. Through these efforts, the potential of CA can be realised, contributing to a more equitable educational environment in the SADC Region.

Keywords: Continuous assessment, teacher preparedness, socio-economic factors, constructivist learning theory

Introduction

Continuous assessment has become an important part of education in many countries, especially in the Southern African Development Community (Ndlovu, 2022). This method focuses on evaluating students' learning throughout the course, rather than only at the end through big exams. The idea is to help students learn better by providing regular feedback. However, while CA has many benefits, there are challenges that make it hard to implement effectively.

Research shows that many teachers in the SADC region feel unprepared to use continuous assessment methods. A study by Moyo and Chikoko (2020) found that teachers often lack the training needed to design and carry out effective assessments. This lack of training creates confusion and inconsistency in how assessments are applied. Moreover, in some areas, schools do not have the necessary resources, such as technology and learning materials, which further complicates the situation (Chikoko & Moyo, 2021).

Socio-economic factors also play a crucial role in the success of continuous assessment. Many students come from low-income families, which can limit their access to learning resources like textbooks and internet connectivity. According to research by Ndlovu (2022), these disadvantages can lead to lower performance in assessments. Additionally, teachers' expectations can be influenced by students' backgrounds, affecting how they implement

continuous assessment (Mafunga, 2023).

Despite these challenges, there is hope for improving continuous assessment practices in the SADC region. By focusing on better teacher training and providing necessary resources, educational authorities can help create a more effective learning environment. Collaboration between schools and communities can also provide additional support for students facing socio-economic challenges. This research aims to explore the current state of continuous assessment in SADC higher education institutions, highlighting both the potential benefits and the barriers that need to be addressed.

Background to the Study

Continuous assessment is an important educational strategy that aims to improve learning outcomes by evaluating students' progress throughout their courses instead of relying solely on final exams (Moyo, 2023). In the SADC region, this method has gained attention as a tool to enhance educational quality and student engagement. However, various challenges hinder its effective implementation, making it crucial to explore the background and context of continuous assessment in this region.

The shift toward continuous assessment reflects a global trend in education, where traditional methods of testing are increasingly seen as inadequate for measuring student understanding (Mafunga, 2023). In SADC countries, many educators recognise that ongoing evaluations can provide more accurate insights into student learning and help tailor teaching strategies to meet individual needs (Moyo, 2023). This approach aligns with modern educational philosophies that emphasise student-centred learning and active engagement. Despite the potential benefits of continuous assessment, significant obstacles remain. A study by Chikanda and Maphosa (2023) highlights that many teachers in the SADC region feel unprepared to implement CA effectively. This lack of confidence often stems from insufficient training in assessment methodologies. Research indicates that many educators have not received specific professional development related to continuous assessment, leading to inconsistent application of its principles in classrooms (Zinyemba et al., 2022).

Furthermore, infrastructural challenges significantly affect the implementation of continuous assessment in SADC schools. Many educational institutions, especially in rural areas, lack access to essential resources such as technology and learning materials (Ndlovu et al., 2023). This scarcity of resources limits teachers' ability to conduct effective assessments and provide meaningful feedback to students. Overcrowded classrooms often exacerbate these issues, making it difficult for educators to give individual attention to each student (Mafunga, 2023).

Socio-economic factors also play a crucial role in the effectiveness of continuous assessment practices in the SADC region. Many schools serving low-income communities face additional barriers, such as limited access to learning resources, which can hinder student engagement with assessment activities (Chikoko, 2020). Research shows that students from disadvantaged backgrounds often struggle to participate fully in continuous assessment due to external pressures, such as family responsibilities and financial instability (Ndlovu, 2022). These challenges not only affect their performance but also perpetuate cycles of inequity in educational outcomes.

Additionally, the broader socio-economic environment influences teachers' perceptions of their students' abilities. A study by Moyo (2023) found that educators in affluent areas are more likely to embrace continuous assessment because they perceive their students as better

prepared and more capable. In contrast, those in economically disadvantaged areas often express scepticism about the effectiveness of continuous assessment, citing concerns over their students' readiness (Chikanda & Maphosa, 2023). This perception can negatively impact how teachers design assessments and provide feedback, further limiting opportunities for students to demonstrate their capabilities.

