

## PRIME TIME

**THEME:** THE NEW EDUCATIONAL CURRICULUM – CONTINUOUS ASSESMENT.  
**GUEST:** **RECTOR KANDEMIVIRI (ZANU-PF PATRIOTS)**  
**DATE:** 28<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2018  
**TIME:** 1900HRS CAT  
**MODERATOR:** CDE GODFATHER (ZPF PATRIOTS GROUP ADMINISTRATOR)

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***theGodFather:***

*Good evening Patriots*

*As a result of series of examination leakages and related malpractices there arouse the need for modification. The most obvious modification is to assess the child's work continuously throughout the course and on the basis of this; either wholly certified him or combines such continuous assessment in a predetermined ratio to the results of a back-up examination.*

*Continuous assessment is viewed by many as the right tool to curtail challenges as mentioned above, the new curriculum agrees with that notion. However the Minister of Primary and Secondary Education Prof Mavima stopped continuous assessment for now.*

*In trying to understand the rationale behind the honorable minister's decision to stop the continuous assessment we have called Zanu Pf Patriots member Cde Kandemiviri who is also an education practitioner to shed some light to as on:*

- 1 What this continuous assessment is and what the new curriculum entails*
- 2 The advantages and disadvantages of continuous assessment*
- 3 The rationale behind stopping continuous assessment for now*
- 4 Govt's preparedness and commitment to fast track the implementation of the new curriculum*

***Rector Kandemiviri***

*Good evening and welcome to this edition of **PRIME TIME***

Right ...

Mhofu, so that we be clear with each other what we are talking of, what is continuous assessment in general and what does the new curriculum say about it?

**Rector Kandemiviri:**

**Thank You Samaita.**

**WHAT IS ASSESSMENT?**

**>>Assessment is the measuring of learner performance against the set standards/benchmarks as defined by the curriculum.**

**>>In other words, assessment concerns the testing and evaluation of learners' performance.**

**>>Therefore, Continuous Assessment (C. A) refers to the ongoing process of such measuring as defined above.**

**>>C.A can also be termed \*Formative Assessment\***

**New Curriculum (i prefer calling it Updated Curriculum) actually encourages CA, so much that we cannot say we are doing updated curriculum without this animal called Continuous Assessment**

**theGodFather:**

*Is it mandatory to do continuous assessment under the updated curriculum or any school can chose to do what's best for it depending on resources?*

**Rector Kandemiviri:**

**Since it is a curriculum, and for the sake of uniformity, it is mandatory that continuous assessment be done by every school, not choosing whether to do it or not.**

**Resources do matter, but schools have to apply a context based approach**

**theGodFather:**

*OK noted.*

*Since you said its mandatory.*

*The systematic nature of Continuous Assessment demands that every assessment activity that is to be conducted by every teacher in the school is clearly articulated in the school plan. The teacher is expected to have been informed by the beginning of the school term or session about the nature of assessment activities he/she is to use in the classroom. This is expected to be in tandem with the recommendations provided in the subject curriculum as published in the new curriculum.*

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*From this Mhofu, was Govt in general and schools in particular prepared to implement continuous assessment this year?*

**Rector Kandemiviri:**

**C.A has been done since time immemorial in as far as our education system is concerned. However, it was done at class, school or cluster level.**

**e.g: weekly, fortnightly, monthly, termly tests,**

**Practical tests such as bed preparation in Agriculture, animal husbandry, item sewing in Fashion and Fabrics etc. However, those marks have not been seriously recorded to contribute on the certification of the learner. The learner had no exit profile based on C.A.**

**Our colonial masters used it from their home. They applied it to their children, that is why they grew up with such business exploitative acumen**

**Now, when the Gvt thru the ministry requested that it be compulsory, most teachers resisted. Their resistance was either because; 1. the resources required to administer C.A are actually not readily available.**

**Or 2. The general resistance to overload teachers.**

**The first one being my assumption as a curriculum developer and analyst.**

**Schools in particular were ready to administer C.A, however, the approach to its introduction was not acceptable.**

**This whole issue about updated curriculum should begin with resource mobilization, distribution and then in-service training /refresher course to those teachers in field already.**

**Therefore, the schools i am sure were ready, but were not equipped with adequate resources, an issue we are still pursuing with the government**

**theGodFather:**

*In essence you are saying the Ministry is approaching implementation of the updated curriculum from the wrong end hence it is confusing all stakeholders?*

**Rector Kandemiviri:** When put to ratio, Resource and situation versus updated curriculum, yes, there has been a mismatch

**theGodFather:** Can this be rectified?

**Rector Kandemiviri:** Yes. If the government, as requested by the Ministry avails both human and material resources, the problem is solved at once.

