

# THE 41<sup>ST</sup> AEAA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

## PROGRAMME AND ABSTRACTS



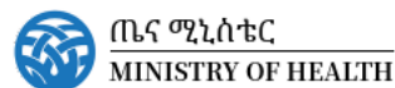
### THEME:

Transforming Educational Assessment:  
Towards Quality Learning and Informed  
Decision Making

25<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> August 2025

Skylight Hotel  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

## Sponsors





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CONFERENCE UPDATES**

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AAU	Addis Ababa University
AEAA	Association for Educational Assessment in Africa
ALIVE	Assessment of Life Skills and Values in East Africa
ALP	Accelerated Learning Program
ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
ATM	Technology Acceptance Model
AU	African Union
BEC	Botswana Examinations Council
CBA	Competency Based Assessment
CBT	Computer-Based Testing
DBE	Department of Basic Education
EAES	Educational Assessment and Examinations Services
ECCE	Early Childhood Education and Car
ECE	Early Childhood Education
ECESWA	Examinations Council of Eswatini
ECOL	Examinations Council of Lesotho
ECZ	Examinations Council of Zambia
EGMA	Early Grade Mathematics Assessment
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessment
EMaCS	Exam Management and Correction System
EXCO	Executive Committee
FA	Formative Assessment
FAWE	Forum for African Women Educationalists
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IDELA	International Development and Early Learning Assessment
IEA	International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement
IEB	Independent Examinations Board
IFEF	Institute of La Francophonie for Education and Training
JAMB	Joint Admission and Matriculation Board
KNEC	Kenya National Examinations Council
LaNA	Literacy and Numeracy Assessment
LOC	Local Organizing Committee
MANEB	Malawi National Examinations Board
MELQO	Measuring Early Learning and Quality Outcomes
MICIT	Ministry of Information, Communication and Information Technology
MoBSE	Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education
MOE	Ministry of Education

MOET	Lesotho Ministry of Education and Training
NABTEB	National Business and Technical Examinations Board, Nigeria
NaCCA	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
NECO	National Examination Council
NECTA	National Examinations Council of Tanzania
NLA	National Learning Assessment
NQF	National Qualifications Framework
OSSREA	Organization for Social Science Research in Eastern and Southern Africa
QM	Qelem Meda
SAQA	South African Qualifications Authority
SARIS	Student Academic Records Information System
SBA	school-based assessment.
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
TEVET	Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training
TEVETA	Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Authority
UCE	Uganda Certificate of Education
UIS	UNESCO Institute of Statistics
UK	United Kingdom
UMALUSI	Council for Quality Assurance in General and further Education and Training
UNEB	Uganda National Examinations Board
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USA	United States of America
UTME	United Tertiary Matriculation Examination
WAEC	West Africa Examinations Council
WASSCE	African Senior School Certificate Examination
ZIMSEC	Zimbabwe School Examinations Council





## WELCOME MESSAGE BY EAES CEO:

**ESHETU KEBEDE GICHORO (Ph.D)**

On behalf of the Educational Assessment and Examinations Service (EAES), I am pleased to warmly welcome you to the 41st Annual Conference of the Association for Educational Assessment in Africa (AEAA) hosted in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. This year's conference theme is framed as **"Transforming Educational Assessment: Towards Quality Learning and Informed Decision-Making."**

I extend my special welcome to the conference participants from Africa and other regions around the Globe. It is a great honor to host this important event, bringing together educational assessment professionals, policymakers, researchers, and practitioners from across the world. Your participation underscores our shared commitment to transforming educational assessment systems that promote meaningful learning and support informed decision-making processes.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to the Ministry of Education, under the leadership of H.E. Professor Birhanu Nega, the Minister, for his guidance and support. His approval for hosting this conference in Ethiopia along with his valuable guidance have been fundamental in making this event possible. I also want to extend my heartfelt thanks to the Local Organizing Committee (LOC), chaired by Mr. Yilikal Wondimeneh. Their relentless efforts and dedication have played a key role in organizing and ensuring the success of this conference. I am also deeply grateful to our partners and sponsors, whose support has been pivotal in making this event a reality. Their partnership shows the spirit of collaboration essential to transformational change in educational assessment. Also, I sincerely thank all stakeholders for their unwavering support.

Over the conference days, I am confident that discussions, presentations, and networking will foster new insights, innovative ideas, and fruitful partnerships that will contribute to the transformation of educational assessment across Africa and beyond.

Once again, I warmly welcome you all and wish you a productive, inspiring, and successful conference.

Thank you.

Eshetu Kebede Gichoro (Ph.D)

CEO, Educational Assessment and Examinations Service

Vice President, The Association for Educational Assessment in Africa



## FOREWORD BY AEAA PRESIDENT:

**MAFU S. RAKOMETSI (Ph.D)**

Having been to Kenya, a hotbed of archaeological discoveries, in 2023 and moving to the Cradle of Humankind, South Africa, in 2024, the AEAA flame has finally arrived in Ethiopia, a place of ancient culture.

The Association for Educational Assessment in Africa (AEAA) 41st Annual Conference, hosted by the Ethiopian Educational Assessment and Examinations Service (EAES), presents an opportunity for delegates from all parts of the African continent and those who join us from other parts

of the world to consider how best to transform educational assessment in order to inform quality learning and informed decision making.

I am particularly excited that the 41st Conference takes place in Addis, the affectionate name of Addis Ababa, where the African Union (AU) is rooted. Since the AU designated 2025 as the "Year of Justice for Africans and People of African Descent through Reparations", I can't think of any better place for the AEAA family and its global sister organisations to have a discourse about the reconstruction of educational assessments than Addis.

A word worth citing from the AU theme is 'reparation' whose general meaning is the action of making amends. So, read together with the 41st AEAA Conference theme, the AU theme calls on this conference to contribute from an educational assessment perspective to addressing historical injustices. Used idiomatically in the context of the conference taking place here in Addis, one can argue that the AU calls on us as assessment practitioners and policy makers to make some adjustments to our ways of assessing in order to treat those assessed in fairer and more accurate ways.

Having gone through the booklet of abstracts, I have no hesitation in saying that the accepted papers, which are spread over eight sub-themes, promise to offer a wide geographic perspective, covering both African and global experiences, as far as transformation of educational assessment is concerned.

Undoubtedly, the papers and workshops to be delivered at this conference over the next five days will generate discussion and debates to help us transform our ways of doing the business of educational assessment to enhance the quality of learning and decision making. We are grateful to the authors who have put together papers for presentation at this conference.

As well as thanking the authors for their papers, I would also like to thank the conference organising team, EAES, led by Dr Eshetu Kebede Gichoro, the incoming President of AEAA, for executing the task of putting this conference together with a high degree of excellence. May I add that the team has plans to ensure that conference delegates are introduced to the hidden gems of this city of increasing significance on the African continent, the capital of Africa - Addis Ababa.

I wish you productive discussions and debates, and I keenly look forward to the resolutions that will emerge from the conference.





## WELCOME MESSAGE BY MINISTER, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, ETHIOPIA: H.E. Prof. Birhanu Nega

On behalf of the Ministry of Education, let me extend a warm welcome to all participants of 41<sup>st</sup> annual conference of the Association for Educational Assessment in Africa (AEAA). We are pleased to host delegates from across Africa and other continents, united by our common goal of transforming educational assessment to foster quality learning and informed decision-making.

The conference theme, "*Transforming Educational Assessment Towards Quality Learning and Informed Decision Making*," resonates deeply with Ethiopia's ongoing journey of educational reform. Our commitment to developing contextually relevant, equitable, and progressive educational systems continues to guide our efforts. The new Education and Training Policy emphasizes quality, inclusiveness, and relevance. We have developed and implemented a new curriculum aligned with these principles, invested in building new boarding and model schools to promote access and excellence, and prioritized comprehensive teacher training to equip our educators with modern pedagogical skills. Furthermore, we are working on the differentiation of universities, tailoring programs to meet labor market needs and societal development goals.

Ethiopia is making significant strides in transforming educational assessment system Which resonates on incorporating digital tools and online platforms. Accordingly, we are moving from paper-based examinations to computer-based testing system through a hybrid testing modality. At the core of these reforms is our strategic use of assessment data. We critically analyze assessment and examination results to inform policy, improve teaching and learning, and make evidence-based decisions that drive continuous improvement in our education system. This focus on data-driven decision-making ensures that our reforms are effective and aligned with our quality learning objectives.

Ethiopia remains committed to strengthening our assessment infrastructure and sharing our experience with the broader educational community. We believe that collaborative efforts and knowledge exchange at forums like this are vital for advancing quality learning across Africa and beyond.

Once again, I am pleased to welcome you all. I wish you productive discussions, valuable networking, and innovative insights throughout this conference.

Thank you.  
Prof. Birhanu Nega  
Minister, Ministry of Education, Ethiopia

## ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION FOR EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT IN AFRICA

### VISION STATEMENT

To harmonise educational assessments across the African continent

### MISSION STATEMENT

The Association for Educational Assessment in Africa (AEAA) is a non-profit organisation dedicated to promoting co-operation among examining and assessment bodies in Africa.

### BACKGROUND

The AEAA was established following a sub-regional conference held in 1982 by Heads of Institutions responsible for educational assessment in Eastern and Southern Africa. The initial vision was to harmonise educational assessment within Africa. Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Botswana, Lesotho, and Malawi were the primary founding members of the Association. Over time, other African countries joined, and in 1992, at a meeting in Arusha, Tanzania, the Association evolved into the AEAA, expanding its membership across the continent.

The AEAA is primarily comprised of private and non-profit government organisations, including educational assessment boards throughout Africa. One of its main goals is to share best practices in educational assessment. The primary forum for this activity is the annual conference, which is convened on a rotational basis by member institutions. This conference serves as a platform for benchmarking among examination bodies and scholars from different member states, facilitating the exchange of knowledge, experience, and best practices.

The AEAA has continental coverage, with 21 active primary members (examination bodies) and several individual members from both public and private institutions, primarily from Sub-Saharan Africa. The primary members are drawn from the following countries:

1	Botswana	8	Malawi	15	Sierra Leone
2	Cameroon	9	Mozambique	16	South Africa
3	Ethiopia	10	Namibia	17	South Sudan
4	Ghana	11	Nigeria	18	Swaziland
5	Kenya	12	Tanzania	19	Uganda
6	Lesotho	13	The Gambia	20	Zambia
7	Liberia	14	Rwanda	21	Zimbabwe

The AEAA is an affiliate member of the International Association for Educational Assessment (IAEA), which includes assessment institutions from around the world.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSOCIATION

The AEAA is committed to facilitating best practices in educational assessment among its member institutions by sharing experiences and sponsoring staff training on emerging trends. Its initiatives are guided by the following objectives:

- Promote co-operation among examining and assessment bodies across Africa;
- Encourage relevant examining and assessment activities among members;
- Sponsor international participation in the field of educational testing and examination;
- Commission and co-ordinate research projects;
- Improve assessment, testing, and examination processes within individual member countries;
- Address and share experience on various evaluation and assessment issues; and Undertake activities that are incidental or conducive to achieving the Association's objectives as outlined in its Charter.

## AEAA MEMBERSHIP

Membership in the AEAA is categorised into three types:

- Primary Membership – Open to non-profit regional and national examining boards;
- Affiliate Membership – Available to commercial firms and profit-making organisations; and
- Individual Membership – Available to organisations or individuals with expertise or a vested interest in educational assessment and testing.

## ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OF THE AEAA

The administrative structure of the AEAA comprises the following organs:

- General Assembly
- Executive Committee (EXCO)
- Secretariat
- Regional Representative

The General Assembly, comprising the Association's full membership, meets at least once each year. The Executive Committee (EXCO) stands as the Association's highest decision-making body, with eight members led by an elected President and Vice President. Since August 2024, the Chief Executive Officers of Umalusi (South Africa) and Educational Assessment and Examinations Service (EAES) of Ethiopia have served as AEAA President and Vice President, respectively. Other critical EXCO roles include the Treasurer, Executive Secretary, and Regional Representatives.

## THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE AEAA IS ORGANISED INTO FIVE SUB-REGIONS:

- Western African
- Eastern Africa
- Central Africa
- Southern Africa

## AFFILIATION

The Association for Educational Assessment in Africa (AEAA) is affiliated with the International Association for Educational Assessment (IAEA).

## SECRETARIAT ADDRESS

**All correspondences should be directed to the Executive Secretary, AEAA:**

Examinations Council of Zambia

P.O. Box 50432

Lusaka, Zambia

Email: [info@exams-council.org.zm](mailto:info@exams-council.org.zm)

## AEAA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Name	Designation	Organisation	Country
Dr. Mafu Rakometsi	President	Umalusi	South Africa
Dr. David Njegere	Immediate Past President	KNEC	Kenya
Dr. Eshetu Kebede	Deputy President	Educational Assessment and Examination Service	Ethiopia
Dr. Michael Chilala	Executive Secretary	Examinations Council of Zambia	Zambia
Mr. Pa-Samba Baldeh	Treasurer	The Gambia National Examinations Council	The Gambia
Prof. James Tambi Agbor Bechem	Central Africa Representative	University of Buea	Cameroon
Mr. Dan Odongo	East Africa Representative	Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB)	Uganda
Prof. Ibrahim Danstani Wushishi	West Africa Representative	National Business and Technical Examinations Board (NABTEB)	Nigeria
Dr. Mandlankosi Dlamini	Southern Africa Representative	Botswana Examinations Council (BEC)	Botswana

## ABOUT ETHIOPIAN AIRLINES



**Ethiopian Airlines:** A Legacy of African Aviation Excellence is founded on December 21, 1945. It is the national flag carrier of Ethiopia and the largest airline in Africa. Headquartered at Bole International Airport in Addis Ababa, the airline began operations on April 8, 1946, with a flight from Addis Ababa to Cairo using a Douglas C-47 aircraft. It was established with the support of Trans World Airlines (TWA) and under the vision of Emperor Haile Selassie I, who saw aviation as a symbol of modernization for Ethiopia.