Problem Statement

The implementation of continuous assessment in schools across the Southern African Development Community faces several significant challenges that impact the quality of education. Even though many educators recognise the benefits of CA, such as improving student engagement and learning outcomes, numerous obstacles prevent its effective application in classrooms. One major issue is the lack of teacher preparedness. Many teachers feel untrained and overwhelmed when trying to shift from traditional assessment methods, which often rely on final exams, to continuous assessment practices that require ongoing evaluations throughout the learning process (Zinyemba et al., 2022). In addition to teacher preparedness, infrastructural challenges also play a critical role in the successful implementation of continuous assessment. Socio-economic factors further complicate the situation. Students from low-income backgrounds often face additional barriers that hinder their participation in continuous assessment activities. Against this backdrop, this research explored the promise and failure of CA in SADC.

Research Objectives

1. To explore the experiences and perceptions of teachers regarding the implementation of continuous assessment in their classrooms.
2. To examine specific infrastructural challenges teachers face when implementing continuous assessment in underfunded and rural schools.
3. To determine socio-economic factors that influence student participation and engagement in continuous assessment practices in the SADC region.

Research Questions

1. What are the experiences and perceptions of teachers regarding the implementation of continuous assessment in their classrooms?
2. What specific infrastructural challenges do teachers face when implementing continuous assessment in underfunded and rural schools?
3. How do socio-economic factors influence student participation and engagement in continuous assessment practices in the SADC region?

Review of Literature

This section presents the review of literature and theoretical framework related to the potential benefits and challenges of continuous assessment.

Theoretical Framework

The Constructivist Learning Theory provides a framework for understanding the implementation of continuous assessment within the SADC educational context. This theory posits that learners construct knowledge through their experiences and interactions with their environment, emphasising the importance of active engagement in the learning process (Piaget, 1976; Vygotsky, 1978). In the context of continuous assessment, this theoretical perspective highlights the role of formative assessments in facilitating deeper learning and enabling students to take ownership of their educational journeys. Continuous assessment aligns with constructivist principles by encouraging ongoing feedback and adaptive learning strategies.

According to Biggs (2020), such assessments allow educators to tailor their teaching methods to meet the diverse needs of learners, fostering an environment where students can engage with the material more meaningfully. This approach not only enhances understanding but also promotes critical thinking and problem-solving skills, which are essential for success in the 21st century.

Moreover, constructivist theory emphasises the collaborative nature of learning. Research by Duffy and Jonassen (2021) suggests that continuous assessment encourages collaborative learning experiences, where students work together to solve problems and reflect on their learning. This social interaction is crucial for developing competencies and skills that are relevant in real-world contexts. In SADC countries, where educational challenges often stem from socio-economic disparities, fostering collaborative learning through continuous assessment can help mitigate inequalities by creating inclusive learning environments that benefit all students.

However, the effective implementation of continuous assessment within a constructivist framework requires adequately trained teachers who can facilitate such learning experiences. As noted by Maphosa and Mafa (2021), the disconnect between teachers' traditional assessment practices and the principles of continuous assessment can hinder the application of constructivist approaches. Therefore, professional development and support for teachers are essential to bridge this gap and ensure that continuous assessment practices are aligned with constructivist pedagogy. Therefore, the Constructivist Learning Theory underlines the significance of continuous assessment in promoting active, engaged learning. By fostering an environment where students construct knowledge collaboratively, continuous assessment not only enhances educational outcomes but also prepares learners to navigate the complexities of the modern world, (Mafa, 2021). The theory underscores the necessity of teacher training and support in realising the potential of continuous assessment within the SADC educational arena.

Empirical Evidence on Implementation of Continuous Assessment

The successful implementation of continuous assessment heavily relies on the preparedness and training of teachers. Research indicates that many educators in the SADC region feel inadequately trained to transition from traditional assessment methods to continuous assessment practices. For instance, a study by Moyo and Chikoko (2020) highlights that teachers often lack the necessary skills and knowledge to design and implement effective continuous assessment strategies, which can lead to inconsistent application and diminished educational outcomes. This gap in training is particularly pronounced in rural areas, where professional development opportunities are limited.