**theGodFather:** Can this mismatch be blamed on the Ministry or the past minister Dr L Dokora or all stakeholders?

**Rector Kandemiviri:** The Ministry has submitted its request to the responsible and relevant authorities seeking the following:

1. Human resource (remember there is a freeze on employment)
2. Material resources in form of relevant textbooks, ICT tools, state of the art infrastructure etc

The Ministry or the former Minister, Dr Dokora cannot be blamed in my view. Remember this Updated Curriculum is a brainchild /recommendation of the CIET (commonly known as Nziramasanga commission) to wait until resources had been mobilised would see us never embarking on this updated curriculum. Hence, the move by the ministry, or the past Minister to introduce this Updated Curriculum was a noble idea. What needed to be done was to put pressure from the financiers so that they could respond by providing the resources, just as the ministry of health does

**theGodFather:**

*The comprehensive nature of CA is in two folds;*

*firstly, the teacher has to ensure that different assessment techniques are employed at different times in the quest for CAS. This will take care of whatever inadequacy that could have been accessioned by the students' inability to maximally express their prowess when a particular assessment technique (e.g. test) is used. For example, a student who has phobia for test could make up for his/her inadequacy in other activities like project or take-home assignment. The comprehensive nature in this strand implies that the teacher will have to conduct series of assessment activities at different stages of teaching and learning in the classroom.*

*Secondly, the comprehensive nature of CA also demands that the assessment activity of the teacher is expected to cover the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains of the students' behaviour. This means that the teacher should not narrow his/her assessment activity to*

issues relating to paper and pencil method of assessing the students' achievement in a subject but should also extend such subject's assessment to such activities like the use of hand and brain (through the coordination of muscles and bones) to produce things that are observable (Faleye and Afolabi, 2007).

Mhofu

From the narrative above it means the shift is not only to the students but teachers as well. Does our teacher training prepare teachers for continuous assessment or if CA was introduced it means teachers would need to attend courses on CA especially test construction?

**Rector Kandemiviri:**

**Our teacher training prepares a teacher for CA yes. From the training itself, there is continuous Assessment as part of their learning. From day 1 at college, to final day, teacher trainees are continuously assessed, and their assessment is in 3 phases, and those phases are subdivided into minor assessments too.**

**Student teachers are assessed before they go for teaching practice attachment. A number of assignments are given to them, both in class and take home. Practicals included.**

**During their Teaching Practice, they are continuously assessed, and when they return for final semesters, they are also continuously assessed. Their final output is actually the sum of coursework, attachment results and exam outcome. Therefore, C.A to teachers is not a new thing.**

**Even their Syllabi teaches them when and how to apply C.A, as well as Summative Assessment. They also do dissertations (Curriculum Depth Study) in which the major component of the dissertation is based on CA. Not to apply it when in the field is not because they are not taught, but it's by choice to ignore, which generally degrades the standard of education then**

**However, at Secondary, we had those people who did not so teacher training per se, their degrees can allow them to teach, but they had not pedagogical approach to teaching, therefore, they were not well furnished. That's why the ministry then reworded them to undertake PGDE. It was meant to curb the competency gap**

**theGodFather:**

Very well...

*So if teachers were equipped why do you think the Minister halted CA for Form 4s and 6s this year?*

*After this question Mhofu can you also give a narrative of the new curriculum that you want us to know then we open the floor*

**Rector Kademiviri:**

**Well.**

**Like i said, the Updated curriculum kickstarted without adequate resources. The intention was to put pressure to the financiers to finance the programme.**

**However, it appeared like it was milking a dry teat.**

**Also, following the recommendations from the workshops done from late last year to early this year, it emerged that it was necessary to pause CA for the Form 4s and 6s of 2018. It is the hope of the Ministry that by the end of the year, at least some resources would have been allocated to the ministry to allow smooth implementation of the updated curriculum**

**Thank u Mr Admin Sir, my presentation was of this nature :**

**1 definition of assessment and Continous Assessment (C. A)**

**2. What do we assess?**

**3. When do we assess?**

**4. Reason(s) for Assessing/Background to Assessment**

**5. Types/Forms of Assessment**

**6. Relevance of School-based continuous assessment.**

**7. Tasks and their position in the curriculum**

**However, some parts of the presentation have been presented as i responded to your questions. To that effect, i shall touch on the unattempted areas**

**I will also dwell on the expectations on a student passing out of the new curriculum phase. As in what type of person do we expect to have mould after completing his/her education in the new curriculum era**

**Having discussed what assessment and CA is, its important we discuss what we assess**

**\*What do we assess?\***

>>As alluded to earlier that assessing is measuring performance, therefore, we are assessing performance of learners.