### Growth and Global Reach

From its humble beginnings, Ethiopian Airlines has grown into a global aviation powerhouse. It became the first African airline to:

- Operate international flights (1951)
- Employ African pilots and flight attendants
- Join the International Air Transport Association (IATA) in 1959
- Introduce jet aircraft in Africa with the Boeing 720 in 1962
- Operate the Boeing 787 Dreamliner and Airbus A350 in Africa

Today, Ethiopian Airlines serves over 160 destinations across five continents, including 70 cities in Africa, making it the most connected airline on the continent. It operates a modern fleet of over 150 aircraft, with an average fleet age of less than seven years.

### Innovation and Alliances

Ethiopian Airlines has consistently led African aviation in innovation and service. It joined the Star Alliance in 2011, becoming the third African carrier to do so. The airline also established the Ethiopian Aviation Academy, one of the continent's premier training centers for pilots, technicians, and cabin crew.

### Awards and Recognition

Ethiopian Airlines has received numerous accolades, including:

- Skytrax Four-Star Airline rating
- APEX Passenger Choice Awards for "Best Overall in Africa"
- US President's Lifetime Achievement Award

### Vision 2035

Having surpassed its "Vision 2025" goals ahead of schedule, Ethiopian Airlines is now pursuing an even more ambitious "Vision 2035" strategy. This roadmap focuses on expanding its fleet, enhancing digital transformation, and strengthening its position as a global aviation leader.

Source: <https://www.ethiopianairlines.com/et>





## World Bank Support to Ethiopia's Education Sector

The World Bank has been supporting Ethiopia's education sector through major projects since 2008, when the first phase of the General Education Quality Improvement Program (GEQIP-I) began. The World Bank plays a vital role in supporting Ethiopia's education sector through both financial and technical assistance aimed at enhancing access, quality, and equity. Its comprehensive strategy addresses immediate educational needs while

promoting long-term systemic reform. Key programs include the recently concluded General Education Quality Improvement Program for Equity (GEQIP-E), which made significant strides in expanding access and improving quality, and the currently active Education Transformation through Outcome-based Learning (ETOL) and Human Capital Operation (HCO), which focus on expanding early and primary education, strengthening teacher training, updating curricula, and fostering inclusive environments, including for refugee learners. Additionally, the World Bank supports Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) and skills development through the East African Skills Transformation for Regional Integration (EASTRIP) and the East Africa Skills for Employment (EASE) projects.

### Key Areas of Support

**Expanding Access:** The World Bank has played a crucial role in broadening access to pre-primary and primary education across Ethiopia, with particular emphasis on reaching underserved rural communities, marginalized populations, and vulnerable groups. Through strategic investments in school infrastructure and community mobilization initiatives, the Bank has helped increase enrollment rates significantly, particularly among girls and children from pastoralist communities. The O-Class Program, a flagship pre-primary initiative, has dramatically boosted early childhood education enrollment and established quality standards that serve as models for nationwide expansion.

**Enhancing Quality:** Through comprehensive quality improvement initiatives, particularly the recently concluded GEQIP-E, the World Bank invested substantially in elevating educational standards by supporting systematic teacher training programs, comprehensive curriculum enhancement, and the provision of essential learning materials and school resources. These efforts included establishing teacher training colleges, developing competency-based curricula, and implementing continuous professional development programs that have reached thousands of educators nationwide.

**Advancing Equity:** To promote truly inclusive education, the World Bank has supported comprehensive efforts to make learning accessible to all children—including those with disabilities, refugee backgrounds, and from marginalized communities—by establishing Inclusive Education Resource Centers (IERCs) throughout the country and successfully integrating refugee secondary schools into the national education framework. This work has directly benefited thousands of refugee learners while strengthening Ethiopia's capacity to provide equitable educational opportunities.

**Strengthening Teacher Development:** Support extends comprehensively to both pre-service and in-service teacher training programs, equipping educators with pedagogical skills, subject matter knowledge, and inclusive teaching methodologies required to implement new competency-based curricula and effectively support diverse learners, including those with special educational needs and multilingual backgrounds.

**Curriculum Reform:** The World Bank has provided sustained backing for the Ethiopian government's ambitious curriculum reform agenda, supporting the development of updated learning materials aligned with modern pedagogical approaches, training educators to deliver revised content effectively, and establishing systems for continuous curriculum review and improvement.

**Analytical Work and Knowledge Generation:** The World Bank conducts comprehensive analytical work and knowledge generation on key education themes to inform evidence-based policy making and reform in Ethiopia. This includes systematic impact evaluations of major programs like GEQIP, learning assessments that track student outcomes across different demographic groups, and policy research on critical areas such as teacher effectiveness, curriculum reform, and inclusive education practices. Key analytical pieces include studies on out-of-school children examining barriers to access and retention, learning poverty studies that measure children's ability to read and understand simple text by age 10, and education public expenditure tracking analyses that assess resource allocation efficiency and spending patterns across regions. The Bank's research on early childhood education, particularly the O-Class program evaluation, provides crucial evidence for scaling pre-primary interventions, while studies on conflict-affected areas analyze the impact of displacement on educational access and quality. Additionally, diagnostic studies on education financing, teacher deployment, and institutional capacity strengthen the foundation for strategic planning and inform the design of future operations, ensuring that all interventions are grounded in robust evidence and aligned with national education priorities.

*In line with its ongoing commitment to evidence-based education policy, the World Bank in Ethiopia supports the 41<sup>st</sup> Annual Conference of the Association for Educational Assessment in Africa (AEAA).*

## CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF PAST AEAA CONFERENCES

The Association for Educational Assessment in Africa (AEAA) was established in 1982. AEAA Conferences are held annually and are hosted on a rotational basis by member institutions. A chronological list of these conferences is provided in the following table.

#	Year	Country	Theme
1	1983	Tanzania	Continuous Assessment: A case of Aptitude Testing and Technical Examination.
2	1984		
3	1985	Malawi	
4	1986	Uganda	Continuous Assessment and Selection
5	1987	Kenya	Standard setting in public examinations
6	1988	Kenya	Assessment of skills for self-reliance
7	1989	Malawi	Achievement of the examinations in certification and placement processing of examination results (from marking to release)
8	1990	Zambia	Processing of examination results: From marking to release
9	1991	Uganda	Innovations in assessment
10	1992	Tanzania	Assessment of practical and professional skills in examinations
11	1993	Kenya	Challenges of educational assessment in Africa
12	1994	Uganda	
13	1995	South Africa	Assessment and opportunity – the ethos, practice and impact of assessment for reconstruction and development in education
14	1996	Zimbabwe	Guaranteeing quality in assessment, challenges, agonies and benefits of indigenization of curriculum
15	1997	Nigeria	Quality assurance in education assessment
16	1998	Malawi	Education assessment in African countries – challenges and prospects
17	1999	Zambia	Enhancing relevance and appropriateness of educational assessment
18	2000	Cameroon	Capacity building in the conduct of public examinations
19	2001	Kenya	School based assessment
20	2002	Tanzania	The management and administration of public examinations system in Africa - experiences in examination irregularities
21	2003	South Africa	Assessment and certification in changing educational, economic and social context

22	2004	Botswana	The role of assessment in the implementation of national education policy
23	2005	Uganda	Enhancing the quality of education through assessment
24	2006	Swaziland	Curriculum change and challenges in educational assessment
25	2007	Rwanda	Assessment and evaluation for teaching and learning in the 21st century
26	2008	Ghana	Contemporary trends and tools in educational assessment
27	2009	Cameroon	Educational assessment and quality assurance in a multicultural society
28	2010	Nigeria	The challenges of quality assessment in a changing global economy
29	2011	Kenya	Best practices in educational assessment for regional integration
30	2012	Botswana	Enhancing assessment practices
31	2013	Tanzania	Enhancing assessment practice for quality education
32	2014	Zambia	Educational assessment in a knowledge society
33	2015	Ghana	Quality assurance in educational assessment in an era of rapid change
34	2016	Zimbabwe	Promoting holistic development through innovative educational assessment initiatives
35	2017	Uganda	Enhancing efficiency and effectiveness in educational assessment in an era of rapid change
36	2018	Lesotho	Reforming educational assessment: a renewed agenda
37	2019	Nigeria	Innovations in educational Assessment
	2020		Suspended due to COVID-19 pandemic
	2021		Suspended due to COVID-19 pandemic
38	2022	Zambia	Educational Assessment for developing 21st Century Skills
39	2023	Kenya	Educational assessment for nurturing every learner's potential
40	2024	South Africa	Reimagining educational assessment in the age of multiple dimensions of learning in a global society
41	2025	Ethiopia	Transforming Educational Assessment: Towards Quality learning and Informed decision making



## ABOUT THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION- ETHIOPIA

The Ministry of Education (MoE) serves as Ethiopia's central governmental authority for steering and overseeing the development and implementation of educational policies, programs, and standards across the entire spectrum—from early childhood education through to tertiary and postgraduate institutions. Established in 1935 under the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia (FDRE), the Ministry has played a pivotal role in shaping the nation's education system over successive reform periods.

To ensure coordinated governance and targeted policy delivery, the MoE is structured into two primary sub-sectors:

**General Education Sub-sector:** encompassing pre-primary, primary, and secondary education, including curriculum development, teacher training, and national assessment.

**Higher Education Sub-sector:** responsible for overseeing universities and colleges, accreditation processes, academic standards, and research advancement.

This institutional framework allows the Ministry to address both foundational learning needs and the strategic development of Ethiopia's human capital. As part of its mandate, the MoE engages with regional education bureaus, development partners, and civil society to promote inclusive, equitable, and quality learning opportunities nationwide.

### Vision

Sustainably building an education and training system that ensures quality and equitable education for all citizens and that continuously produces a competent and competitive workforce fueling the country's economic development.

### Mission

Ensuring effective, quality and equitable education and training system through building the implementation capacity of the education sector at all levels, designing and regulating standards of efficiency, expanding standardized education throughout the country, as well as complementing and leveraging education sector development interventions with strategic communications and public awareness.

### Values

- Effectiveness and efficiency
- Fairness
- Accountability
- Excellence
- participatory
- Servanthood

### Power and Duties

- According to the proclamation No. 1263/2021 issued to determine the powers and functions of the executive bodies of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, the Ministry of Education will have the following powers and functions.
- Initiate policies, strategies, laws and programs with respect to general and higher education; prepare detail program compatible with the country's overall development plan; implement the same upon approval;
- Formulate a general framework of education curricula of general and higher education; set education and educational institution standards; national qualification framework and ensure implementation of the same;
- Oversee and coordinate the process of preparation of national examinations based on the country's general and higher education policy and curricula, maintain of records and issuance of certificates;
- Devise, in collaboration with concerned organs, strategies that enhance higher education institutions capacity in study and research; implement the same; facilitate mechanism for implementation of study and research findings;
- Create, in collaboration with ministry of innovation and technology, conducive condition for facilitating linkages between research institute of higher education and the industry sector to assist research and technology development activities;
- Follow up the performance of public higher education institutions;
- Ensure that the implementation of student admissions and placements in higher education institutions are equitable;
- Ensure standards required of general and higher education are set; and quality and relevant education are delivered;
- Cause the expansion of quality standard higher education; oversee same;
- Publicize national performance in education;
- Implement the powers and duties entrusted to the Higher Education Strategic Center under Higher Education Proclamation No. 1152/2019

Source: <https://www.moe.gov.et/>



## **ABOUT EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT AND EXAMINATIONS SERVICE (EAES)**

The Educational Assessment and Examinations Service (EAES) in Ethiopia is a prestigious and esteemed organization responsible for educational assessment, research, and examinations in the country. With a commitment to excellence and integrity, this esteemed institution has made a pivotal impact in ensuring the quality and standard of education in Ethiopia. Its dedication to fair and transparent assessment practices, as well as its unwavering focus on maintaining high standards in assessment and examination, makes it an asset to the educational landscape of Ethiopia.

### **VISION**

To become a center of excellence for educational assessment, examinations, and research by 2030.

### **MISSION**

Deliver fair, high-quality educational assessments, examinations, and services driven by technology, characterized by professionalism, innovation, efficiency, and effectiveness to address societal needs.

The Educational Assessment and Examinations Service (EAES) formerly known as the National Educational Assessment and Examinations Agency has been overseeing national examinations and large scale assessments since 1946 and 2000 respectively. EAES is dedicated to maintaining high standards in educational assessment.

### **OBJECTIVES**

- To determine students who are eligible to be promoted to the next level of education through development and administration of national examinations for general education, exit examination, and national graduate admission tests.
- To determine the professionals who possess the required knowledge, skills, and abilities to meet the standards for practicing in a specific field, through development and administration of professional competency and licensure assessments.
- To support development and quality assurance of education through conducting educational assessments and research; and disseminating the findings.
- To maintain the standards of regional educational assessments and examinations; and to provide technical support to relevant regional government offices in developing their capacities

To carry out its mandate, EAES is structured into four core executives, each of whom holds the following distinct roles and responsibilities essential to the organization's function.