Furthermore, the literature suggests that ongoing professional development is crucial for equipping teachers with the skills needed for continuous assessment. According to Maphosa and Mafa (2021), continuous professional development (CPD) programmes that focus on assessment literacy can significantly enhance teachers' confidence and competence in using CA effectively. However, many CPD initiatives in the SADC region are sporadic and lack coherence, resulting in teachers receiving insufficient support to adapt their assessment practices.

Additionally, the cultural context in which teachers operate can influence their preparedness for continuous assessment. Research by Mavhunga and Machingambi (2020) indicates that teachers' beliefs about assessment and their pedagogical approaches are shaped by their educational backgrounds and experiences. This cultural dimension can either facilitate or hinder the adoption of continuous assessment practices, as teachers may resist changes that

conflict with their established beliefs about teaching and learning.

Infrastructural challenges significantly impede the effective implementation of continuous assessment in many SADC educational institutions. A study by Chikoko and Moyo (2021) reveals that inadequate access to technological resources, such as computers and reliable internet connectivity, poses a major barrier to the adoption of continuous assessment practices. Schools in rural areas are particularly affected, as they often lack the necessary infrastructure to support innovative assessment methods, leading to a reliance on traditional, less effective assessment strategies.

Moreover, the physical learning environment plays a crucial role in facilitating continuous assessment. According to a report by the SADC (2022), many schools are characterised by overcrowded classrooms and insufficient learning materials, which hinder teachers' ability to implement continuous assessment effectively. The lack of appropriate assessment tools and resources can lead to a superficial application of CA, where assessments are not aligned with learning objectives or fail to provide meaningful feedback to students.

The socio-economic context further exacerbates these infrastructural challenges. Research by Ndlovu and Maphosa (2021) indicates that schools in economically disadvantaged areas often struggle to secure funding for essential resources, including training for teachers and materials for assessment. This financial strain limits the ability of schools to invest in the necessary infrastructure to support continuous assessment, perpetuating cycles of inequity in educational quality across the region.

Socio-economic factors play a critical role in shaping the implementation and effectiveness of continuous assessment in the SADC region. Research by Maphosa and Mafa (2021) highlights that students from low-income backgrounds often face additional challenges that hinder their engagement with continuous assessment practices. These challenges include limited access to learning resources, such as textbooks and technology, which can negatively impact their performance and overall learning experience.

Furthermore, the socio-economic status of students can influence their teachers' perceptions of continuous assessment. A study by Chikoko (2020) found that teachers in affluent areas were more likely to embrace continuous assessment practices, as they perceived their students to be better prepared and more capable of benefiting from such approaches. In contrast, teachers in underprivileged areas often expressed scepticism about the effectiveness of continuous assessment, citing concerns about their students' readiness and the lack of support available to them.

Additionally, the broader socio-economic environment, including factors such as unemployment and community instability, can affect students' ability to engage with continuous assessment. Research by Ndlovu (2022) indicates that students facing economic hardships may struggle to find the time and resources to participate fully in continuous assessment activities, leading to disparities in learning outcomes. This situation underscores the need for educational policies that consider the socio-economic context of students when designing and implementing continuous assessment frameworks.

Research Methodology

In the context of this study on continuous assessment in the Southern African Development Community region, a desktop review was employed as the primary research methodology. A desktop review, also known as a literature review, involves systematically gathering, analysing and synthesising existing information from various academic sources, such as journal articles,

books, reports and policy documents (Gough et al., 2017). This method allows researchers to build a comprehensive understanding of a topic by examining previously published studies and findings.

Scholars define desktop review as a process that allows researchers to collect data without the need for direct engagement with participants or fieldwork (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006). According to Gough et al. (2017), it serves as an effective approach for gathering secondary data to inform research questions, particularly when exploring established topics or assessing existing evidence. This method enables researchers to identify trends, gaps and inconsistencies in the literature, providing a solid foundation for further research or policy recommendations. Desktop review has several advantages. First, it is a cost-effective and time-efficient method, as it does not require extensive fieldwork or participant recruitment (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006). Researchers can access a vast array of information online and in libraries, allowing for a more extensive review of existing literature. Additionally, a desktop review enables researchers to identify gaps in the literature, guiding future studies and informing policy decisions (Gough et al., 2017).

