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Impact of Continuous Assessment on Primary Education Students' Attitude towards Learning in Tertiary Institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Background: Continuous Assessment (CA) plays a critical role in shaping students' learning experiences and academic attitudes. In tertiary institutions, especially those training future educators, understanding the influence of CA on students' learning attitudes is essential for improving instructional practices and learning outcomes. **Objective:** This study investigated the influence of continuous assessment (CA) on primary education students' attitudes towards learning in tertiary institutions in Anambra State. It also examined contributing factors such as CA practices, resource availability, and student-lecturer ratios. **Method:** A descriptive research design was employed. Data were collected using a 40-item questionnaire validated by experts. The questionnaire was distributed via Google Forms and shared through social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Instagram, and Facebook groups. A total of 63 correctly completed responses were obtained. The data were extracted, coded in Microsoft Excel, and analyzed using SPSS software through mean and standard deviation calculations. **Result:** Findings show that CA has a positive impact on students' attitudes by offering regular feedback, fostering self-awareness, and reducing test anxiety. Nonetheless, effective implementation of CA is challenged by limited resources, time constraints, and large student-lecturer ratios. **Conclusion:** While continuous assessment contributes significantly to improving students' attitudes toward learning, systemic issues must be addressed to maximize its benefits. **Originality/Value:** This study provides novel empirical insights in the field of higher education assessment by revealing the positive impact of Continuous Assessment (CA) in reducing test anxiety and providing regular feedback, alongside systemic barriers like high student-lecturer ratios, regarding primary education students' learning attitudes within the context of tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria. These findings enrich empirical evidence and serve as a strategic reference for refining institutional evaluation policies, optimizing faculty-student ratios, and enhancing resource allocation for effective assessment practices.

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Attitude;
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1. INTRODUCTION

Continuous assessment (CA) has emerged as a fundamental component of modern educational systems, aiming to enhance student learning experiences and outcomes. In the context of primary education, CA plays a crucial role in shaping students' attitudes towards learning. Continuous assessment (CA) is an educational approach that involves the systematic and ongoing evaluation of students' learning progress and performance throughout a course or academic program (Porta et al, 2023). Unlike traditional forms of assessment that rely heavily on summative examinations, CA encompasses a variety of formative assessment techniques, including quizzes, assignments, projects, and observations, conducted at regular intervals (Selemani-Mbewe, 2023).

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This dynamic assessment process emphasizes the importance of feedback, self-reflection, and incremental progress, fostering a deeper understanding of subject matter and promoting lifelong learning skills (Rai, 2019). One significant impact of continuous assessment on primary education students' attitudes towards learning is its ability to provide regular feedback and opportunities for self-assessment. Research by Osuala et al, (2018) found that continuous assessment practices positively influence students' self-awareness and motivation by offering them timely feedback on their academic performance. This feedback loop enables students to monitor their progress, identify areas for improvement, and take ownership of their learning journey. As a result, students develop a growth mindset and a more positive attitude towards learning, viewing challenges as opportunities for growth rather than obstacles.

Attitude towards learning refers to an individual's disposition, beliefs, and emotions regarding the process of acquiring knowledge and skills. It encompasses their overall approach, motivation, and engagement in learning activities (Aljermawi et al, 2024). A positive attitude towards learning is characterized by enthusiasm, curiosity, persistence, and a growth mindset, wherein challenges are viewed as opportunities for growth and learning. Conversely, a negative attitude may manifest as disinterest, apathy, or avoidance of learning tasks (Byukusenge et al, 2024). Attitude towards learning influences learners' behavior, choices, and academic performance, shaping their willingness to invest effort, seek help, and persevere in the face of difficulties throughout their educational journey.

Furthermore, continuous assessment helps to reduce test anxiety among primary education students, thereby fostering a more conducive learning environment. A study by Grace et al, (2024) observed that the ongoing nature of continuous assessment reduces the pressure associated with high-stakes examinations, allowing students to approach learning tasks with greater confidence and enthusiasm. By breaking down assessment into smaller, manageable components, continuous assessment alleviates the fear of failure and promotes a growth-oriented mindset, where mistakes are viewed as valuable learning experiences rather than sources of stress.

Moreover, continuous assessment facilitates personalized learning experiences tailored to individual student needs and preferences. Ye et al, (2016) emphasize the flexibility inherent in continuous assessment practices, which allow educators to adapt instruction to address students' diverse learning styles, interests, and abilities. By providing differentiated feedback and support, continuous assessment empowers students to take ownership of their learning and pursue areas of interest that resonate with their unique strengths and passions (Modup & Sunday, 2015). This personalized approach fosters a sense of autonomy and intrinsic motivation, leading to a more positive attitude towards learning.