## 1. Educational assessment and research

- Conduct Measuring Early Learning and Quality Outcomes (MELQO) in pre-primary education
- Conduct Early Grade Reading and Mathematics Assessments at early primary education
- Conduct National Learning Assessment (NLA) at exit grade levels
- Conduct various research on topics related to educational assessments
- Develop data collection instruments and maintain the standard of classroom assessment

## 2. National examinations development

- Establish Item Bank System
- Develop Standardized National Examinations
- Ensure the Standards of Grade 8 Regional Examination
- Give Professional and Capacity Building Support for Regional State Education Bureau

## 3. National examinations administration

- Establish examination timelines, allocate budgets, and manage resources effectively to ensure seamless operations.
- Develop and enforce comprehensive standards for candidates, exam centers, administrators, and infrastructure management.
- Conduct registration, verify candidate eligibility, assign unique identifiers, and identify secure and accessible exam centers.
- Select, train, and assign exam administrators to promote ethical, efficient, and well-supported examination processes.
- Monitor the examination process with strict invigilation, address issues promptly, and uphold fairness and security at all times.
- Conduct accurate marking, verify scores, resolve appeals, publish results, and audit all procedures to drive continuous improvement.

## 4. Digital Education Data Management and Service

- Mange and administer educational assessment and examination data
- Certify examinees
- Verify and authenticate educational documents
- Organize and manage digital educational data archive center.
- Ensure certificates are confidential and standardized that prevent fraud
- Provide accessible, efficient and effective educational document services

## LOCAL ORGANISING COMMITTEE



### Welcome Message from the LOC Chairperson

On behalf of the Local Organizing Committee, I warmly welcome you to the 41<sup>st</sup> AEAA Annual Conference here in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. This year's theme—“*Transforming Educational Assessment: Towards Quality Learning and Informed Decision Making*”—highlights our shared commitment to advancing assessment systems that are innovative, inclusive, and impactful. As hosts, the Educational Assessment and Examinations Services (EAES) is honored to facilitate this platform for collaboration and knowledge exchange across the continent.

We hope your stay in Addis Ababa offers valuable professional insights and meaningful cultural experiences. Together, we can advance assessment practices that serve learners across Africa.

Warm regards,

**Yilikal Wondimeneh**

**Chairperson, Local Organizing Committee for 41st AEAA Annual Conference  
Educational Assessment and Examinations Services (EAES), Ethiopia**

## LIST OF LOC MEMBERS

OVERAL COORDINATION OF AEAA CONFERENCE		
Dr. Eshetu Kebede	Vice President – Association for Education Assessment in Africa (AEAA)	
Mr. Yilikal Wondimeneh	Chairperson - The Local Organising Committee of the 41st AEAA Conference	
Sub-Committees for the Local Organising Committee (LOC) of the 41st Annual Association of Educational Assessment in Africa (AEAA) conference to be held from 25th to 29th August 2025		
SUB TEAM MEMBERS	SUB TEAM ROLE	REMARK
1.0 STEERING / COORDINATING TEAM		
Mr. Yilikal Wondimeneh	Chairperson	
Mr. Tefera Feyisa	Deputy Chairperson	
Mr. Zenebe Gilo	Member	
2.0 PAPER REVIEW AND PUBLICATION		
Dr. Effa Gurmu	Chairperson	
Abraraw Teka	Deputy Chairperson	
Wondwosen Eyesuwork	Member	
Libeyin Teshome	Member	
Bekele Geleta	Member	
Dagne Asefa	Member	
Arega Mamaru	Member	
Robel Getachew	Member	
3.0 SOCIAL / WELFARE AND LOGISTICS		
Zenebe Gilo	Chairperson	
Endale Getachew	Deputy Chairperson	
Alelign Arutie	Member	
Ashenafi Tesfaye	Member	
Abera Wakessa	Member	
Endale Ayalew	Member	
COMMUNICATION AND PROTOCOL		
Asmamaw Estezia	Chairperson	
Kassahun Tamene	Deputy Chairperson	
Getachew Abebe	Member	
Dilame Demeke	Member	
Adigo Yanet	Member	
Bekema Sileshi	Member	
PUBLICITY AND SPONSORSHIP		
Dr. Girma Mekonnen	Chairperson	
Asefa Leta	Deputy Chairperson	
Getnet Misganaw	Member	
Desta Gashu	Member	
Desalegn Tiruneh	Member	
Getachew Kumera	Member	
Solomon Teferi	Member	
PUBLICITY AND SPONSORSHIP		
Chernet Belete	Deputy Chairperson	
Zelalem Mitiku	Member	
Sendeku Yazachew	Member	



UNICEF believes that all children have the right to survive, thrive, and fulfill their potential – to the benefit of a better world. Having been present in Ethiopia for over 70 years, UNICEF's work is closely linked to the country's ongoing journey towards economic development and social transformation. The organization supports national efforts to realize the rights of children and women through initiatives that improve child health, education, and protection. Over this period, UNICEF has built strong partnerships with the Ethiopian government, development agencies, civil society, and donors to support sustainable progress.

In the realm of education, UNICEF emphasizes the importance of equitable access to quality learning opportunities. Recognizing that educational assessment plays a crucial role in shaping effective policies and practices, UNICEF collaborates with national authorities to promote robust assessment systems that inform evidence-based decision-making. These efforts aim to ensure that children across Ethiopia acquire necessary skills and competencies, contributing to the country's broader development goals.

UNICEF in Ethiopia underscores the critical role of transforming educational assessment to enhance learning outcomes. Supporting initiatives that develop assessment frameworks aligned with international standards, UNICEF advocates for tools that measure not just rote memorization but genuine understanding and skills. This focus aligns with the 41st Annual Conference theme: "Transforming Educational Assessment: Towards Quality Learning and Informed Decision Making." Through these efforts, UNICEF is committed to ensuring that Ethiopia's educational systems foster meaningful learning experiences and data-driven policies for a brighter future."

UNICEF has operated in Ethiopia since 1952, with its work closely aligned to the country's steady transition toward a modern economy and its ambition to attain middle-income status by 2025. In the post-World War II era, Ethiopia initiated national modernization efforts and welcomed international collaboration. UNICEF's early involvement included delivering medical supplies and coordinating child vaccination campaigns. The organization established its first office in Addis Ababa in 1958 and formalized its cooperation with the Government in 1963 through a Basic Cooperation Agreement. Since then, UNICEF has consistently supported Ethiopia's development—providing policy advice, technical expertise, and essential services to improve the lives of children across the country.

Between 2000 and 2015, Ethiopia made notable strides—cutting child mortality by over two-thirds, reducing extreme poverty, expanding health and education services, and improving nutrition and access to clean water. With over 400 staff and operations in all eight regions, UNICEF's Ethiopia programme is among its largest globally. For more than 60 years, UNICEF has partnered with government, donors, and civil society to advance child and women's rights through improved survival, development, and protection. Source: <https://www.unicef.org> › Ethiopia



## BIOGRAPHIES OF KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



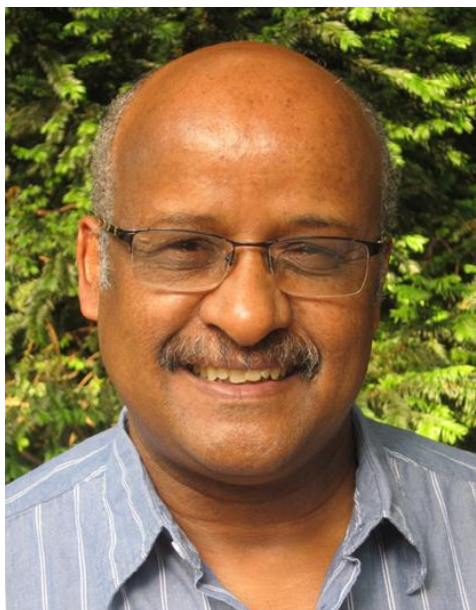
### Dawit Mekonnen (Ph.D)

Dr. Dawit Mekonnen Mihiretie is an Associate Professor of Education at Addis Ababa University and a leading figure in curriculum development, teacher education, and educational policy across Ethiopia and the broader international landscape. Holding a PhD in Education from the University of Leipzig, Dr. Dawit brings over 20 years of academic, research, and consultancy experience to the field of education.

He has played a central role in numerous high-impact initiatives, collaborating with global institutions such as UNESCO, the World Bank, and the Ethiopian Ministry of Education. His work has informed national education strategies, curriculum reforms, and teacher development programs, contributing to systemic improvements in education quality and equity. Notably, he has been instrumental in shaping Ethiopia's education roadmap and teacher training frameworks, aligning them with both national priorities and global standards.

Dr. Dawit is a prolific scholar with over 40 peer-reviewed publications on curriculum, literacy, teacher development, and educational equity. His widely cited research has shaped policy and practice across diverse contexts. Beyond academia, he is a respected advisor and speaker on education reform and assessment, actively contributing to policy development and capacity-building across Africa, Europe, and Asia. His commitment to evidence-based policymaking and sustainable education makes him a leading voice in the field.

As a keynote speaker at the 41st AEAA Conference, Dr. Dawit will contribute rich experience and insight to conversations on educational assessment, equity, and innovation—offering a valuable perspective for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers committed to advancing learning across Africa and beyond.



### Prof. Bahru Zewde

Prof. Bahru Zewde is Emeritus Professor of History at Addis Ababa University and a leading figure in Ethiopian academia. A Founding Fellow and former Principal Vice President of the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences, he currently serves as President of the Association of Ethiopian Historians and is a Fellow of the African Academy of Sciences.

At AAU, he held key leadership roles including Chair of the History Department and Director of the Institute of Ethiopian Studies. He also led the Forum for Social Studies and played influential roles in regional organizations such as OSSREA and the Association of African Historians.

Prof. Bahru has served on multiple boards, including TrustAfrica, Ethiopian Heritage Trust, Good Governance Africa–Horn of Africa, and AAU's governing board. He edited several major journals, including the Journal of Ethiopian Studies and Africa Review of Books, and served on international editorial boards.

His scholarship has earned fellowships and awards from institutions such as the British Academy, Humboldt University, and the Japan Foundation. He has held visiting professorships in Europe and the U.S., and consulted for organizations including the African Union, Carnegie Corporation, and Ethiopian Airlines.



### Dr. David Njengere (Ph.D)

Dr. David Njengere (MBS) is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Kenya National Examinations Council.

He holds a PhD in Education, Master of Philosophy in English and a Bachelor of Education in English and Literature, from the Moi University, Kenya. He also holds a Post Graduate Diploma in Curriculum Design and Development from the International Bureau of Education (UNESCO) and Open University of Tanzania, and a Certificate in Design and Development of Large-Scale Assessments from Education and Testing Services, Princeton, New Jersey. He is also a

fullbright fellow under the Hubert Humphrey Fellowship Programme, Vanderbilt University, USA.

Dr. Njengere has a wealth of experience as an educationist and has been involved in many initiatives in education reforms at national, regional and global levels. He chaired some of the East African Community Technical Committees Sessions that culminated in the Framework for Harmonization of Education Systems and Curricula.

He has also been a resource person with the International Bureau of Education (UNESCO) on several assignments, including being a facilitator with the Government of Malaysia on curriculum-related issues.



### Prof. Belay Tefera

Prof. Belay Tefera is a Full Professor of Psychology with a PhD in early childhood development and learning from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. He has held key academic and leadership roles at Addis Ababa University, including Founding Editor-in-Chief of the Ethiopian Journal of Behavioral Studies and Associate Dean of Education, and served as President of the Ethiopian Psychologists' Association. A prominent voice in national educational reform, he has contributed to various Ministry of Education task forces and boards such as the African Center for Early Childhood Development. He is widely regarded for his thought leadership on child development policy and for mentoring emerging scholars in the behavioral

sciences.

Prof. Belay is a prolific scholar, authoring seven books and over 230 publications, and serves on numerous editorial and advisory boards. Recognized with 30+ certificates, his affiliations include the Ethiopian Academy of Sciences, OSSREA, and the International Forum of Researchers in Education. His cross-sector engagements have strengthened collaborations between academic institutions, civil society, and government in support of inclusive early learning initiatives. His work reflects a deep commitment to advancing psychology, educational policy, and early childhood care in Ethiopia and beyond.



### Prof. Ann A. O'Connell

Ann A. O'Connell, Ed.D., is Professor of Educational Psychology with specialization in Evaluation, Statistics and Measurement, in the Graduate School of Education, Rutgers University, New Jersey, USA, and Professor Emeritus in the College of Education and Human Ecology, The Ohio State University, Ohio, USA. Dr. O'Connell holds the A. DeMarzo and Keith N. Lamb Endowed Chair in Educational Equity at Rutgers University.

She is an internationally respected leader in educational statistics and research methodology. Dr. O'Connell has devoted her career to methodology capacity building particularly for multilevel models and data-analyses in education and health research, the use of research evidence and evidence-based interventions, and evaluation of interventions in health and education. She is passionate about training the next generation of quantitative scholars in education and the social sciences for improving learning outcomes and advancing equity in education and health. In 2013-14, she received a Fulbright Scholar Award to Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia, where she continues to collaborate on teaching, research and capacity-building initiatives.

## BIOGRAPHIES OF WORKSHOP PRESENTERS



### Arnold J Brouwer (Ph.D)

**Dr Arnold J Brouwer** is an international assessment expert in educational measurement and psychological testing. He is an all-around researcher, innovator and consultant of methods and techniques for analysing, optimising and auditing fair, reliable, secure and valid assessments. He is director/owner of the Dutch Research Centre for Examination and Certification. Besides he is a guest lecturer and guest researcher at the Department of Cognition, Data and Education within the Faculty Behavioural, Management and Social Sciences at the University of Twente in the Netherlands.

He obtained his PhD on the System-oriented Talent Management (STM) model, which he elaborated into an evidence-based method for visualising the interaction between human talent and business purpose from both a psychological and managerial perspective. He carried out external audits, conducted training and provided capacity- building in countries including Azerbaijan, Curacao, Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Mexico, Uganda and the Netherlands.