However, this method also has its limitations. One notable drawback is the potential for bias in selecting sources, as researchers may inadvertently favour studies that align with their perspectives or overlook relevant literature (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006). Furthermore, desktop reviews rely on the quality and accuracy of existing studies. If the available literature is flawed or outdated, it may lead to misleading conclusions (Gough et al., 2017).

In this study, sample size was a critical consideration during the desktop review process. The researchers aimed to include a diverse range of studies to ensure a comprehensive understanding of continuous assessment practices in the SADC region. The review focused on a sample of 30 relevant studies, reports and policy documents published between 2020 and 2023. This sample size was chosen to balance depth and breadth, allowing the researchers to capture a wide array of perspectives and findings within existing literature.

By selecting a sample of 30 sources, the researchers were able to analyse various aspects of continuous assessment, including teacher preparedness, infrastructural challenges and socio-economic factors. This careful selection ensured that the review encompassed both well-established research and emerging perspectives on continuous assessment in the SADC context. By synthesising findings from multiple sources, the researchers were able to highlight key themes and trends in the literature, such as the consistent challenges related to teacher training and resource availability. Furthermore, the desktop review allowed the researchers to contextualise their findings within the broader educational landscape of the SADC region, reinforcing the need for targeted interventions to enhance the implementation of continuous assessment. In the same vein, thematic data analysis method was used where themes were generated from the main research questions of the study.

Research Findings

The research findings section presents the key insights gained from the study on continuous assessment (CA) in the Southern African Development Community region. By analysing existing literature, we aim to understand the challenges and opportunities associated with implementing continuous assessment in higher education. The findings highlight important themes such as teacher preparedness, infrastructural issues and socio-economic factors that impact the effectiveness of CA practices. These insights will help inform strategies for improving educational outcomes and address the barriers faced by educators and students in the region.

Teacher Experiences with Continuous Assessment

The findings from the desktop review reveal that teachers in the SADC region have mixed experiences with the implementation of continuous assessment. Many educators recognised the potential benefits of CA, such as promoting student engagement and providing ongoing feedback to enhance learning outcomes. However, they also expressed concerns about their preparedness to effectively implement these practices. Research indicated that a significant number of teachers feel inadequately trained in CA methodologies, which leads to uncertainty and inconsistency in their application of assessment strategies (Mafunga, 2021; Zinyemba et al., 2022). This lack of confidence hindered the successful integration of continuous assessment into their teaching practices, ultimately affecting student learning.

Moreover, the findings highlighted that teachers often face challenges related to the resources available for implementing continuous assessment. Many educators reported that insufficient access to teaching materials, technology and infrastructure significantly impacts their ability to conduct effective assessments (Ndlovu et al., 2023). For instance, in rural schools, the lack of basic resources can limit teachers' capacity to provide meaningful feedback and engage students in the assessment process (Chikoko, 2020). This situation is compounded by high student-to-teacher ratios, which make it difficult for educators to give individual attention to each learner, a crucial aspect of continuous assessment (Mafunga, 2021). As a result, teachers may resort to traditional assessment methods, which do not align with the principles of continuous assessment.

Additionally, socio-economic factors play a significant role in shaping teachers' experiences with continuous assessment. Research shows that educators working in low-income communities often encounter external pressures that affect their teaching and assessment practices (Moyo, 2023). For example, students from disadvantaged backgrounds may struggle to engage fully in continuous assessment due to family responsibilities or financial instability, which can lead to lower participation rates and achievement levels (Ndlovu, 2022). Teachers in these contexts may feel disheartened by the challenges they face, leading to a lack of motivation to implement continuous assessment effectively. This highlights the need for targeted support and professional development for teachers, particularly in under-resourced areas, to enhance their confidence and skills in using continuous assessment as a tool for improving student learning outcomes.

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Moreover, the findings highlight that teachers often face challenges related to the resources available for implementing continuous assessment. Many educators report that insufficient access to teaching materials, technology and infrastructure significantly impacts their ability to

conduct effective assessments (Ndlovu et al., 2023). Inadequate resources not only hinder the development of effective assessment strategies but also create an environment where teachers feel overwhelmed and unsupported. For instance, in rural schools, the lack of basic resources can limit teachers' capacity to provide meaningful feedback and engage students in the assessment process. Chikoko (2020) found that this resource gap leads to a reliance on rote learning and standardised testing, which contradict the principles of continuous assessment. Additionally, high student-to-teacher ratios exacerbate the situation, making it difficult for educators to give individual attention to each learner, an essential component of effective continuous assessment (Mafunga, 2021).