However, despite its numerous benefits, continuous assessment also presents challenges that can impact primary education students' attitudes towards learning. One such challenge is the potential for assessment overload and burnout, particularly in environments where continuous assessment practices are implemented excessively or ineffectively. Olubukola & Bankole (2015) highlight the importance of striking a balance between assessment frequency and quality, cautioning against the overreliance on assessment as a means of evaluating student progress. When continuous assessment becomes overly burdensome or repetitive, students may become disengaged or demotivated, leading to a negative attitude towards learning (Emunemu, 2018).

The motivation for the study on the impact of continuous assessment (CA) on primary education students' attitudes towards learning in tertiary institutions in Anambra state is crucial due to several reasons. Firstly, while CA is widely implemented in educational settings, there is a lack of comprehensive research focusing specifically on its effects on primary education students transitioning to tertiary education. This gap underscores the need to understand how CA practices in primary education influence students' attitudes towards learning as they enter higher education. Secondly, existing studies often focus on the academic outcomes of CA, neglecting its potential impact on students' attitudes, motivation, and engagement in learning. For instance, a study by Pather (2015) highlighted the importance of considering non-academic factors, such as attitudes towards learning, in assessing the effectiveness of educational interventions.

Moreover, understanding the relationship between CA and students' attitudes towards learning is essential for informing educational policies and practices aimed at improving teaching and learning outcomes. By identifying the factors that contribute to positive attitudes towards learning, educators can design more effective pedagogical approaches and interventions to enhance student motivation and engagement in the learning process.

Research questions (1) to what extent does continuous assessment affect primary education students' attitude towards learning in tertiary institutions in anambra state?; (2) to what extent do the availability of resources impact the implementation of continuous assessment?; (3) to what extent does the student-to-lecturer ratio affect the administration of continuous assessment?; (4) what solutions address the challenges facing the administration of continuous assessment in tertiary institutions?.

2. METHOD

2.1 Research Design

The research design for this study is descriptive, aiming to assess the impact of continuous assessment on primary education students' attitudes towards learning in tertiary institutions in Anambra state, Nigeria.

2.2 Research Object

The target population comprised students enrolled in primary education, early childhood education, and related courses across tertiary institutions in Anambra state

2.3 Data Collection

The research instrument utilized was a questionnaire consisting of forty items derived from the four research questions. It comprised two sections: Section A collected demographic data, while Section B contained the questionnaire based on the research questions, utilizing a four-point scale ranging from strongly agree (SA = 4 points) to strongly disagree (SD = 1 point). The questionnaire underwent validation by two experts in the Department of Measurement and Evaluation and one lecturer in the Department of Primary Education. Trial testing involved 15 students, ensuring reliability through the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient method, yielding a score of 0.95.

