



Classroom Assessment Practices The Malawi Experiences

Misheck Yagontha Munthali – Directorate for Teacher Education and Development
Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
Malawi

Organisation

- ▶ Malawi – General Assessment Issues
- ▶ How i understand assessment
- ▶ Purpose of assessment in Malawi
- ▶ Assessment methods
- ▶ Tools for assessment
- ▶ Negative influence of assessment
- ▶ Factors that influence assessment practices
- ▶ Ending thoughts for reflection
- ▶ Clip from UK and From Cape Town and implications for assessment

General Assessment Issues

- ▶ The Malawi National Examinations Board (MANEB) as a main assessment Policy Holder (Primary, Secondary and Primary Teacher Training Colleges – (TTCs))
- ▶ University Colleges are semi Autonomous in assessment (operating through both Internal and External Assessment Moderation)
- ▶ Most Primary, Secondary, TTCs, and University Colleges have either assessment committees or examination departments that oversee matters of assessment
- ▶ There are other professional bodies that plan and manage their own assessment practices:
 - ▶ a) Malawi Nurses Council
 - ▶ b) Malawi Medical Council
 - ▶ c) Chartered Institutes of Malawi
 - ▶ d) Engineers
 - ▶ e) Lawyers etc

How I Understand Assessment

- As an integral part of teaching and learning process
- Process for collecting information using different strategies, tools and methods (Chirwa, 2014)
- How teachers perceive assessment influence the way they assess teaching and learning (Susuwere Banda 2005)
- Teachers Knowledge and self belief determines how they undertake assessment practices
- Encompasses testing, measurement and evaluation for decision making and is continuous

Purpose Assessment Play in Malawi

- ▶ facilitates student-teacher communication
- ▶ Guides day to day teacher – teaching and learning processes
- ▶ Empowers learners to monitor and take responsibility for their own learning
- ▶ Provides feedback to various stakeholders on learner achievement levels
- ▶ Motivates learners to aim for more

....Purpose of Assessment ctd..

- ▶ Raises teacher/school status in society (or the reverse)
- ▶ Helps teachers and learners to construct new knowledge from existing knowledge
- ▶ It is used for placement and certification processes
- ▶ Builds records for learner achievement over the years (school, national, regional and global level)

Assessment Methods

▶ (a) Assessment of Learning methods such as: Various kinds of tests:

- ▶ - end of topic
- ▶ - end of term
- ▶ - end of year (school or national examinations)
- ▶ - school, cluster, national or regional based assessment tests

(b) Assessment for Learning through:

- ▶ - student reflective journals or logs
- ▶ - teacher reflective journals or logs
- ▶ - observation and reflection checklists/rubrics
- ▶ - individual or group based project based learning
- ▶ - Various forms of field research or experimentation learning

Tools For Assessment

- ▶ Those used to generate Learner Achievement eg Test sheets, Marking sheets and scoring rubrics
- ▶ Those used for Assessment Records eg Attendance or performance registers
- ▶ Those used for Reporting eg Report cards
- ▶ Those used for Storage eg report cards, learner portfolio and teacher portfolio

Negative Influence of Assessment

- ▶ Fear for examinations amongst learners (at times teachers and parents)
- ▶ Outright cheating cases or in extreme cases (drop out from schools)
- ▶ Shame and embarrassment (learners, parents and teachers alike)
- ▶ Mislabeling of people as dull or intelligent (due to miss assessment or limited assessment knowledge and know how) (Refer to multiple intelligence research and literature)
- ▶ Schools or learning institutions seem stuck in assessment of learning mode and less on assessment for learning or for life mode)
- ▶ Suicide or depression for those whom assessment has labelled wrongly

Factors that influence Assessment Practices

- ▶ Teacher Preparation at pre-service and post service stages
- ▶ High teacher –pupil ratio
- ▶ Teacher qualification and experience
- ▶ Level of pressure to succeed from multiple stakeholders
- ▶ Class size
- ▶ Nature and economic status of the school
- ▶ Teacher – student; and teacher – teacher; and student – student relationships
- ▶ Teacher knowledge, skills and self beliefs
- ▶ Purposes for or of assessment

Ending Thoughts for Reflection

- ▶ To what extent has assessment helped to build or destroy many learners in our region?
- ▶ To what extent has limited or wrong assessment practices contributed towards under development of Africa?
- ▶ What national or regional assessment reforms do we need to learn or emulate from Finland, Singapore and or South Korea where there are non stressful high student achievement levels?
- ▶ How do we balance assessment of learning , with assessment for learning and assessment for life?
- ▶ **Clip from UK and Clip from Capetown (If time permits)**