### Prof. Anil Kanjee

**Prof. Anil Kanjee** is a Research Professor at the Tshwane University of Technology whose work focuses on addressing the challenge of equity and quality in education. He is the head of the Assessment and Learning Research Programme, and coordinator of the Postgraduate Programme in the Department of Primary Education. He also serves as a Research Fellow at the Oxford University Centre for Educational Assessment. Currently he is supporting the Education Department and Teacher Unions to implement the national Assessment for Learning Pedagogical Strategy in South African schools. He has served as a technical advisor to education ministries in Africa and Asia, UNICEF, UNESCO,

the United National Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees, as well as to the Department of Basic Education, JET Education Services, UMALUSI and the National Educational Collaborative Trust

#### His areas of research focus on:

- Enhancing the use of classroom and large-scale assessments to improve learning for ALL.
- Learner rights, learner voice and learning across schools in different poverty quintiles.
- Developing models of teacher professional development to address equity gaps in schools.
- Monitoring and evaluation of education systems, programmes and projects.
- Application of Item response theory for enhancing the reporting of assessment results.





## About Us

Qelem Meda Technologies is a leading Ethiopian software company, certified under ISO/IEC 27001:2022 and ISO 9001:2015, known for delivering secure, scalable, large-scale and user-friendly digital solutions. Specializing in education technology, the company has deployed its robust Examination Management System since 2021 across 11 regional education bureaus, supporting Grade 6, Grade 8, and CoC exams.

## Vision

To be one of the leading technology companies in making client's life easier

## Mission

To provide innovative, game changing and state of the art technology solutions in all walks of life

## EMaCS (Exam Management and Correction System)

A comprehensive software solution that streamlines the entire examination lifecycle from candidate registration and secure exam administration to automated correction, advanced analytics, and timely result publication which supporting both paper-pencilled and online formats, depending on readiness and infrastructure capacity.



## EMaCS Reach

Regions	Schools	Students
11	25 K	6.1M

## EMaCS Core Benefits

- ✓ End-to-end exam process management
- ✓ Data privacy and information sovereignty
- ✓ In person 24/7 dependable support
- ✓ Cheating detection mechanisms
- ✓ No reliance on foreign currency
- ✓ Real-time data presentation

## Our Clients - Education Bureaus

- ✓ Oromia
- ✓ Amhara
- ✓ Addis Ababa
- ✓ Sidama
- ✓ Afar
- ✓ South West Ethiopia
- ✓ Harari
- ✓ Central Ethiopia
- ✓ Gambella
- ✓ Somali
- ✓ South Ethiopia

## Other Products and Services

- ✓ BSC based PMS
- ✓ Roster Management System
- ✓ Liyu System
- ✓ E-School System
- ✓ Electronic Invoice

## Global Certification





## CONFERENCE PROGRAMME AND SCHEDULE

Day 0: Sunday 24 August 2025	
08:00 – 09:00	Arrival and Registration of Delegates at Skylight Hotel
09:00 – 16:00	AEAA Executive Committee (EXCO Meeting) – Separate logistics planning
09:00 – 12:30	Pre-conference Workshop1 by: Dr. Arnold, J. Brouwer, Integrating Competency Based Assessment and Informed Decision Making for Effective Learning Outcomes
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 - 17:30	Pre-conference Workshop 2 by: Prof Anil Kanjee, Assessment for Learning: Policy and Practice Implications for Scaling-up in African Schools
19:00 - 21:30	Welcome Cocktail at Skylight Hotel
Day 1: Monday 25 August 2025	
Opening Ceremony and Plenary Session: Chair: Dr Eshetu Kebede , CEO, EAES	
07:00 – 08:00	Arrival and Registration of Delegates Continues
08:00 - 08:30	Entertainment
08:30 - 08:35	Prayer
08:35 - 08:40	Ethiopia National Anthem and AU Anthem
08:40 - 08:50	Student Choir
08:50 - 09:00	Recognition of Delegates on Country Basis
09:00 - 09:10	Introduction and Welcome Remarks: Dr. Eshetu Kebede, CEO of EAES
09:10 - 09:25	Remarks: Prof. Birhanu Nega, Minister of Education
09:25 - 09:40	Official Opening: Deputy Prime Minister of FDRE
09:40 - 09:50	Remarks: AU Commissioner
09:50 - 10:05	Remarks: Dr. Mafu S. Rakometsi, President of the AEAA
10:05 - 10:40	Launching of Common Continental Assessment Framework in Africa
10:40 - 11:10	Tea Break
11:10 - 11:40	Keynote Address: Dr. Dawit Mekonnen, Transforming educational assessment towards quality learning and informed decision making
11:40 - 12:30	Presentation: World Bank Ethiopia, The World Bank's contributions in strengthening educational assessment systems for data-driven decision making and policy formulation
12:30 – 13:00	Discussion about Keynote Speech and Presentations : Mr. Dan Odongo, CEO-Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB), East Africa Representative
13:00 - 14:00	Lunch Break

Parallel Sessions							
Session 1	Abay Ball Room A	Abay Ball Room B	Abay Ball Room C	Abyssinia Ball Room 01	Abyssinia Ball Room 02	Abyssinia Ball Room 03	Abyssinia Ball Room 04
	<b>Session Chair: Dr. Agnes Mohale</b> <i>Facilitator: Bekele Geleta</i>	<b>Session Chair: Dr. Mokhitli Khoabane</b> <i>Facilitator: Abraraw Teka</i>	<b>Session Chair: Ms. Diana Makau</b> <i>Facilitator: Libeyin Teshome</i>	<b>Session Chair: Dr. Kidist Yohannes</b> <i>Facilitator: Dagne Assefa</i>	<b>Session Chair: Prof. Sarah Jane Howie</b> <i>Facilitator: Arega Mamaru</i>	<b>Session Chair: Prof. Abebaw Yirga</b> <i>Facilitator: Dr. Girma Mekonnen</i>	<b>Session Chair: Mr. Godfrey Waman</b> <i>Facilitator: Assefa Leta</i>
14:00 – 14:30	<b>Ms. Linda Pande</b> 101.Transformin g Classroom Assessment for Holistic Learning: Exploring Innovative Practices in Rural Schools of Mpika District, Zambia.  <b>Zambia</b>	<sup>1</sup> <b>Mr. Sitta Samson &amp; <sup>2</sup>Marandu Daniel</b> 201.Leveraging Digital Technologies to Transform Educational Assessment in Africa: Insights from the ALiVE Initiative  <sup>1</sup> <b>Milele Zanzibar Foundation</b> <sup>2</sup> <b>University of Dar es Salaam</b>	<sup>1</sup> <b>Dr. Evaristo Tukamuhabwa &amp; <sup>2</sup>Dr. Bashir Kishabale</b> 301. Evaluating the Impact of Formative Assessment Intervention and Experiences of Secondary Teachers in Teaching High-Order - Thinking Skills in Physics  <sup>1</sup> UNEB, Uganda <sup>2</sup> Kyambogo University	<b>Mr. Lucky Mkhonza, Ms. Nomawethu Dumezweni &amp; Nombulelo Sesi Nxesi</b> 401. Differentiate d Assessment implementation between Quintiles 1-3 and 4-5 Primary schools in South Africa: Teachers’ perspectives.  <b>Education Training and Development Practices Sector Education and Training Authority, South Africa</b>	<b>Dr. Grace Ojonide Onoja</b> 501. Leveraging UTME Assessment Data For Decision-Making and Accountability in Nigeria’s Higher Education  <b>JAMB, Abuja, Nigeria</b>	<b>Namigadde Salimah</b> 601. Examination Malpractice at High-Stakes Examination of the Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) in Luweero District  <b>Uganda National Examinations Board</b>	<sup>1</sup> <b>Ms.Jane Kamau, <sup>2</sup>Mr.Joseph K. Musyoki <sup>3</sup>Mr.Joseph Githinji</b> 701. Championing recognition and certification for inclusive qualification pathways towards labour mobility and promotion in the informal sector- perspectives from the National Industrial Training Authority, Kenya  <sup>1,2</sup> <b>National Industrial Training Authority (NITA), Nairobi, Kenya</b> <sup>3</sup> <b>The Kenya National KNEC, Nairobi, Kenya</b>

14:30 – 15:00	<p><b><sup>1</sup>Dr. Evaristo Tukamuhabwa</b> <b><sup>2</sup>Prof. Grace Lubaale</b></p> <p>102. From testing to transformation: Rethinking classroom assessment for 21st Century learning.</p> <p><b><sup>1</sup>UNEB</b> <b><sup>2</sup>Kyambogo University</b></p>	<p><b>Ayobode Mayokun, AKINBULUMA &amp; Oriyomi Olorunwa, OLBANWO</b></p> <p>202. Effect of Adoption of Technology on Candidates' Performance in the West African Senior School Certificate Examination during the Pandemic in Nigeria</p> <p><b>Lagos, Nigeria</b></p>	<p><b>Mr. Kingtin Kisamo* &amp; Safarath Byabato</b></p> <p>302. Teachers' Practices and Challenges in Implementing Formative Assessment in Tanzania's Competency-Based Curriculum for Secondary Education</p> <p><b>NECT, Tanzania</b></p>	<p><b>Daniel Alenyo,</b></p> <p>402. Primacy and Recency Effects in Learning: Teachers' Perceptions and Influencing Factors of Slow Learner Performance in Uganda</p> <p><b>UNEB, Uganda</b></p>	<p><b>Dr. Caitlin Collis, Mahlet Mairegu &amp; Hassen Hassen Ahmed</b></p> <p>502. Leveraging Assessment Data to Evaluate Learning Outcomes and Inform Iterations in a Structured Pedagogy Government Accelerated Learning Program in Sidama, Ethiopia</p> <p><b>The Luminos Fund, Ethiopia</b></p>	<p><b>Mr. Musa B.B. Conteh</b></p> <p>602. Innovations and Strategies to Combat Examination Malpractices</p> <p><b>WAEC, Banjul, The Gambia</b></p>	<p><b>Mr. Justine Kimena</b></p> <p>702. Aligning TVET Assessment with Industry Standards: Insights from a Graduate Tracer Study in Zambia</p> <p>Aligning TVET Assessment with Industry Standards: Insights from a Graduate Tracer Study in Zambia</p> <p><b>Technical Education Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Authority Lusaka, Zambia</b></p>
15:00 – 15:30	<p><b>Prof. M. Basitere &amp; J. Minnie</b></p> <p>103. Integrating Reflective Assessment in A Flipped Classroom Model for An Engineering Physics Course</p> <p><b>University of Cape Town, South Africa.</b></p>	<p><b>Mr. Nicolas Dieteren</b></p> <p>203. Testology and Technology: how the human factor can leverage and enhance the use of AI in making good tests</p> <p><b>The Netherlands</b></p>	<p><b>Ms. Rona Kerubo Kebati</b></p> <p>303. The Early Years School Based Assessment Experience in Kenya</p> <p><b>Kenya National Examinations Council, Nairobi. Kenya</b></p>	<p><b>Mr. Geremew, Tamene Deysmi* &amp; Prof. Dr. Steklács János</b></p> <p>403. Language of Instruction and Its Influence on Educational Outcomes and Cultural Inclusion in Ethiopia: A Systematic Review</p> <p><b>Páfrány utca 43 Pécs, Hungary</b></p>	<p><b>Mr. Colin Watson, Ms. Elizabeth Stubbs &amp; Ms. Theodora Ntoka</b></p> <p>503. Leveraging the National Standardized Test (NST) in Ghana for SDG 4.1.1 Reporting and National Education Accountability</p>	<p><b>Dr. Mohammed Aminu Dr. Osariemen Evans* Mr. Idowu Julius Mrs. Ogedegbe Bridget Dr. Christine Ekojoka Dr. Uba James</b></p> <p>603. Combating Examinations Fraud with Innovative Digital Technologies and Ethical Practices in Nigeria Technical Colleges</p> <p><b>NABTEB, Nigeria</b></p>	<p><b>Ms. Peragia F. Bikongoro &amp; Visensia Kadege</b></p> <p>703. Assessing Teachers' Implementation of Formative Assessment in Enhancing Students' Achievement of Vocational Education Competencies in Tanzania Secondary Schools.</p> <p><b>NECT</b></p>