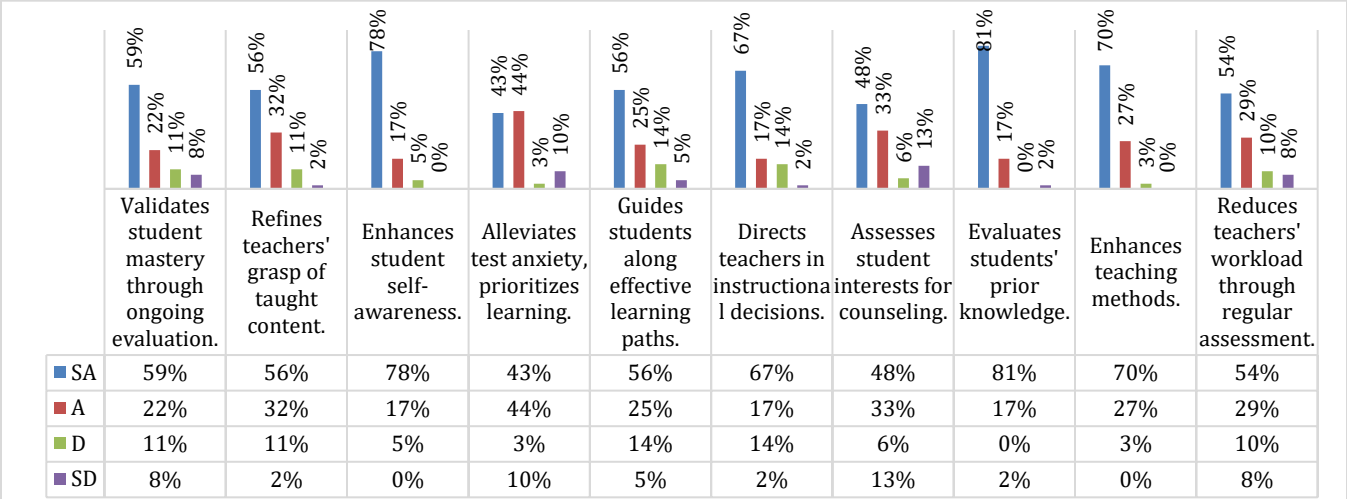
2.4 Data Analysis

Distribution of the questionnaire was facilitated through virtual platforms such as Google online survey system, shared across WhatsApp, Instagram, Facebook groups, and other social media channels. A total of 63 correctly filled questionnaires were collected, extracted from the Google platform, and transferred to Microsoft Excel for coding. Subsequently, the coded variables and data were analyzed using SPSS software, employing mean and standard deviation calculations. Items scoring 2.50-4.00 were accepted, with a cutoff mean of 2.50 guiding the decision rule.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Result