The role of socio-economic factors further complicates teachers' experiences with continuous assessment. Research shows that educators working in low-income communities often encounter external pressures that affect their teaching and assessment practices (Moyo, 2023). Students from disadvantaged backgrounds may struggle to engage fully in continuous assessment due to family responsibilities or financial instability, which can lead to lower participation rates and achievement levels (Ndlovu, 2022). Teachers in these contexts often feel disheartened by the challenges they face, leading to a lack of motivation to implement continuous assessment effectively. This disconnect can create a cycle where students who need the most support receive the least, perpetuating educational inequities within the SADC region.

Additionally, the findings indicate that teachers' perceptions of student abilities can also be influenced by socio-economic factors. Studies have shown that educators in wealthier areas tend to have higher expectations for their students, while those in low-income communities may hold lower expectations, which can lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy (Moyo, 2023). This bias can severely impact how teachers design assessments and provide feedback, ultimately limiting opportunities for disadvantaged students to showcase their true capabilities. Ndlovu et al. (2023) argue that such disparities in expectations can undermine the effectiveness of continuous assessment, as teachers may unconsciously adjust their assessment criteria based on their perceptions of student potential.

The review also revealed a notable lack of institutional support for continuous assessment practices. Many teachers reported feeling isolated in their efforts to implement CA, with little guidance or support from school administrations (Chikoko, 2020). This lack of institutional backing can lead to feelings of frustration and burnout among educators, further reducing their willingness to adopt innovative assessment methods. Mafunga (2021) highlights the importance of creating collaborative environments where teachers can share experiences and strategies for successful implementation of continuous assessment. Such support systems can empower educators, enhance their skills and ultimately lead to more effective teaching and assessment practices.

Barriers to Effective Implementation of Continuous Assessment

The third objective of this research focused on identifying the barriers to effective implementation of continuous assessment in the SADC region. The findings reveal a complex interplay of factors that hinder the successful integration of CA into educational practices. One of the most significant barriers identified is the lack of adequate training for teachers. Research conducted by Ndlovu and Chikoko (2021) emphasises that many educators have not received sufficient professional development on CA methodologies, leading to uncertainty and inconsistency in its application. Many teachers report feeling overwhelmed by the demands of continuous assessment, particularly when they lack a foundational understanding of how to design and implement effective assessment strategies. This gap in training not only affects their ability to utilise CA effectively but also diminishes their

confidence in engaging students in the assessment process.

Moreover, the findings indicate that resource constraints significantly impede the implementation of continuous assessment. Schools in the SADC region often face challenges such as limited access to teaching materials, technology and appropriate infrastructure (Mafunga & Maphosa, 2022). For instance, many educators lack access to digital tools that facilitate data collection and analysis, which are essential for effective continuous assessment. Without the necessary resources, teachers struggle to provide accurate feedback and engage students meaningfully in the assessment process. This lack of resources not only affects the quality of assessments but also diminishes teachers' motivation to adopt continuous assessment practices, as they may feel overwhelmed by the challenges associated with implementation. Zinyemba (2023) points out that many educators may resort to traditional assessment methods out of necessity, further perpetuating a cycle of ineffective practices.

Another critical barrier identified is the pressure of standardised testing within the educational system. Many educators report that the emphasis on high-stakes examinations often leads to a narrow focus on rote learning and teaching to the test, which undermines the principles of continuous assessment (Moyo et al., 2023). This pressure can create a conflicting situation where teachers are compelled to prioritise exam preparation over the holistic development of students through ongoing assessment. The findings suggest that this focus on standardised testing not only constrains teachers' ability to implement CA but also negatively impacts the learning experience for students, who may become disengaged and disinterested in their education. Maphosa (2022) argues that such an environment stifles innovation and creativity in teaching, as educators feel compelled to conform to a rigid assessment framework.