15:30 – 16:00	Tea Break						
<b>Session 2</b>	<b>Session Chair: Dr Tolla Beriso</b> <i>Facilitator: Bekele Geleta</i>	<b>Session Chair: Dr. Bonnqe Taolane</b> <i>Facilitator: Abraraw Teka</i>	<b>Session Chair: Dr. Muluken Ngatu</b> <i>Facilitator: Libeyin Teshome</i>	<b>Session Chair: Dr. Peter Alih Ibrahim</b> <i>Facilitator: Dagne Assefa</i>	<b>Session Chair: Dr. Nigus Tadese</b> <i>Facilitator: Arega Mamaru</i>	<b>Session Chair: Dr. Kiros Guesh</b> <i>Facilitator: Dr. Girma Mekonnen</i>	<b>Session Chair: Mrs. Mbogyamb Solly</b> <i>Facilitator: Assefa Leta</i>
16:00 – 16:30	<b>Dr.Kassa Michael<sup>1</sup>, Prof. Ann O’Connell<sup>2,3</sup>, Winnie Wilberforce<sup>3</sup>, Dr.Mulugeta W/Michael<sup>1</sup>, Fiseha Teklu<sup>1</sup>, Meseret Teshome<sup>1</sup>, Jackie Goodway<sup>3</sup> Arya Ansari<sup>3</sup> &amp; Laura Justice<sup>3</sup></b> 104. Assessing Teacher Instructional Practices and School Readiness in ECE Classrooms in Ethiopia <sup>1</sup> AAU, Ethiopia <sup>2</sup> Rutgers University, USA <sup>3</sup> The Ohio State University, USA	<b>Mr. Abitew Asmare, Mr. Fikre Sahile, Mr.Marefu Lerebo &amp; Mr.Wondwosen Eyesuswork</b> 204. Assessment of the Computer-Based Testing (CBT) System in Ethiopia's Secondary School Leaving Certificate Examination (2016 E.C./2024 G.C.): Practices, Challenges, and Future Prospects <b>EAES, Ethiopia</b>	<b>Mrs.Asobasi Immaculate Omal</b> 304. Competence-Based Curriculum Assessment Approaches and Classroom Experience in Lower Secondary Schools in Eastern Region of Uganda <b>Uganda National Examinations Board</b>	<sup>1</sup> Dr.Tapela Bulala & <sup>2</sup> Dr.Simon Ntumi 404. Leveraging assessment data for equity in agricultural examination between urban and rural examinees in Botswana <b>Botswana University of Agriculture and Natural Resources, Botswana</b> <b>University of Education, Ghana</b>	<b>Mr.Simwanga Simwanga</b> 504. The interplay between psychometric properties of items and Cognitive Levels of Bloom’s Taxonomy in assessment design: A case of five MCQ examination papers from the ECZ <b>ECZ, Zambia</b>	<b>Ms.Jemima Vanderpuije &amp; Ebenezer N. Ankamah</b> 604. Impact of Multiple Choice Randomization on Examination Malpractice at the Basic Education Certificate Examination in Ghana <b>The West African Examinations Council (Research, Hdqrs), Accra</b>	<b>Mr.Gracian Leston Mkwapatira</b> 704. An Assessment on the Perceptions of TEVET College Managers and Trainers Towards External Quality Assurance Systems in Malawi: A Case Study of Technical Colleges in Lilongwe, Malawi.
16:30 – 17:00	<b>Dr. Tekalign Geleta Kenea</b> 105. ‘Teacher-Made Tests’ Specificity and	<sup>1</sup> Dr. Mohammed Dr. <sup>1</sup> Dr. Aminu Mohammed <sup>2</sup> Dr. Irene Ovekairi Iluobe, <sup>3</sup> Irene	<b>Fabious Karls Ambama</b> 305. Restructuring Educational Assessment	<sup>1</sup> Muhwezi Loy. K. Abaine & <sup>2</sup> Mr. Muhwezi Mcbernard 405. Inclusive	<b>Dr. Angela N. Obi</b> 505. Leveraging Students’ School Literacy Practices and English	<b>Ms. Doreen Chilaka Kapoteza</b> 605. Management System for Educational Assessment: A Case of	<b>Ms. Eraphine Mukami</b> 705. Evaluating Alignment of TVET Assessments with Industry Standards: A

	<p>Sensitivity in Measuring Students' Academic Performance at Ethiopian Public Universities: an Intervention Study</p> <p><b>Naqamtee College of Teacher Education, Ethiopia</b></p>	<p><b>Etarefe Ipogah*,<sup>4</sup></b> <b>Dr Evelyn O. Egonmwan</b> <b><sup>5</sup>Dr. Adewumi Stephen</b> 205. Awareness , Availability and Utilization of Digital Technological Tools in the Assessment of Students in Nigerian Technical Colleges</p> <p><b>NABTEB, Nigeria</b></p>	<p>Practices in Ugandan Secondary Schools: Bridging the Gap between 21st-Century Skills, Curriculum Objectives and Classroom Experiences</p> <p><b>UNEB, Kamplala Uganda</b></p>	<p>Assessment Strategies for Diverse Learners in Uganda's TVET System.</p> <p><b><sup>1</sup>Ministry of Education and Sports – Uganda</b> <b><sup>2</sup>Uganda Vocational and Technical Assessment Board</b></p>	<p>Composition Writing Assessment Data for Accountability and Decision-making in Lagos State, Nigeria</p> <p><b>WAEC International Office, Lagos, Nigeria</b></p>	<p>Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR)</p>	<p>Case Study of Food and Beverage Management Assessments by the Kenya National Examinations Council</p> <p><b>KNEC, Nirob, Kenya</b></p>
17:00 – 17:30	<p><b>Prof. Abubeker Usman</b> 106. Revisiting Educational Assessment and Examination in Teaching of History in the University System</p>	<p><b>Dr Louisa Muparuri</b> 206. AI-Powered Examination Malpractice Detector</p>	<p><b>Dr. Samuel M. Mutweleli</b> 306. Adapting Scenario Based Assessments for School Based Assessment of 21st Century Skills: The ALiVE Experience <b>Zizi Afrique Foundation</b></p>	<p><b>Mr. Gaudence Kapinga</b> 406. Understanding Inclusive Assessment: Perspectives and Practices in Basic Education for Diverse Learners in Tanzania</p> <p><b>Regional Education Learning Initiative Africa (RELI Africa)</b></p>	<p><b>Dr. Grace Ojonide Onoja</b> 506. Leveraging UTME Assessment Data for Decision-Making and Accountability in Nigeria's Higher Education</p> <p><b>JAMB Abuja, Nigeria</b></p>	<p><b>Dr. Oladipupo m Oladele</b> 606. Strategies and Types of Examination Malpractices in Public Examination in Nigeria</p> <p><b>National Examinations Council, Nigeria</b></p>	<p><b>Mr. Brain Nkoane</b> 706. The Role of TVET in Addressing Youth Unemployment and Promoting Economic Development: A Case Study of South Africa</p>
17:30 – 17:35	Closing and Announcement						
19:00 – 22:00	Welcome Dinners at Skylight Hotel						



Day 2: Tuesday 26 August 2025							
07:00 – 08:30	Arrival and Registration of Delegates						
08:00 - 08:30	Entertainment						
08:30 – 09:00	Keynote Address: Prof Bahru Zewude, Historical African Education, Assessment and the Pan-African Ideal						
09:00 - 09: 30	Keynote Address: Dr. David Njengere , Competency based curriculum and assessment						
09:30 - 10: 00	Presentation: Dr Tamirie Andualem, National Examinations in Secondary Schools in Ethiopia: Validity and Achievement Disparity						
10:00 - 10:30	Presentation: Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE), Launch of the Adapted Tuseme Model						
10:30 - 11: 00	Tea Break						
11:00 - 11:30	Presentation: Qelem Meda, Solving African Education Challenges with African Innovation: the EMaCS Experience						
11:30 - 12:00	Presentation: UNICEF Ethiopia, The Contribution of UNICEF in Strengthening Assessment Systems and Education Quality						
12:00 - 12:30	Discussion about Keynote Speeches and Presentations: Chaired by Dr. Michael Chilala, Executive Secretary of AEAA, CEO-Examinations Council of Zambia						
12:30 - 14:00	Lunch Break						
Parallel Sessions							
Session 3	Abay Ball Room A	Abay Ball Room B	Abay Ball Room C	Abyssinia Ball Room 01	Abyssinia Ball Room 02	Abyssinia Ball Room 03	Abyssinia Ball Room 04
	Session Chair: Mr. Shadreck Nkoya Facilitator: Bekele Geleta	Session Chair: Dr. William Kapambwe Facilitator: Abraraw Teka	Session Chair: Ms. Sukai Jorbateh Facilitator: Libeyin Teshome	Session Chair: Mr. Andrew Otieno Facilitator: Dagne Asefa	Session Chair: Mr. Augustine Aidokhai Facilitator: Arega Mamaru	Session Chair: Dr Teshome Nekatibeb Facilitator: Asefa Leta	Session Chair: Dr. Zeleke Teshome Facilitator: Wondwosen Eyesuswork
14:00 – 14:30	Ms. Emmy M. Mugailwa 107. Classroom Assessment and the Acquisition of 21st Century Skills in among Primary schools in Kenya  KNEC, Kenya	Mr. Simbai Kapfunde 207. Unlocking the Benefits of Computerised Item Banking: Strategies to enhance exam quality	Dr. Alfred D. Mdimba 307. Improving Learning through Effective Classroom-Based Assessment: Insights from Primary Schools NECTA, Tnazania	Dr. Malepa-Qhobela. 407. Exploring Teachers’ Perspectives, Practices and Challenges on Inclusive Classrooms Assessment in the Mainstream Classrooms Examinations Council of Lesotho	Mr. Eriot Kadubira* 507. Factors Associated with Academic Achievement of Primary School Learners in Numeracy in Uganda  UNEB	Mr. Tumelo Motai 607. Investigating stakeholders’ perceptions on combating malpractice in Accounting at Lesotho General Certificate of Secondary Education  Examinations Council of Lesotho	Dr. Chilwalo Malupande & Mr. Ocean Matimba 707. Challenges and Opportunities in the Implementation of Prior Learning Assessments at the Technical Education Vocational Entrepreneurship Authority in Zambia.  Zambia

14:30 – 15:00	<p><b>Dr. Endalew Fufa</b> 108. The Quality of School-Based Practices in Enhancing National Examination Achievement: A Contextual Case Study on Experiences in Secondary Schools of Ethiopia <b>Arsi University; Ethiopia.</b></p>	<p><b>Dr. Zanele HW Dube-Xaba &amp; Thabile A. Zondi</b> 208. South African student teachers' use of Artificial Intelligence tools and ethical considerations in responding to assessment tasks <b>University of KwaZulu-Natal</b></p>	<p><b>Mr. Bayiwayi Solomon &amp; Murima. B Dzinotywei</b> 308. Enhancing the Integrity of High-Stakes Science Practicals: The Role of ZIMSEC Science Kits in Standardizing Assessment in Secondary Education in Zimbabwe <b>ZIMSEC, Zimbabwe</b></p>	<p><b>Mrs. Margot Mol-Hennion</b> 408. Towards Equitable Learning: Designing Bilingual Assessment Frameworks for Multilingual Contexts <b>ELAN Working Group within the IFEF, Senegal</b></p>	<p><b>Mr Vonani Mabunda &amp; Ms Annemarie Janse Van Rensburg</b> 508. Qualification awarding and cross-border recognition: case studies from South Africa, Kenya and Ghana <b>South African Qualifications Authority,</b></p>	<p><b>Dr. Amos Josiah Dangut, Rosemary Ojo-Odide &amp; Dr. Busari Atinuke R.</b> 608. Mitigating Examination Malpractice through Technology: Assessing WAEC Nigeria's Migration from Paper-Based to Computer-Based Examination <b>WAEC, Nigeria</b></p>	<p><b>Ms. Saukwaeli E. Swai</b> 801. Teacher Collaboration in Teaching and Assessment of Secondary School Learners in Tanzania <b>The National Examination Council of Tanzania</b></p>
15:00 – 15:30	<p><b>Mrs. Mahabash eane Makhate</b> 109. Investigating Geography Teachers' Assessment Practices and Experiences on Fieldwork in Secondary schools in Lesotho <b>Examinations Council of Lesotho</b></p>	<p><b>Mrs. Ojo-Odide Rosemary &amp; Fanimokun Adebayo Ayo</b> 209. Digital Transformation in WASSCE: A Comparative Study of Paper-Based and Computer Based Assessment Approaches (2024 PC2) <b>WAEC, Nigeria</b></p>	<p><b>Mr. Moeketsi Rakhosi</b> 309. Exploring Teachers' and Learners' Perceptions of Curriculum, Teaching and Assessment in Lesotho Advanced Secondary Certificate (LASC) Pilot Program <b>Examinations Council of Lesotho</b></p>	<p><b>Ms. Rashida Salihu Safiyau</b> 409. Inclusive Assessment Practices to Address Diverse Learners' Abilities, Talents, and Competencies taking JAMB as a case study <b>JAMC, Bwari, Abuja</b></p>	<p><b>Dr. Oliver Neuschmidt, Lale Khorramdel &amp; Clara Wilsher Beyer</b> 509. LaNA – A Novel Assessment to Inform Education Policy and SDG Reporting <b>IEA, Germany</b></p>	<p><b>Dr. Edward Masoambeta</b> 609. Strategies and Innovations to Curb Malpractices for Paper and Pen-Based Examinations in Africa: A Systematic Review <b>Malawi National Examinations Board, Zomba, Malawi.</b></p>	<p><b>Dr. Mohammed A. Mohammed , Mr. Pius S. Osaigbo, Dr. Philomena E., Iro-Aghedo &amp; Dr. Catherine I. Omeonu</b> 802. Assessing the Consistency of Examiners' Scoring in English Language and Mathematics of NABTEB Certificate Examination <b>NABTEB, Nigeria</b></p>