Research Question 1: To what extent does continuous assessment affect primary education students' attitude towards learning in tertiary institutions in Anambra State?.



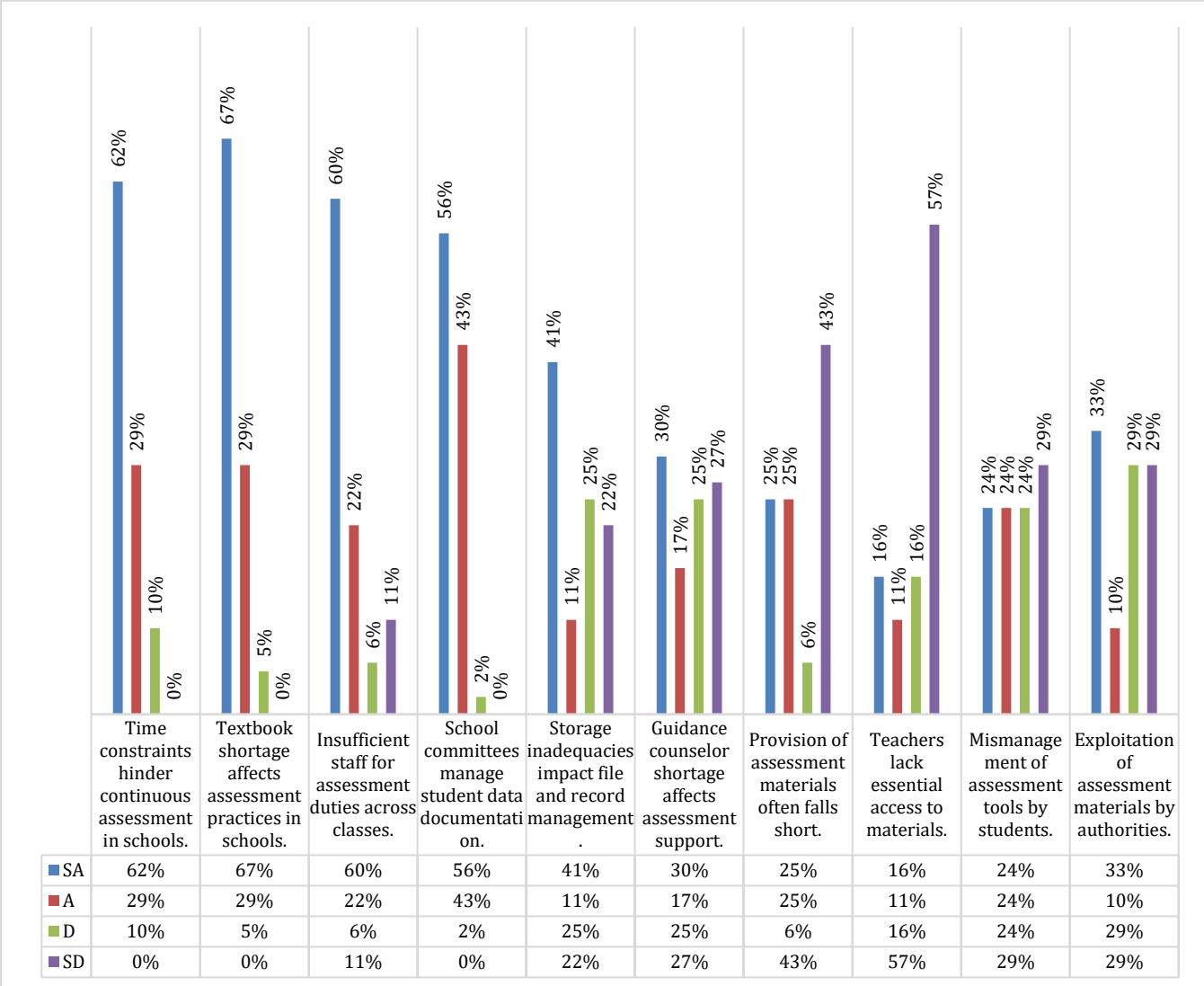
	Validates student mastery through ongoing evaluation.	Refines teachers' grasp of taught content.	Enhances student self-awareness.	Alleviates test anxiety, prioritizes learning.	Guides students along effective learning paths.	Directs teachers in instructional decisions.	Assesses student interests for counseling.	Evaluates students' prior knowledge.	Enhances teaching methods.	Reduces teachers' workload through regular assessment.
SA	59%	56%	78%	43%	56%	67%	48%	81%	70%	54%
A	22%	32%	17%	44%	25%	17%	33%	17%	27%	29%
D	11%	11%	5%	3%	14%	14%	6%	0%	3%	10%
SD	8%	2%	0%	10%	5%	2%	13%	2%	0%	8%