The curriculum takes/adopts a holistic approach to assessment, and this entails assessing learner competences on a continuum that includes :

**\*#knowledge\***

**\*#skills\***

**\*#abilities\***

**\*#values\***

**\*#traits\***

>>to complete this phase of assessment, learners have to demonstrate performances. Therefore, we assess performance through demonstration of knowledge, skills, abilities, values, and traits.

>> During this assessment, we are tracking learners behaviours and performance on an on-going basis.

**\*When do we Assess?\***

- a) learners' performance is assessed on a continuous/on-going basis or
- b) at the end of a programme/course/on a summative basis.

-on a summative basis, we are assessing knowledge and regurgitation of facts only.

**\*Why do we assess?\*** (Background to Assessment)

Zimbabwean Education adopted from the colonial masters prepared us as second class citizens whose education must be service provision. This curriculum prepared us to be employees of vocationally and/or technically trained individuals, who happened to be them (colonial masters) or their children. When the war of independence was fought Africans won, but the education system to which we were exposed only left us with bookish knowledge. We were prepared to be teachers, accountants, drivers, nurses etc. Our career limitations were never

those that allowed us to exploit the land, or the resources. Therefore, the most suitable form of assessment was summative. Summative (that which is done at the end of the course to assess knowledge and regurgitation of facts) assessment only allowed us to be filled with service knowledge and facts. It did not prepare us to be vocationally or technically oriented.

This means we were secondary industry labour force/applied mental labour force. We only synthesized what primary industry (company owners, agriculturalists, miners, etc) had done. Our task was to enter figures (for accountants), to check how the profits were exploited (auditors), impart knowledge to children (teachers). From this service provision, we were never an income generating labour group.

Whilst this was so for us, the colonial masters prepared their children with a hands on type of education. So one would find the owner of a company had no masters degree, yet his accountant was a Masters degree holder.

The farm owner dealt with income generation, the accountant had no means of producing.

As we grew older in an independent Zimbabwe, our Primary industry deteriorated. And because we were service providers, we were left with no base to provide our employment. We could not make our own companies because we had no means. We had no practical/technical expertise.

This thus prompted the educationists to advocate for a curriculum that focused on more of a practical approach, identifying a learner's area of interest through traits observation and thereby training a child from day 1, in the area where interest and capability is shown.

The thrust of Updated Curriculum being to expose every learner to the disciplines of science, technology, engineering, mathematics and heritage studies. With updated curriculum, learners will also be exposed to life and work learning contexts, through life skills orientation programme

Hence, CA is inevitable

Therefore, When we assess, we do so because we want to measure the following:

1. Learner performance through :-



-skills exhibition/demonstration/practicals (from on-going activities/tasks)

-recall of knowledge and facts (done through summative assessment)

>>thru skills exhibition, learners have a hands-on experience, which may not necessarily need the implication of acquired knowledge, but rather the application of learning process.

>>thru recall, only those who are intellectually gifted will be able to recall and answer

2. To help the learners to exhibit talent traits, thereby assisting the teacher to develop the child from the child's own understanding. (where the child has a talent bias)

Forms of Assessment Applicable to the education system

1. Formative

-It is on-going, continuous (Assessment for learning)

2. Summative

-evaluative, terminal once off (Assessment of learning).

Advantages of C. A

-Assessment information facilitates meaningful judgement about learner progress towards the desired outcome/standard /benchmark in a manner that is fair and promoting learning.

-helps teachers, learners and other stakeholders to know what learners can do:

-assisted

-unassisted

-in groups

-alone/individually.

-provides feedback of how learners learn in time to modify or personalise instruction.

-allows teachers to assess broad range of traits, skills and abilities.

-make assessment itself a learning experience and thus deepen learner engagement in content

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### Disadvantages

-it is continuous, and not a one off thing therefore appears to be laborious

-requires a more managed environment where there is no external interference

-at times the performance is a result of assisted effort which may not reflect individual ability.