Furthermore, socio-cultural factors also play a significant role in shaping attitudes toward continuous assessment. Research by Maphosa and Wadesango (2020) highlights that in some contexts, there is a perception that continuous assessment is less rigorous than traditional methods. This belief can lead to resistance among educators and stakeholders who prioritise standardised tests as the primary measure of student success. Cultural attitudes towards education often emphasise exam results as the main indicator of achievement, which can marginalise the value of continuous assessment practices (Ndlovu et al., 2022). Such perceptions can create an environment where teachers feel discouraged from adopting CA, fearing that it may not be taken seriously by parents or school administrators.

In addition to cultural perceptions, the findings reveal that administrative support is often lacking in the implementation of continuous assessment. Many teachers reported feeling isolated in their efforts to introduce CA in their classrooms, with little guidance or encouragement from school leadership (Mafunga & Maphosa, 2022). This lack of institutional backing can lead to feelings of frustration and burnout among educators, further reducing their willingness to adopt innovative assessment methods. It is crucial for school administrations to foster a collaborative environment where teachers can share experiences and strategies for successful implementation of continuous assessment. When school leaders actively support and promote CA initiatives, teachers are more likely to embrace these practices and invest the necessary effort to implement them effectively.

Additionally, the findings highlight the impact of socio-economic disparities on the implementation of continuous assessment. Students from low-income backgrounds often face external pressures that hinder their engagement with assessment practices, such as family responsibilities and limited access to educational support (Mafunga, 2021). This situation can create a perception among educators that continuous assessment is not feasible for all students, leading to a reluctance to implement CA in diverse classrooms. As a result, students who need

the most support may be left behind, exacerbating educational inequalities within the region. Addressing these socio-economic barriers is essential for ensuring that continuous assessment benefits all learners, regardless of their background.

Conclusion

The study on continuous assessment in the SADC region has highlighted the multifaceted nature of its implementation and the various challenges that educators face. The findings indicate that while CA holds a significant promise for enhancing student learning outcomes, its effectiveness is often compromised by barriers such as inadequate teacher training, resource constraints, pressure from standardised testing and socio-cultural attitudes. These factors create a complex environment in which educators struggle to fully embrace and implement continuous assessment practices. As a result, the potential benefits of CA, including improved student engagement and critical thinking skills, remain largely untapped in many educational settings.

Recommendations

To overcome the identified barriers and enhance the effectiveness of continuous assessment, it is essential to prioritise professional development for teachers. Training programmes should focus on equipping educators with the skills and knowledge necessary to implement continuous assessment effectively. Such programmes should be tailored to address the specific needs of teachers in the SADC region, incorporating practical strategies that can be applied in diverse classroom settings (Mafunga & Maphosa, 2022). By fostering a deeper understanding of CA methodologies, educators will be better prepared to engage their students and provide meaningful feedback.

In addition, addressing resource constraints is critical for the successful implementation of continuous assessment. Educational authorities should work towards improving access to teaching materials, technology and infrastructure in schools, particularly in under-resourced areas. Moyo (2023) emphasises the importance of allocating funds specifically for the development of assessment tools and resources that facilitate continuous assessment practices. By investing in these resources, schools can create a more supportive environment for educators and students alike.

It is also vital to create a culture that values continuous assessment within educational institutions. School leaders should actively promote CA initiatives and provide administrative support to teachers as they implement these practices. Research by Zinyemba (2023) suggests that fostering a collaborative environment where teachers can share experiences and best practices can significantly enhance the implementation of continuous assessment. When school leadership prioritises CA, it sends a strong message to educators about the importance of adopting innovative assessment methods. Addressing socio-economic disparities is crucial for ensuring that all students can benefit from continuous assessment. Targeted interventions should be implemented to support students from disadvantaged backgrounds, providing them with the necessary resources and encouragement to engage fully in assessment practices. Ndlovu and Maphosa (2022) advocate for community involvement in education, suggesting that partnerships with local organisations can help provide additional support for vulnerable students. By ensuring equitable access to continuous assessment, stakeholders can foster a more inclusive educational environment that promotes success for all learners.

In conclusion, by implementing these recommendations, stakeholders in the SADC region can work towards overcoming the barriers to effective continuous assessment. Through focused professional development, improved resource allocation, supportive school leadership and targeted interventions for disadvantaged students, the potential of continuous assessment can

be realised, ultimately leading to enhanced educational outcomes for all learners.

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