Figure 1. How continuous assessment affect primary education students' attitude towards learning

Figure 1 revealed the continuous assessment affect the primary education students Attitude towards learning. The data indicates varying perceptions of continuous assessment (CA) effectiveness among respondents, as shown by the percentages for each level of agreement: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). Notably, a majority of respondents strongly agree or agree with CA's ability to validate student mastery (59% SA, 22% A) and refine lecturers' understanding of content (56% SA, 32% A). Additionally, CA is seen as enhancing

student self-awareness (78% SA) and guiding effective learning paths (56% SA), while also directing lecturers in instructional decisions (67% SA). However, there are mixed views on CA's ability to alleviate test anxiety, assess student interests for counseling, and reduce lecturers' workload. Overall, the data suggests a positive perception of CA's benefits in education, with some areas warranting further consideration and improvement.

Research Question 2: To what extent do the availability of resources impact the implementation of continuous assessment?.

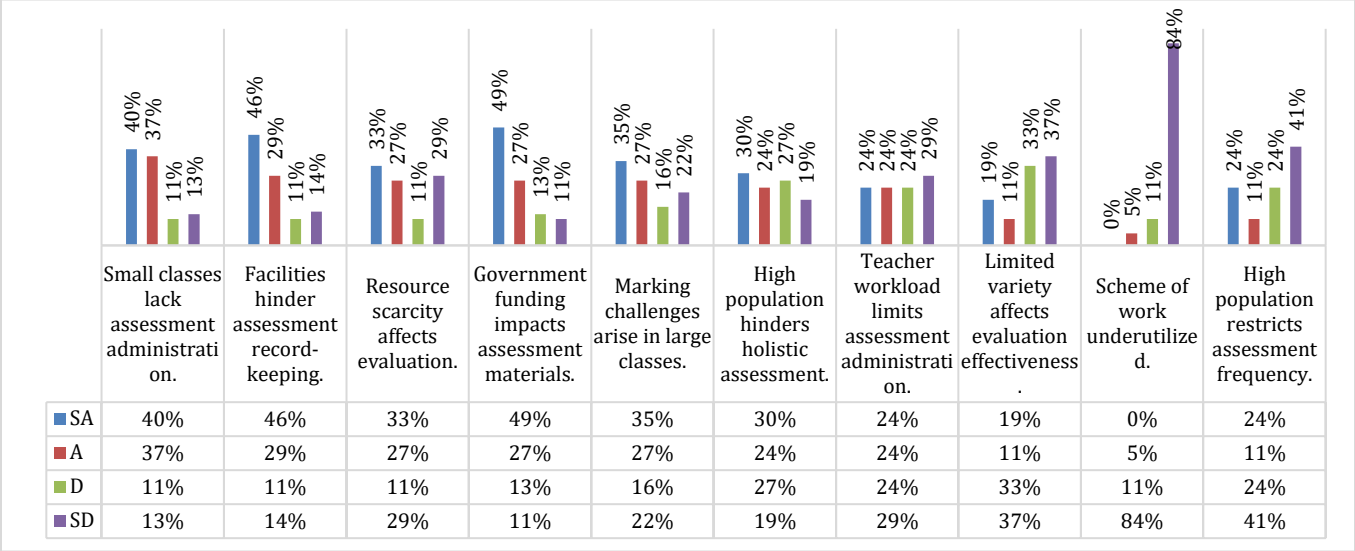


	Time constraints hinder continuous assessment in schools.	Textbook shortage affects assessment practices in schools.	Insufficient staff for assessment duties across classes.	School committees manage student data documentation.	Storage inadequacies impact file and record management.	Guidance counselor shortage affects assessment support.	Provision of assessment materials often falls short.	Teachers lack essential access to materials.	Mismanagement of assessment tools by students.	Exploitation of assessment materials by authorities.
SA	62%	67%	60%	56%	41%	30%	25%	16%	24%	33%
A	29%	29%	22%	43%	11%	17%	25%	11%	24%	10%
D	10%	5%	6%	2%	25%	25%	6%	16%	24%	29%
SD	0%	0%	11%	0%	22%	27%	43%	57%	29%	29%

Figure 2. Extent to which the availability of resources impacts the implementation of continuous assessment.

The data in Figure 2 illustrates respondents' perceptions regarding the availability of resources for continuous assessment (CA) implementation, categorized into levels of agreement: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). It reveals prevalent challenges hindering CA practices, including time constraints (62% SA) and textbook shortages (67% SA). Furthermore, respondents acknowledge insufficiencies in staffing for assessment duties (60% SA), while also recognizing the role of school committees in managing student data (56% SA). Storage inadequacies (41% SA) and guidance counselor shortages (30% SA) are highlighted as additional barriers. Despite these challenges, there are concerns regarding the provision of assessment materials (25% SA) and lecturers' access to essential resources (16% SA). Moreover, the data suggests issues of mismanagement by students (24% SA) and exploitation by authorities (33% SA). Overall, the findings underscore the importance of addressing resource inadequacies to facilitate effective CA implementation in schools.

Research Question 4: To what extent does the student-to-lecturer ratio affect the administration of continuous assessment?.