15:30 – 16:00 Tea Break							
<b>Session 4</b>	<b>Session Chair: Dr. Fekede Tuli</b> <i>Facilitator: Bekele Geleta</i>	<b>Session Chair: Dr. Athian Athia</b> <i>Facilitator: Abraraw Tekla</i>	<b>Session Chair: Dr. Tewedros Shewarega</b> <i>Facilitator: Libeyin Teshome</i>	<b>Session Chair: Mr. Takwi Mathew Ndohwiea</b> <i>Facilitator: Dagne Asefa</i>	<b>Session Chair: Dr. DJAH ADJAH</b> <i>Facilitator: Arega Mamaru</i>	<b>Session Chair: Dr. Diriba Eticha</b> <i>Facilitator: Asefa Leta</i>	<b>Session Chair: Dr. Serawit Handisso</b> <i>Facilitator: Wondwosen Eyesuswork</i>
16:00 – 16:30	<b>Mrs. Florence Mary Agola Buyinza</b> 110. Effectiveness of Competency Based Assessment on Students' Classroom Engagement in Secondary Schools in Uganda  <b>UNEB, Uganda</b>	<b>Mr. Pa Mahmud Kah, Abdoulie Minteh</b> 210. Shift in Public Examination Landscape: Prospects and Challenges of West African Senior School Certificate Examination as Computer-Based Examination in The Gambia  <b>WAEC, The Gambia.</b>	<b>Ms. Elizabeth Obade</b> 310. Reporting learners' competencies in Junior School, Kajiado North, Kenya  <b>KNEC, Kenya</b>	<b>Ms. Digna Mushi &amp; Safari Moshia</b> 410. Inclusive Education: Are We on the Right Track? Insights from Sauti Zetu (Our Voice) Project in Tanzania	<b>Mrs. Esther Thomas Ajabu &amp; Mpuya B. K. Malaba</b> 510. Low Achievement of Students in Mathematics in the FTNA: What Story are the SIRA Reports Narrating?  <b>NECTA, Tanzania</b>	<b>Ms. Sipiwe Sibiya &amp; Mr. Sibusiso Masuku</b> 610. Investigating High Stakes Examination Invigilators' Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices in Eswatini	<b>Dr. Jabulani Pato, Ms. Lindiwe Sibandze &amp; Ms. Sipiwe Sibiya</b> 803. Assessing High-Stake Indigenous Languages Examination Standards in Selected Examination Boards in Southern Africa  <b>Examinations Council of Eswatini</b>
16:30 – 17:00	<b>D. Nampota, E.F. Chilunga, Mr. D.E. Masoambeta &amp; Mr. A. Chimbalu</b> 111. Investigating the impact of integrating College Based Assessment in National Examinations, the Case of Teacher	<b>Mr. DANKWA, Kwaku, ASARE, Eric &amp; OFORI, Michael Safo</b> 211. Prospects and Challenges of Conducting West African Senior School Certificate Examination As a Computer-Based Examination in Ghana	<b>Dr. Sifiso Hlandze</b> 311. Unpacking Teachers' Perspectives on Aligning High-stakes Examinations to Curriculum and Classroom Experiences at the School Leaving Qualification in	<b>Mr. Joseph Gitonga Nyaga</b> 411. Project-Based Assessment and Transition of Learners with Intellectual Disabilities: Kenyan Teachers' Perceptions  <b>KNEC, Kenya</b>	<b>Mr. Job Thato Boikanyo</b> 511. Evaluating Science JCE Item Parameters Using Item Response Theory: Insights from Botswana's 2018 Examination  <b>Botswana Examinations Council</b>	<b>Mrs. Florence Capuc Obong, Mr. Matthias Miti &amp; Namadiba Sarah</b> 611. Assessing the Effectiveness of Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB)'s Strategies in Curbing Examination Malpractice at the Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) Level	<b>Ms. Betty Habaasa Nalukenge</b> 804. Public Relations of Examination Bodies in Coordinating Assessment Standards: Perception of Teachers  <b>UNEB. Uganda</b>

	Training Colleges in Malawi.  <b>MNEB, Malawi</b>	<b>WAEC, Headquarters, Accra, Ghana</b>	Eswatini  <b>Examinations Council of Eswatini</b>			<b>UNEB</b>	
17:00 – 17:30	<b>Adane Hailu, Mekuriaw Ayenew &amp; Cherinet Aytenfsu</b> 112. Mapping the pursuit of knowledge on educational assessment and evaluation practices: A bibliometric analysis of global trends and growth patterns  <b>Dilla University, Ethiopia</b>	<b>Mr. Bunmi Balogun</b> 212. Leveraging Security-Driven Technology in Educational Assessment: Enhancing Quality Learning and Informed Decision-Making  <b>Zunoma , UK</b>	<b>Ms. Mary Malia</b> 312. Are the National Senior Certificate (NSC) Examinations Predictable? Insights from Economics and Geography (2020–2024)  <b>Umalusi</b>	<b>Mrs. Doom Iyortyom* &amp; Dr. Grace Ojonide</b> 412. Inclusive And Digital-Driven Assessments: The Utme Approach In Addressing Diverse Learners’ Abilities’  <b>JAMB, National Secretariat, Abuja, Nigeria</b>	<b>Dr. Endale Getachew</b> 512. The Use of Assessment Data for Decision-Making and Accountability: A Desk Review of Educational Assessment Data in Ethiopia, since 2000.  <b>EAES, Ethiopia</b>	<b>Ms. Wanican Julian Okello<sup>1</sup>,* Ann Move Oguti<sup>2</sup> &amp; Opio Henry Joe<sup>1</sup></b> 612. EduChain: Leveraging Blockchain, Federated Learning, and AI Fraud Detection for Secure Competency-Based Assessment  <b><sup>1</sup>UNEB, Department of ICT <sup>2</sup>Soroti University,</b>	<b>Mr. Abeeb Ibrahim Adeyemi</b> 221. The Impact of Jamb UTME Item Bank on Technology Integration and Test Administration in Nigeria Educational Assessment  <b>JAMB, Nigeria</b>
17:30 – 17:35	<b>Closing and Announcement</b>						
19:00 – 22:00	<b>Cultural Dinner at Skylight Hotel</b>						

Day 3: Wednesday 27 August 2025	
Excursion/Tour	
07:00 – 08:30	Arrival and Registration of Delegates
08:30 - 12:30	Excursions /Conference Tour: ✧ Unity Park ✧ National Museum ✧ Adwa 00Km
12:30 - 14:00	Lunch Break
14:00 - 17:00	Free Business Time
19:00 – 22:00	CEO Dinner



Day 4: Thursday 28 August 2025							
07:00 – 08:30	Arrival and Registration of Delegates						
08:00 - 08:30	Entertainment and Student choir						
08:30 - 09:00	Keynote Address by Prof. Ann O’Connell: Data as Evidence: Implications for Building an Evidence-base in Education						
09:00 - 10:00	Plenary session by UIS: 1. Harmonizing national assessments with global standards to enable reporting against the SDGs and better inform education policy: case studies from Lesotho and Rwanda, Panelist: Bernard Bahati & Maneo Mohale 1. Leveraging SDG 4 reporting data for decision-making and accountability: case studies from The Gambia, Kenya and Zambia Panelist: Andrew Gomez, Fatimata Hydera, Epha Ngota, Moonga Hakalyamba,Stephanie Templeton,Ursula Schwantne and Naoko Tabata						
10:00 - 10:15	Presentation by Berhanena Selam Enterprise						
10:15 - 10:30	Presentation by CQ Tech						
10:30 - 11:00	Tea Break						
11:00 -11:15	Presentation by Ministry of Health, Ethiopia						
11:15 - 12:00	Plenary session by Tsegaye Lolaso Lenjebo and Bruce Oreh,IRC: Comprehensive Teacher Professional Development to Support Classroom Practices and Wellbeing						
12:00 - 12:30	Discussion about Keynote Speech and Presentations: Chaired by: Prof. Ibrahim Danstani Wushishi, National Business and Technical Examinations Board (NABTEB), West Africa Representative						
12:30 - 14:00	Lunch Break						
Parallel Sessions							
Session 5	Abay Ball Room A	Abay Ball Room B	Abay Ball Room C	Abyssinia Ball Room 01	Abyssinia Ball Room 02	Abyssinia Ball Room 03	Abyssinia Ball Room 04
	Session Chair: Dr. Birhanmeskel Tena Facilitator: Bekele Geleta	Session Chair: Dr. Patrick Simalumba Facilitator: Abraraw Teka	Session Chair: Dr. Rrashid Mukki Facilitator: Libeyin Teshome	Session Chair: Mr.Matthias Miti Facilitator: Dagne Asefa	Session Chair: Dr. Ebba Mijena Facilitator: Arega Mamaru	Session Chair: Mrs. Boitumelo Leloba Selerio Facilitator: Asefa Leta	Session Chair: Dr. Harriet Nalukwago Facilitator: Wondwosen Eyesuswork
14:00 – 14:30	<b>Ms. Patricia Omunyang’oli</b> 113. Competency Based Assessments for Holistic Learning: A Case of Primary Schools in Kenya  <b>KNEC, Kenya</b>	<b>Mr.Simeon Maganga</b> 213. Analysis of E-Registration Policy Formulation for National Examinations in Malawi  <b>Malawi</b>	<b>Dr. Deribie Workineh</b> 313. Alignment of Classroom Instruction with Assessment:The Role of Professional Teacher Training & Years of Teaching	<b>Dr. Waleed Bagadi</b> 413. Evolving Landscapes of Accessibility in Educational Assessment: A Decade-Long Analysis of Cambridge International Access Arrangements (2015-2025)	<b>Mr. Biki Lepota</b> 513. Looking closely at learner performance in South Africa’s National Senior Certificate Home Language Examinations: 2014 - 2024	<b>Ms Funiwe Bikitsha</b> 6.13. Surveillance for Integrity: Leveraging Real-Time Monitoring to Protect High-Stakes Assessments  <b>Independent Examinations Board, South Africa</b>	<b>Ms.Catherine Masila*&amp; Joseph Githinji,</b> 222.Driving Digital Transformation in Assessment: KNEC’s E-Assessment Journey in Teacher Education for Informed Decision-Making

			Experience <b>Hawassa, Ethiopia</b>	<b>Cambridge International Education, UK</b>	Umalusi, South Africa		<b>KNEC, KENYA</b>
14:30 – 15:00	<b>Mr. Shemsedin Mohammed, Dawit Asrat &amp; Tiruwork Tamiru</b> 114. Secondary School Students' Perceptions of Classroom Assessment Fairness in Ethiopia's Benishangul- Gumuz Region  <b>Bahir Dar University, Ethiopia</b>	<sup>1</sup> Dr.Maduhu Mlyatu, <sup>2</sup> Mrs. Margreth Venaely, <sup>3</sup> Daniel Sarungi, <sup>4</sup> Sadick Mghase & <sup>5</sup> Japhet Guyai 214. Leveraging Jamii X-Change Technology in Educational Assessment in Tanzania  <sup>1,2,4,5</sup> <b>NEKT, Tanzania</b> <sup>3</sup> <b>MICIT, Tanzania</b>	<b>Dr Bridget Mutsvangwa Mthembu</b> 314. Assessment t of the Implementation of School-Based Assessment in Grade 12 Mathematics: A Case of The Gauteng Province Department of Basic Education in South Africa  <b>South Africa</b>	<b>Dr Matsie Agnes Mohale</b> 414. Towards an Equitable Qualification for Learners in Schools of Skills: A Freirean Perspective  <b>Umalusi, South Africa</b>	<b>Ms. Evelyn Maturure</b> 514. 'O' Level Mathematics Quality Instruction Enhancement Strategy: Application of Zimbabwe researcher School Examinations Council Examiners' Examiners' reports in Secondary Schools  <b>ZIMSEC</b>	<b>Mr. Zeru Seyoum</b> 519. Teachers' Professional Development Training Practice in Higher Education Institutions in Ethiopia and Its Spillover Impact on Students' Learning Outcomes  <b>Haramaya University, Ethiopia</b>	<b>Mrs. Aisha Muhammad</b> 223.Leveraging Technology in Educational Assessment: Enhancing Quality Learning and Decision-Making through Computer- Based Test in Nigeria  <b>JAMB, National Headquarters, Bwari, Abuja</b>
15:00 – 15:30	<b><sup>1</sup>Tonny Muzaale, <sup>2</sup>John Paul Kasujja &amp; <sup>3</sup>Francis Kasekende</b> 115. Enhancing Teaching and Learning in Public Universities in Central Uganda: The Role of Alternative Assessment <sup>1</sup> <b>UNEB</b>	<b>Ms. Kagiso Patronella Maule</b> 215. Leveraging Digital Platforms to Implement Pre and Post Examination processes  <b>Botswana Examinations Council</b>	<b>Dr.Deborah Rebecca Kyazze</b> 218. Leveraging Gamification in Technology-Based Assessments: Enhancing Student Engagement in Uganda's Vulnerable Communities <b>Edusphere Education Consultancy</b>	<b>Mr. Gifted Sabelo Maziya</b> 415. The Inclusive Assessment Conundrum  <b>Examinations Council of Eswatini</b>	<b>Dr Hellen Mkhwanazi &amp; Dr FE Khumalo</b> 515. Understandin g and Implementing Promotion, Progression, and Condonation requirements in Mpumalanga Schools: Perspectives of Teachers and	<b>Mengistu Girma</b> 520. The nexus between youth involvement in education and irregular migration to South Africa in Hadiya, Ethiopia: Situational and Impact Analysis  <b>Wachemo University, Hossana, Ethiopia</b>	<b>Opio Henry Joe</b> 224.A Deep Learning Framework for Longitudinal Face-Based Candidate Re- Identification in Educational Assessment Systems: A Case Study of Uganda's PLE and UCE  <b>UNEB, Kampala, Uganda</b>