- assessment is open (to biased result due to some situations)

To curb this, assessment has to be taken as a learning process. This means very regularly, it has to be done, (and has been done, though not on a more practical basis, but through weekly, fortnightly, monthly, or termly tests)

### Tasks/Activities and their position in Curriculum

Tasks are mere activities learners should undertake whether at home or under observation at school. They are a component of C.A. However, their administration, as alluded to earlier on, requested the involvement of ICT, the WiFi, And printers etc.

Some schools in Zimbabwe do not have these. This means they had to travel from their station to another station where they could access these. The challenge was on the funding, considering the dynamic nature of schools. Updated curriculum itself required more resources, and the burden was piled on the school, which made the teachers resist. When a request to raise fees is made, the response is not favorable. Then no source of funds is available fund the curriculum. (zviriipo zvaka wanda)

### \*Learner exit profiles\*

It is expected that after a learner has completed his/her education course under this updated curriculum, he comes out with some abilities.

The learner is trained in life long skills that can help him or her (in line with Zimasset).

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Learner exit profiles clearly describe the acquired knowledge, skills, values, attitudes and attributes that a learner should possess as a result of their learning experiences.

Such skills include:

- problem solving
- critical thinking
- leadership
- communication and team work
- technological and scientific

Knowledge developed include:

- business and financial literacy
- Content mastery/discipline
- basic literacy and numeracy

Values include:

- discipline
- honesty

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Attitudes and dispositions:

- initiative and enterprise
- self management

Planning and organising.

To achieve all these, CA cannot be ignored in Updated Curriculum

It is in the learner exit profile that national identity should be developed too. This can be achieved thru team work, appreciating others, ideas, and values etc.

CA also takes precedence if these are to be achieved

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Finally, to end my presentation, i will cote some goals of the updated curriculum :

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### Infant ad Junior Goals:

- 1 acquisition of foundational skills for learning in the 3 domains
2. Establishment of building blocks for socialization
- 3.development of the 3 domains' competencies
4. Acquisition of basic literacy and numeracy skills, including basic practical competencies necessary for life and work

### Secondary

1. Dvmt of linguistic competence in both local and foreign language
2. Establishment and consolidation of firm grounding in STEM
3. Display cognitive mastery in heritage studies and national identity

Deepened theoretical and practical knowledge of selected disciplines in preparation for further education and workplace skills development

These are just but the few ones.

With these, i come to the end of my presentation.

**theGodFather:**

*Thank you very much Rector Kandemiviri for that presentation.*

*Mhofu*

*The CA process seems like its a tight program , what are chances of teachers manipulating the grading system for the advantage of their own students m*

**Rector Kandemiviri:**

**The chances are very high especially if there are no adequate resources. However, to curb the problem, the issue of external assessment can be of greater help too. Regularly, external assessors can be called to do the assessment. Just as is done in Tertiary institutions, esp teacher training ones.**

**Mai Meme:**

*From your presentation Cde Educator the New Curriculum is the way to go. ....*

*So where is the Min lost*

**Rector Kandemiviri:**

The answer i will give is based on my assumption.

1. The Updated curriculum having been introduced last year, the start was not that smooth, as is usually with most pioneer programmes, there are challenges.

Such challenges are those that have been raised by stakeholders in imdabas held throughout the country from late last year, to early January. The recommendations are those that may have prompted the Minister to pause the CA for this year's exam classes

Such challenges include:

1 zero induction of Secondary teachers on administration of CA (tasks)

2. Financial crippling effect the CA has for schools are not on the same ground in terms of resources needed to administer tasks.

*\*#My thinking\**

I am not sure what pushed Minister Mavhima to suspend CA for this year though

Yes, that's true, but that may produce results we cannot bank on. In the industry, ndopaye paunonzwa kuti maA level egore ra2018 anongosiwa pakupinzwa basa. It is because their results anenge achiita lack that credibility

**Pam Pam:**

*My question is on standardisation of these CAs is there a standard set or its just mazvake mazvake kuchkoro ichocho....cz if external assessors are to come vanoda wer to start from when doing the assessing*

**Rector Kandemiviri:**

*\*What is Assessment?\**

>>Assessment is the measuring of learner performance against the set standards/benchmarks as defined by the curriculum.

>>In other words, assessment concerns the testing and evaluation of learners performance.

>>Therefore, Continuous Assessment (C. A) refers to the ongoing process of such measuring as defined above.

>>C. A can also be termed *\*Formative Assessment\**

I am sure from these definitions, you can draw that CA has a standard way of doing it

A standard model is agree upon and followed. This, the essence of assessing for benchmark performance e

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I guess there are no more questions.

To that effect, i now retire to bed.

Thank you Cde Farai. Good night

Good night Patriots

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