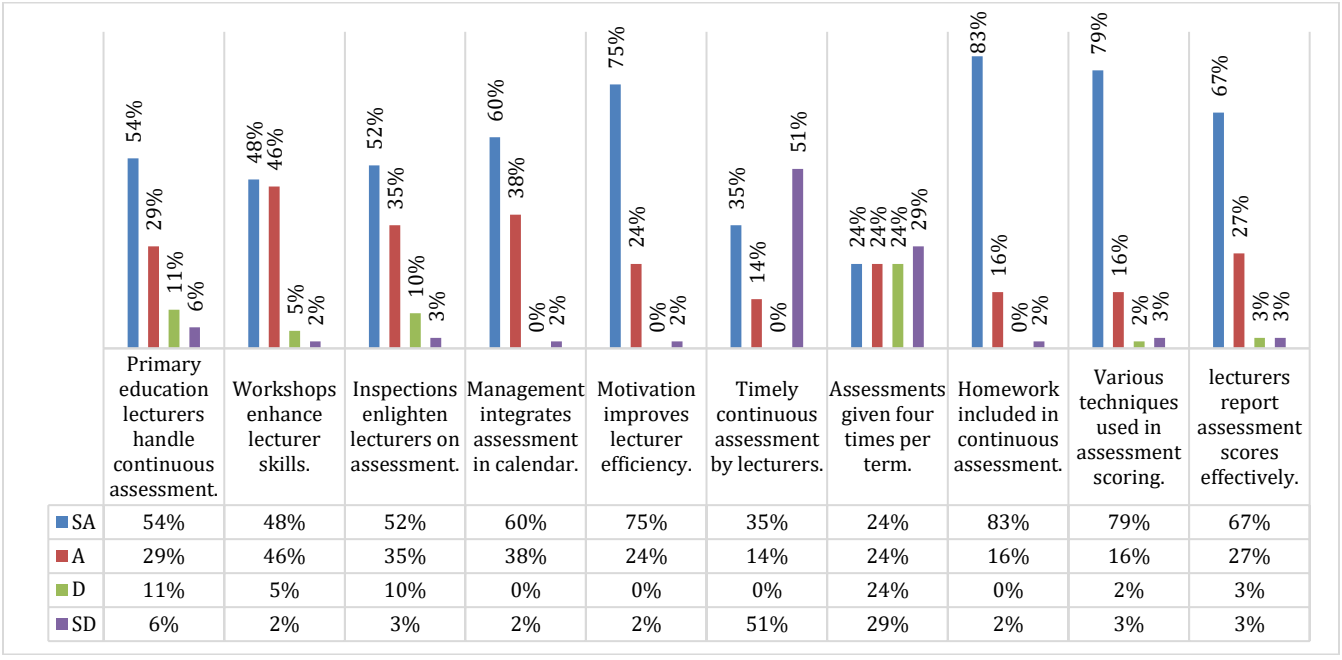


	Small classes lack assessment administration.	Facilities hinder assessment record-keeping.	Resource scarcity affects evaluation.	Government funding impacts assessment materials.	Marking challenges arise in large classes.	High population hinders holistic assessment.	Teacher workload limits assessment administration.	Limited variety affects evaluation effectiveness.	Scheme of work underutilized.	High population restricts assessment frequency.
SA	40%	46%	33%	49%	35%	30%	24%	19%	0%	24%
A	37%	29%	27%	27%	27%	24%	24%	11%	5%	11%
D	11%	11%	11%	13%	16%	27%	24%	33%	11%	24%
SD	13%	14%	29%	11%	22%	19%	29%	37%	84%	41%

Figure 3. Extent to which the student-to-lecturer ratio affect the administration of continuous assessment

The data in Figure 3 highlights perceptions regarding the impact of student-to-lecturer ratio on the administration of continuous assessment (CA), categorized by levels of agreement: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). Respondents identify various challenges stemming from class size and resource availability. Notably, there is acknowledgment that small classes lack assessment administration (40% SA), while facilities hinder assessment record-keeping (46% SA). Resource scarcity (33% SA) and government funding (49% SA) are recognized as factors affecting evaluation. Marking challenges in large classes (35% SA) and high population hindering holistic assessment (30% SA) are also noted. Additionally, respondents perceive lecturer workload (24% SA) and limited assessment variety (19% SA) as impacting assessment administration. Furthermore, there are concerns regarding the underutilization of scheme of work (0% SA) and the restriction of assessment frequency due to high population (24% SA). Overall, the data underscores the need to address these challenges to ensure effective CA administration amidst varying student-to-lecturer ratios.

Research Question 4: What solutions addresses the challenges facing the administration of continuous assessment in tertiary institutions?



	Primary education lecturers handle continuous assessment.	Workshops enhance lecturer skills.	Inspections enlighten lecturers on assessment.	Management integrates assessment in calendar.	Motivation improves lecturer efficiency.	Timely continuous assessment by lecturers.	Assessments given four times per term.	Homework included in continuous assessment.	Various techniques used in assessment scoring.	lecturers report assessment scores effectively.
SA	54%	48%	52%	60%	75%	35%	24%	83%	79%	67%
A	29%	46%	35%	38%	24%	14%	24%	16%	16%	27%
D	11%	5%	10%	0%	0%	0%	24%	0%	2%	3%
SD	6%	2%	3%	2%	2%	51%	29%	2%	3%	3%

Figure 4. Solutions to the challenges facing the administration of continuous assessment in tertiary institutions

The data in Figure 4 presents solutions to challenges in the administration of continuous assessment (CA), categorized by levels of agreement: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). Primary education lecturers are identified as pivotal in CA administration (54% SA), while workshops are recognized for enhancing lecturer skills (48% SA). Inspections are seen to enlighten lecturers on assessment practices (52% SA), and management integration of assessment in calendars is valued (60% SA). Moreover, motivation is perceived as crucial for improving lecturer efficiency (75% SA), and timely assessments are emphasized (35% SA). Additionally, assessments given four times per term (24% SA) and including homework in CA (83% SA) are seen as beneficial. Furthermore, respondents highlight the importance of using various assessment techniques (79% SA) and effective reporting of assessment scores by lecturers (67% SA). Overall, these solutions aim to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of CA administration in primary education settings.