	<sup>2,3</sup> <b>Nkumba University</b>				principals		
					<b>South Africa</b>		
15:30 – 16:00	<b>Tea Break</b>						
<b>Session 6</b>	<b>Session Chair: Dr. Wako Geda</b> <i>Facilitator: Bekele Geleta</i>	<b>Session Chair: Mr. Godslove Aluyi</b> <i>Facilitator: Abraraw Tekla</i>	<b>Session Chair: Dr. David Nnabgere</b> <i>Facilitator: Ms. Diana Makau</i>	<b>Session Chair: Mr. Japhet Guyai</b> <i>Facilitator: Dagne Asefa</i>	<b>Session Chair: Dr. Asrat Atsedewoin</b> <i>Facilitator: Arega Mamaru</i>	<b>Session Chair: Mr. Deogratias Mbatta</b> <i>Facilitator: Libeyin Teshome</i>	<b>Session Chair: Dr. Degele Ergena</b> <i>Facilitator: Wondwosen Eyesuswork</i>
16:00 – 16:30	<sup>1</sup> <b>Dr. Kassa Michael,</b> <sup>2</sup> <b>Dr. Abraha Asfaw,</b> <sup>3</sup> <b>Dr. Silvia Diazgranados Ferrans</b> <sup>4</sup> <b>Dr. Stephen Bayley</b> <sup>5</sup> <b>Jonathan Kwok</b> 116. Measuring Holistic Learning Outcomes of Refugee and Ethiopian National Children in the Somali Region of Ethiopia  <sup>1,2</sup> <b>AAU</b> <sup>3,4,5</sup> <b>IRC</b>	<b>Mr. Evance Witson Kijallo</b> 216. Incorporating Information Communication s Technology (ICT) in School - Based Assessment in Tanzania.  <b>NECT, Tanzania</b>	<b>Mr. Joseph Ndunu Githinji</b> 219..Enhancing Feedback from the Assessment of Science Practical Subjects through ICT Integration; a case if Kenyan Teacher Colleges.  <b>KNEC, Kenya</b>	<b>Ms. Shilela Nkadimeng</b> 416. The Real African Language- insights for assessments  <b>Umalusi, South Africa</b>	<b>Mr. Ngwenya Mandla, Ms. Nolwazi Ntombela, Makhosazana Nyoni &amp; Sibusiso Masuku</b> 516. Enhancing the Utilization of Grade 9 Checkpoint Assessment Data in Eswatini Secondary Schools  <b>Examinations Council of Eswatini</b>	<b>Dr. Jemal Abdulkadir</b> 518.USAID/LEGO Foundation Childhood Development Activity Accelerated School Readiness Program: IDELA Baseline-Endline Assessment Study  <b>Save The Children Ethiopia</b>	<b>Mrs. Alison Rodrigues , Emma Walland</b> 225.The validity of virtual labs for assessing science practical skills  <b>Cambridge University Press &amp; Assessment, UK</b>
16:30 – 17:00	<b>Tewodros Asmare</b> 117. The Practices and Challenges of Formative Assessment in Assuring Quality Education in the Secondary Schools	<b>Dr. Phenyane Tlali</b> 217. The Effectiveness of the Electronic Marking System at Lesotho General	<b>Dr. Matanki Mabeleng, Mokhitli Khoabane</b> 220.Integrating Smartphones as Mobile Learning Tools	<b>Wondimagegn Tesfaye</b> 118. Exploring authentic assessment in teacher education: perceptions,	<b>Busisiwe M Mhlongo Somo</b> 517. Are NSC subjects becoming less difficult? Evidence-Based Analytical Hierarchy Process		

	<p>of Jimma Zone</p> <p><b>Mattu University, Ethiopia</b></p>	<p>Certificate of Secondary Education: A Case of Eklavvya Electronic Marking System</p> <p><b>Examinations Council of Lesotho</b></p>	<p>in the Teaching, Learning and Assessment of English Language: Perceptions of Lesotho Secondary School Teachers</p> <p><b>Examinations Council of Lesotho</b></p>	<p>practices, and barriers in three colleges of Southern Ethiopia</p> <p><b>Hawassa University, Ethiopia</b></p>	<p><b>Umalusi, South Africa</b></p>		
17:00 -18:30	<b>AEAA Business Meeting</b>						
19:00 – 22:00	<b>Gala Night Dinner</b>						

Day 5: Friday 29 August 2025	
07:00 – 08:30	Arrival and Registration of Delegates
08:00 - 08: 45	Entertainment and Student choir
08:45 - 09:15	Keynote Address: Prof. Belay Tefera, AAU, Towards Transforming the Assessment Landscape in the New Millennium
09:15 - 10:30	Panel discussion with various stakeholders regarding educational assessment and beyond, Chaired by Dr. Kassa Michael, AAU
10:30 - 11:00	Tea Break
	Presidency Handing Over Ceremony
11:00 - 11:30	Remarks by Outgoing AEAA President
11:30 – 12:30	Speech by Incoming AEAA President
12:30 – 13:00	Conference Communiqué by the AEAA Executive Secretary
13:00 – 13:15	Closing Speech by the Honourable Minister of Education, Ethiopia
13:15 – 13:20	Interlude/Entertainment (Students’ Performance)
13:20 – 13:30	Prayer and Ethiopian National Anthem
12:30 - 14:00	Lunch Break
Departure	



## THE LUMINOS FUND

### Who We Are

The Luminos Fund is an international education nonprofit that provides transformative education programs to thousands of vulnerable and out-of-school children, helping them to catch up to grade level, transition to government schools, and prepare for lifelong learning.

In just one school year, we teach students to read and do math—to learn how to learn—through a joyful, activity-based curriculum. To date, Luminos catch-up education programs have enabled over 377,407 out-of-school children to get back to school.

The Luminos Fund is currently working in some of the most vulnerable and hardest-to-reach children in parts of sub-Saharan Africa and the Middle East. In each of our countries of operation, Luminos brings a holistic approach: working in partnership with community-based organizations to co-create country-specific curricula and implement the program.

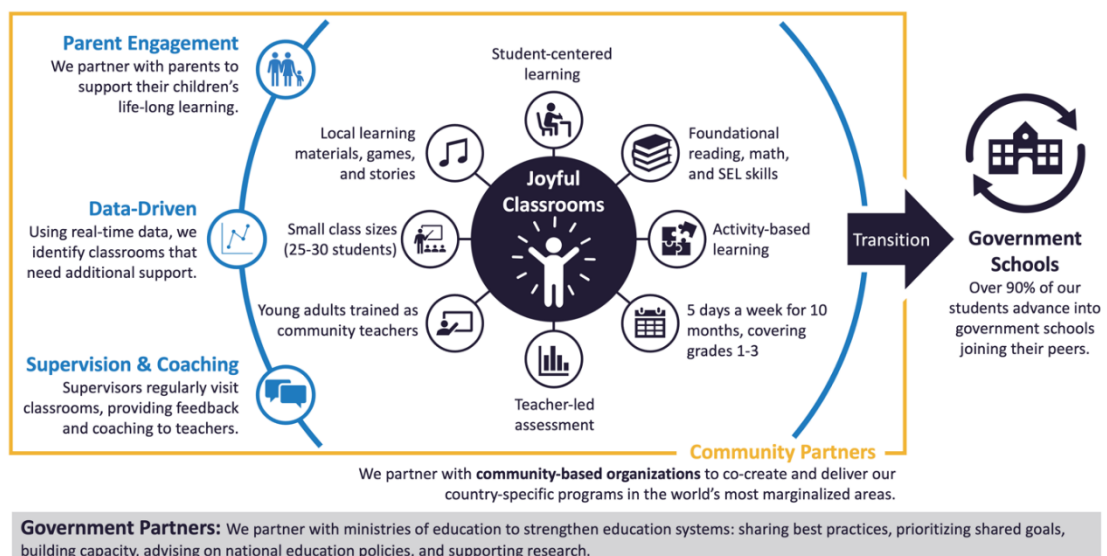
### Our Mission

To ensure all children have equal access to joyful, foundational learning, especially those shut out of education by crisis, poverty, or discrimination.

### Our Vision

A world where no child is ever denied the chance to learn.

### How Our Program Works



# ABSTRACTS FOR KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

## KEYNOTE ADDRESS 1 (DAY 1):

### Transforming Assessment in Africa in the Context of a Learning Crisis and the Digitalization of Education

**Dawit Mekonnen (PhD)**  
**Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia**

Despite notable progress in expanding access to education across Africa over the past two decades, the continent continues to grapple with a profound learning crisis. While enrolment has increased considerably which sadly appears to be pegged back due to COVID-19, conflict, and natural disasters, learning outcomes remain alarmingly low. According to the World Bank and UNESCO (2022), more than 50% of children globally are unable to read and understand a simple text by the end of primary school. In sub-Saharan Africa, this figure is even more concerning: approximately 9 out of 10 children are unable to read proficiently by the end of lower primary, and many still struggle by Grade 10. These trends reflect deep systemic issues in the quality of teaching, curriculum implementation, and—critically—assessment practices. In recognition of this urgent challenge, the African Union has committed to cutting learning poverty by 2035 as part of its continental education strategy. Achieving this goal requires not only expanding access to education but also transforming how learning is measured, monitored, and supported. This keynote presentation will critically examine two fundamental questions: How have existing assessment systems contributed to the current learning crisis, and what must be done to reimagine assessment as a driver of improved learning outcomes? In Ethiopia, discussions on these two questions is happening a broader digital transformation of curricula, pedagogy, and assessment. The country is piloting digital learning assessment tools, investing in national and regional data systems, and building teacher capacity to use real-time data to guide instructional decision-making. Drawing on Ethiopia's experience and comparative insights from other African countries, the presentation will highlight appropriate assessment practice, persistent challenges, and opportunities in leveraging assessment to contribute to the effort for improving learning crisis while digitalizing the system. It will also explore how policy reforms; professional development programs, and digital tools can help reposition assessment as a central pillar in efforts to improve education quality and equity across the continent.

## KEYNOTE ADDRESS 2 (DAY 2):

### Historical African Higher Education and the Pan-African Ideal

**Prof Bahru Zewudie**  
**Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia**

Africa boasts the oldest university in the world in Fez, Morocco. Ethiopia, too, has a long history of traditional higher education in both its Christian and Muslim dimensions. Yet, when modern higher education began in Sierra Leone in the early nineteenth century, it began to assume a colonial vintage, something that reached its pinnacle in the creation of the three prime institutions of the colonial era: Ibadan, Legon and Makerere. In 1958, Ethiopia began the granting of the first scholarships to students from other African countries to the University College of Addis Ababa. This was a logical step to take, as Ethiopia has served as a beacon of African freedom and dignity through its resounding victory over Italian colonialism at the Battle of Adwa in 1896. It marked the beginning of a chapter of Pan-African cooperation and synchronization, which has now culminated in the creation of the Pan-African University system, with the establishment of five specialized institutes in different African countries.

Other integrative steps include the publication of the UNESCO General History of Africa, which recast the continent's history within an African perspective. At the non-governmental level, pan-African organizations like the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) have served as surrogate universities at a time when African higher education was undergoing a crisis, not least by the publication of a journal dedicated to the subject. It is within this context that Africa has to aspire to meet SDG goals, notably by making higher education not only accessible but also relevant and of high quality. This is where a robust assessment system becomes all the more important.

## KEYNOTE ADDRESS 3 (DAY 2):

### Competency Based Education and Competency Based Assessment

**Dr. David Njengere, MBS**  
**Chief Executive Officer (CEO), KNEC**

Africa as a continent is endowed with a wealth of natural resources, being the second largest of the seven continents, standing on 30.37 million km<sup>2</sup> of land, holding an estimated 30% of the world's mineral reserves, favourable climatic conditions, and an array of tourist destinations.

In terms of human resource, Africa's population is estimated at 1.55 billion (July 2025) representing about 18.83% of the global population and a projected yearly growth rate of 2.32% in 2024 (UN, Economic and Social Affairs, 2024). The continent has the youngest population in the world, with 70% of sub-Saharan Africa being under the age of 30.

Despite the great potential for the youthful population to propel the continent's socio-economic development, 33 out of the 46 Least Developed Countries are in Africa (5th UN Conference on LDC, 2021). For the continent to realise socio-economic growth, education systems in the continent must harness the potentials inherent in their youthful population through education and educational assessment; develop indicators of reporting core competencies.

Education systems must inevitably embrace acquisition of core competencies, through competency based education. Countries can identify their specific set of core competencies out of the globally recognised such as communication; collaboration; literacy; numeracy; digital literacy/ technology/information processing; enquiry skills; learning to learn; initiative/entrepreneurship; problem solving; environmental awareness/responsibility; critical thinking; creativity/innovation; social and civic competence /citizenship /cultural awareness (European Union, 2006; Massimo, 2013). Competency based approach in education will aid in realizing quality learning that focuses on giving value to the learner, rather than grades; enable education systems to make more meaningful and informed decisions and ultimately propel its economic growth and independence. The paradigm shift will also guide the institutionalization of continental educational assessment standards and frameworks.

Key words: Competency Based Education; Competency Based Assessment; Core Competencies.

## **KEYNOTE ADDRESS 4 (DAY 4):**

### **Data as Evidence: Implications for Building an Evidence-base in Education**

**Prof. Ann A. O'Connell**  
**Rutgers University, New Jersey, USA**

Education leaders and policy makers rely on data to address or plan for complex challenges, such as strengthening teacher quality, increasing parent, teacher, and student engagement, impacting student achievement, and promoting educational equity.

A critical component of data-based decisions is data quality, which can vary depending on the type of data being used, how the data are collected, or the impact on data quality of unintended events including weak data management systems, school disruptions, political contexts or other factors. Along with the growing demand for high-quality data is the increasing global attention on evidence-based programs and practices in education. Within the context of a team-based training program for selection and use of evidence-based programs, sources of data as evidence and considerations for improving data quality are reviewed. Consistent with school-based and system-wide supports for actionable and high-quality data evidence, we aim for a better understanding of data-related challenges and for collaborative identification of promising approaches to addressing these challenges.



## **KEYNOTE ADDRESS 5 (DAY 5):**

### **Towards Transforming the Assessment Landscape in the New Millennium**

**Prof Belay Tefera**

**School of Psychology, Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia**

The new millennium calls for acquisition of complex set of adaptive and creative skills for students to successfully engage in lifelong learning. Educational assessment remains to be an integral component of the teaching-learning process that presumably promotes these skills. As a major educational tool, they don't only mirror the teaching-learning process but also shape and structure the course the teaching-learning process itself has to take. National educational exams in particular are globally mandated with several other responsibilities and need meticulous management to discharge these responsibilities. Yet, on top of benefits, they are compounded with paradoxes, limitations, and challenges and, hence, globally critiqued of possible inefficiencies and ineffectiveness. This speech positions educational assessment in Ethiopia in general and the Ethiopian National Secondary School General Exam in particular and, then, through synthesis of literature and critical reflections, highlights some of the major concerns in all the phases of the exam. Finally, it stipulates the areas of change transformation is needed to better ensure purposefulness, alignments, efficiency, and effectiveness of the exam in the time ahead.