3.2. Discussion

Research question 1 dealt with how continuous assessment affect primary education students' attitude towards learning. Based on the analysis, Continuous assessment significantly influences primary education students' attitudes towards learning. It validates their mastery, refines lecturers' understanding, enhances self-awareness, and guides effective learning paths. This finding aligns with Grace et al, (2024), who emphasized the positive impact of continuous assessment on student confidence and teacher adaptability. Additionally, continuous assessment directs instructional decisions and assesses student interests, promoting personalized learning experiences (Osiesi, 2023). However, in contrast, Rai (2019) highlighted challenges such as increased teacher workload and resource limitations, which may hinder the full realization of continuous assessment's benefits. Similarly, Solomon et al, (2018) pointed out potential stressors related to continuous assessment, such as time constraints and test anxiety. Despite these challenges, continuous assessment remains a valuable tool for nurturing positive attitudes towards learning in primary education.

Research question 2 examined the extent to which the availability of resources impacts the implementation of continuous assessment. The availability of resources significantly influences the implementation of continuous assessment (CA) in educational settings. Time constraints present a major hurdle for effective CA practices, limiting the amount of assessment that can be conducted within the allocated timeframe (Porta et al, 2023). Similarly, Girma et al, (2020) emphasized how the shortage of textbooks affects assessment practices by limiting the variety and quality of materials available for evaluation. Additionally, insufficient staff for assessment duties across classes can lead to increased workloads and decreased efficiency in administering CA. In contrast, school committees play a crucial role in managing student data documentation, which can streamline CA processes and ensure accurate record-keeping (Adil et al, 2018). However, despite these efforts, challenges persist as the provision of assessment materials often falls short, resulting in inadequate resources for effective assessment practices. Moreover, lecturers lacking essential access to materials and mismanagement of assessment tools by students' further compound resource availability challenges for CA implementation (Ndebele et al, 2022). Overall, while some aspects of resource availability support CA implementation, challenges such as shortages and inadequate access remain significant barriers to effective assessment practices in educational contexts.

Research question 3 dealt on Extent to which the student-to-lecturer ratio affect the administration of continuous assessment. The student-to-lecturer ratio significantly influences the administration of continuous assessment (CA), as evidenced by various research findings. In contrast to the finding that small classes lack assessment administration due to limited resources or time (Dale et al, 2023), larger classes face marking challenges due to the sheer volume of assessments. This finding agrees with Al-Alawi (2023), who highlight the impact of high student-to-lecturer ratios on hindering holistic assessment practices. Furthermore, high population sizes restrict assessment frequency and limit the variety of evaluation methods utilized. This finding aligns with the notion that resource scarcity affects evaluation, emphasizing the importance of adequate government funding for assessment materials (Glewwe et al, 2021). Overall, the student-to-lecturer ratio plays a critical role in CA administration, impacting various aspects such as resource allocation, workload, and assessment frequency. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach that considers both classroom dynamics and institutional support.

Research question 4 determined the appropriate solutions to the challenges facing the administration of continuous assessment in tertiary institutions. The solutions proposed to address the challenges in the administration of continuous assessment (CA) in tertiary institutions offer varied approaches to enhance assessment practices. In contrast to the finding that lecturers handle CA, Ebhaleme (2019) found that CA practices in Nigerian universities often involve lecturers from diverse academic backgrounds, potentially bringing a broader range of perspectives to assessment design and implementation. However, both studies emphasize the importance of workshops in enhan-

cing lecturer skills, with Phillips & Phillips (2016) and Ledikwe et al, (2014) highlighting the role of workshops in improving the quality of assessment practices in schools. Similarly, while inspections aim to enlighten lecturers on assessment practices in one study, Saleem et al, (2021) emphasized the need for continuous professional development programs to support lecturers in implementing effective assessment strategies. Additionally, management's integration of CA into the academic calendar aligns with findings by Mukan et al, (2019), who underscored the importance of institutional support and infrastructure for successful CA implementation. Moreover, the motivation of lecturers to prioritize CA is consistent with Koyuncu & Demirhan (2021) findings on the positive correlation between lecturer commitment and assessment quality. However, in contrast to the recommendation of assessments four times per term, DeLuca & Bellara (2013) suggest that assessment frequency should be aligned with educational objectives and curriculum requirements. Overall, while there may be variations in the implementation of CA solutions across different educational contexts, the common goal is to enhance assessment practices and improve student learning outcomes.

4. IMPLICATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

4.1 Research Implication

The implications of this study underscore the critical need for collaborative efforts among educational stakeholders, including policymakers, administrators, lecturers, and students, to effectively address the challenges associated with continuous assessment (CA) implementation. The findings highlight that while CA has the potential to significantly enhance student learning experiences by promoting continuous feedback, reducing anxiety, and encouraging reflective learning, its success is highly dependent on the educational environment in which it is applied.

4.2 Research Contribution

This study provides valuable insights for educational stakeholders by highlighting the strengths and challenges of implementing continuous assessment in tertiary education. It emphasizes that while continuous assessment can positively influence students' learning attitudes through regular feedback and increased engagement, its effectiveness is often hindered by limitations such as inadequate resource allocation and insufficient support for lecturers. These challenges point to the necessity of collaborative efforts among policymakers, institutional leaders, and educators to ensure that adequate funding, training, and infrastructural support are provided to optimize continuous assessment practices. Moreover, the findings suggest that continuous assessment should be integrated thoughtfully within the broader educational framework to create a more supportive and effective learning environment. To build on this foundation, further research is recommended to explore additional variables that may affect students' attitudes toward learning in higher education, including factors such as motivation, digital learning tools, and institutional culture, thereby offering a more comprehensive understanding of how to enhance student engagement and achievement.

5. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTION

5.1 Research Limitation

This study has several limitations to consider when interpreting the findings. The sample size was relatively small with only 63 respondents, which may limit the generalizability of the results to a broader population. Data collection relied on self-reported online questionnaires, which could introduce biases such as social desirability or inaccurate responses. The descriptive research design limits the ability to determine causal relationships between continuous assessment practices and students' learning attitudes. Additionally, the study focused on only a few factors, excluding others like student motivation, teaching quality, and institutional culture. Future research should use larger, more diverse samples, mixed methods, and examine additional variables to better understand the impact of continuous assessment on learning attitudes in higher education.

5.2 Recommendations for Future Research

Future researchers are encouraged to expand beyond the scope of this study by exploring a wider range of factors that may influence the effect of continuous assessment (CA) on primary education students' attitudes toward higher learning in Anambra State. This could include investigating the roles of student motivation, teaching quality, institutional support, and the use of technology in assessment practices. Additionally, employing diverse research methodologies such as longitudinal studies or mixed-method approaches could provide deeper insights into how CA

impacts attitudes, academic performance, and retention over time. Exploring different educational contexts and student demographics would also help to generalize findings and identify best practices tailored to specific groups. By broadening the research focus, future studies can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how continuous assessment shapes students' learning experiences and outcomes in tertiary education.

6. CONCLUSION

This study has provided valuable insights into the impact of continuous assessment (CA) on primary education students' attitudes towards learning in tertiary institutions in Anambra State. By conducting a comprehensive analysis of various key factors, such as assessment practices, availability of instructional resources, and student-lecturer ratios, the study revealed significant correlations between the effective implementation of CA and improved student learning outcomes. The findings highlight that CA contributes positively to students' attitudes by offering consistent feedback, fostering self-awareness in learning progress, and mitigating test-related anxiety. These benefits, in turn, support a more reflective and motivated learning approach among students.

Despite the evident advantages of CA, its implementation is not without challenges. The study identified several barriers that can undermine the effectiveness of CA, including limited educational resources, insufficient time for thorough assessment, and disproportionately high student-lecturer ratios. These challenges often limit lecturers' ability to provide meaningful, individualized feedback and hinder the consistent application of CA principles. Addressing these constraints is critical to unlocking the full potential of continuous assessment in tertiary education settings.

Therefore, overcoming these challenges calls for coordinated efforts from all educational stakeholders. Policy-makers must prioritize funding and policy reforms that support the integration of effective assessment practices, while institutions should invest in professional development and resource provision for lecturers. Additionally, educators must embrace evidence-based CA strategies adaptable to large and diverse student populations. By doing so, the educational system can ensure that continuous assessment becomes a powerful tool for fostering a positive and effective learning environment. Further research is also recommended to explore how additional variables, such as student motivation, digital tools, and institutional culture, interact with CA to influence learning attitudes in higher education.

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Author Contribution Statement

The author declares that the entire research and writing process for this article was conducted independently. The author assumes full responsibility for all data associated with this research. No other individual contributed as a co-author or made any significant contribution to the content of this work.

Declaration of Generative AI (GenAI) Usage in Scientific Writing

The authors declare that Grammarly was employed as a technical assistive tool to refine grammar, improve syntactic structure, and enhance sentence cohesion. All linguistic suggestions provided by the tool were carefully evaluated, reviewed, and approved by the authors to ensure accuracy and consistency with the intended academic meaning. All instances of Generative AI usage in this article were conducted by the authors in accordance with the JIPPG GenAI Tool Usage Policy, with the authors assuming full responsibility for the originality, accuracy, and integrity of the work."

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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