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- national governments and international organizations can evaluate trends, benchmark progress and better target their policies;
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- civil society groups have the 'hard facts' they need to mobilise support to provide quality education for all.

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- Serve as the neutral broker and trusted source of support and guidance for countries looking to improve the measurement of critical issues, such as learning outcomes;
- Provide a range of technical services and tools to countries to produce and use high-quality data for effective policymaking; and
- Advocate for the production and use of data as a public good to spotlight issues and regions needing greater support from the international community.

Source: <https://uis.unesco.org/en/about-us>

## ABSTRACTS FOR PLENARY SESSION SPEAKERS

### PLENARY SESSION SPEAKER 1:

#### Launch of the Adapted Tuseme Model by Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE)

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FAWE in partnership with Australian Council for Educational Research (ACERUK) and Higher Education Resource Services – East Africa (HERS-EA), will launch the adapted Tuseme model at the 41st Annual Conference of the Association for Educational Assessment in Africa (AEAA) on 26 August 2025 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The launch will showcase the model's design process, evidence base, pilot outcomes, and key learnings, and will invite education policymakers, practitioners, and partners to consider adoption and scale-up in other crisis-affected contexts.

Tuseme ('Let Us Speak Out' in Kiswahili) is an empowerment program for girls and boys to enhance their self-esteem, leadership, social and life skills. Tuseme Clubs empower girls and boys to speak out against the gender-based challenges they face, which can be significant barriers to their education. Tuseme also promotes positive attitude amongst male participants to champion for gender equality and equity.

About GPE KIX Tuseme Project: A Voice for Internally Displaced and Refugee Children, implemented in partnership with Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER-UK) and Higher Education Resource Services – East Africa (HERS-EA), funded by GPE KIX, a joint endeavour with IDRC. FAWE implements her flagship Tuseme model to empower refugee and IDP learners in Kenya (Dadaab, Kakuma, and Busia), Uganda (Rwamwanja and Adjumani), and Ethiopia (Sherkole and Bambasi). Tuseme provides children, especially girls, with a platform to express their challenges, build life skills, and engage in advocacy within their schools and communities.

The overarching objective of this project is to develop revised Tuseme model, with associated tools, that can be deployed in Refugee and IDP settings in the East Africa region. The revised model will help develop children's skills and agency and support them to overcome barriers in their education and make positive choices in their lives.

To achieve its overarching objective, the project conducted a series of case studies in mainstream school settings where the Tuseme model was already being implemented. These case studies explored the key factors that contribute to or hinder the model's success. They also examined how Tuseme interacts with two of FAWE's other gender-focused initiatives: the Centres of Excellence and the Gender-Responsive Pedagogy (GRP) approach. Insights from these studies informed the development of a revised Tuseme model that integrates best practices from all three initiatives. This adapted model was then deployed in refugee and internally displaced communities, with implementation closely monitored and evaluated. Based on the findings from this phase, the Tuseme model underwent a final revision, and a comprehensive toolkit was developed to support other organisations in adopting and scaling the model in similar contexts.

The revised model retains the original pillars of student expression, problem-solving, and community engagement, but has been enriched with tools for dealing with displacement-related vulnerabilities, promoting healing, and building learner agency and resilience.

## PLENARY SESSION SPEAKER 2:

### National Examinations in Secondary Schools in Ethiopia: Validity and Achievement Disparity

**Tamirie Andualem, Abera Tibebu, Arega Mamaru\*, Kassahun Habtamu, Seleshi Zeleke, Abebaw Minaye, Mulat Asnake, Daniel Teferra, and Yekoyealem Dessie**  
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This study evaluates the validity of Ethiopia's national secondary school examination and investigates disparities in student achievement based on gender, school type, residence, and examination mode. In 2022, the Ethiopian Ministry of Education shifted the administration of the exams to universities to improve fairness and reduce cheating. Using a cross-sectional descriptive design, the study primarily analyzes student scores obtained from the Educational Assessment and Examinations Service (EAES), complemented by data from structured teacher questionnaires.

By examining examination scores from 2022 and 2023, alongside teacher feedback, the research assesses both the quality of exam items and the achievement levels across different demographic groups. The results indicate that the examination items demonstrate sufficient validity, meeting established quality standards. Despite this, overall achievement levels remain low: less than 4% of students scored 50% or higher, with average subject scores ranging from approximately 28% to 29.3%. Performance varies by subject—Civics and Chemistry show higher averages (about 31.6% and 32%), while Social Science and Physics record lower averages (around 25.5% and 27%). Disparities are also evident across streams; for instance, only about 6% of natural science students and 1.5% of social science students attain passing scores. Gender disparities are notable, with approximately 4% of males and 2% of females passing the exam. In conclusion, although the exam's validity has been confirmed, significant achievement gaps persist across gender, school type, and academic program. These findings emphasize the urgent need to address these disparities and ensure assessment fairness, ultimately promoting greater equity and quality within Ethiopia's secondary education system.

**Keywords:** National Examination, Validity, Achievement Disparity, Secondary Education.

## PLENARY SESSION SPEAKER 3:

### **Solving African Education Challenges with African Innovation: the EMaCS Experience**

**Ashenafi Desalegn**

**Gebremedhin Mekonen**

**Qelem Meda Technologies, Ethiopia**

Ethiopia's education system faces with major challenges in assessment and school management, including inefficient manual processes, limited transparency, weak data protection, and reliance on costly foreign technologies. These are compounded by foreign currency shortages and underutilized local expertise, threatening educational sovereignty. These issues, common across Africa, call for sustainable, locally driven solutions that harness indigenous capacity and reduce external dependency. In response to these pressing challenges, Qelem Meda Technologies (QMT), an Ethiopian innovation-driven technology firm, has developed and deployed EMaCS (Exam Management and Correction System), a comprehensive digital platform that modernizes the end-to-end examination lifecycle. EMaCS replaces fragmented, paper-based workflows with secure, automated, and scalable digital processes, improving accuracy, transparency, and operational efficiency. The company is proudly certified under ISO 27001:2022 for Information Security Management and ISO 9001:2015 for Quality Management, ensuring its systems meet international standards of excellence and security.

At the core of its innovations, EMaCS- a comprehensive platform that digitizes the examination lifecycle, from candidate registration and secure administration to automated correction, insightful analytics, and timely result publication. EMaCS constitutes EMaCS Ministry for national and regional school exams, EMaCS University Entrance for pre-university assessments, EMaCS Graduate Admission Test, EMaCS University Exit for final year evaluations, EMaCS Job Application for employment and recruitment exams, EMaCS Holistic Exam Bank for secure item storage and management, and EMaCS Certificate of Competency (CoC) for vocational and professional certifications.

EMaCS Ministry is deployed in 11 Regional Education Bureaus, digitizing exam management for 25,000+ schools and over 6 million students. It reduces costs, enhances decision-making, and improves accountability through real-time analytics, centralized control, and role-based access- while ensuring data sovereignty and compliance with Ethiopian privacy laws and global data protection standards.

Qelem Meda Technologies is committed to addressing Africa's digital and educational priorities by developing homegrown solutions aligned with the African Union's Agenda 2063. Its flagship platforms- EMaCS and E-School (a holistic digital learning and school management platform)- are end-to-end technologies fully developed by Ethiopian professionals, tailored to African realities. These solutions promote digital sovereignty, reduce dependency on foreign technologies, and ensure scalable, long-term impact. By delivering context-driven, high-impact innovations, Qelem Meda Technologies plays a strategic role in Ethiopia's digital transformation and champions the vision of "African solutions to African problems" through practical and sustainable technologies.

**Key words:** Digital Sovereignty, Education Transformation, Locally Developed Solutions, Assessment Modernization and Scalable Technology



## PLENARY SESSION SPEAKER 4 (1):

### **Harmonizing national assessments with global standards to enable reporting against the SDGs and better inform education policy: case studies from Lesotho and Rwanda**

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The Examinations Council of Lesotho (ECOL), and the National Examination and School Inspection Authority (NESA) in Rwanda were established to ensure the quality of education and administer national examinations in their respective countries. Both nations conduct periodic national sample-based assessment to measure learner performance against the curriculum and inform education policy. These national assessments, the 'Lesotho National Assessment (LNA)' in Lesotho, and the 'Learning Achievement in Rwandan Schools' (LARS) in Rwanda, play a critical role in measuring student learning outcomes. In 2024, the ECOL and NESA joined the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) 'Assessment for Minimum Proficiency Levels' (AMPL) initiative, which aims to establish minimum proficiency levels (MPLs) in reading and mathematics. To facilitate alignment with global standards, both the ECOL and NESA opted for a common-person alignment approach that aligns the test items in LNA and LARS with those in AMPL. This approach enables data from these national assessments to be reported against Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4.1.1. This SDG goal focuses on the proportion of children who have achieved at least a minimum proficiency level in reading and mathematics by the end of lower and upper primary education. This paper presents the implementation of AMPL in Lesotho and Rwanda to provide data for reporting against SDG 4.1.1, as well as inform national education policy. The benefits of using common-person alignment between AMPL and a national assessment will be highlighted. The paper will emphasise the need to conceptually and statistically align global and national assessment test items and results. This alignment enables education stakeholders to accurately gauge student proficiency levels, and measure comparable domains and constructs against global standards. Accordingly, the authors will address how LNA and LARS constructs for reading and mathematics were aligned with those in AMPL, and with respect to the definitions in the Global Proficiency Framework and the MPLs. The ECOL's and NESA's participation in AMPL is expected to have significant implications for educational policy and practice in Lesotho and Rwanda. Establishing MPLs in reading and mathematics provides valuable insights into each country's basic education sector's performance and enables informed policy recommendations to enhance educational outcomes.

**Key words:** Keywords: Sustainable Development Goal 4, SDG 4, SDG Indicator 4.1.1., Assessments for Minimum Proficiency Levels, AMPL, UNESCO Institute for Statistics, UIS, outcomes, proficiency, Minimum Proficiency Levels, MPLs, reading, mathematics, primary school, basic education, technical standards, internationally comparable, contextual data, decision-making, national assessments; global proficiency framework; minimum proficiency levels; common-person alignment approach.

## PLENARY SESSION SPEAKER 4 (2):

### Leveraging SDG 4 reporting data for decision-making and accountability: case studies from The Gambia, Kenya and Zambia

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As part of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, Indicator 4.1.1 aims to measure the “proportion of children and young people: (a) in grades 2/3; (b) at the end of primary; and (c) at the end of lower secondary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by sex.” The UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), in technical partnership with the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), has developed the Assessment for Minimum Proficiency Levels (AMPL), to measure the proportion of students meeting the SDG 4.1.1 minimum proficiency levels for reading and mathematics. These technically rigorous assessments have enabled participating countries to produce internationally comparable learning outcomes data for reporting progress towards achieving SDG Indicator 4.1.1.a and b, and to describe associations between learning outcomes and learners’ contexts, over time. Providing this important evidence makes AMPL a powerful tool for policy making. This paper presents case studies from Western, Eastern and Southern Africa highlighting the ways in which this internationally comparable data has been used within national contexts to inform decisions around foundational level learning.

**The Gambia:** Findings from AMPL have informed key policy decisions, including the review of the National Assessment Policy for Basic and Secondary Education and the design of standardized assessment items for end-of-term assessments for Foundational learning and for the Mainstreaming Effective Intervention Strategies in Schools (MEISS) pilot project. As efforts continue to strengthen the National Assessment, AMPL results play a crucial role in guiding this review process.

**Kenya:** In Kenya, AMPL data helped inform targeted early intervention remedial programs to address learning gaps, the introduction of specific reading and mathematics skills into School Bases Assessments, and ongoing teacher training. AMPL provided baseline data for tracking the Competency Based Education reforms. AMPL data also helped target equity and nutrition programs to ensure all learners have the best chance of succeeding.

**Zambia:** AMPL data supported the design of new policies, for example, reducing the number of years of primary education and reintroducing assessments lower primary, the reinforcement of existing policies, for example, the Free Education Policy, the targeting of the Zambia Educational Enhancement Project (ZEEP), and the monitoring of learning achievement.

**Keywords:** Sustainable Development Goal 4, SDG 4, SDG Indicator 4.1.1., Assessments for Minimum Proficiency Levels, AMPL, UNESCO Institute for Statistics, UIS, outcomes, proficiency, Minimum Proficiency Levels, MPLs, reading, mathematics, primary school, basic education, foundational learning, technical standards, internationally comparable, contextual data, decision-making, national assessments, policy, evaluation, instruction, capacity development.

## PLENARY SESSION SPEAKER 5:

### Comprehensive Teacher Professional Development to Support Classroom Practices and Wellbeing

**Silvia Diazgranados Ferrans, Jonathan Kwok, Abraha Asfaw, Kassa Michael, Stephen Bayley and Eva Smallegange**

Teachers are a critical factor in student learning outcomes and school quality. Teachers' wellbeing is an important outcome in contexts of conflict and crisis in which teachers, who are often refugees or affected by crises themselves, receive minimal training and support, and are often requested to take on many roles and make 'impossible choices' (Burns & Lawrie, 2015; Falk, 2025; Mendenhall et al., 2018). Thus, understanding how teachers interpret and enact curriculum through the pedagogies they implement and their wellbeing sheds light on classroom processes and practices. PlayMatters (2020 – 2026) is an education project that strengthens the capacity of education systems in Ethiopia, Tanzania, and Uganda to integrate active teaching and learning through play (LtP) for refugee and host community children. PlayMatters developed a complementary research agenda including formative and implementation research, impact evaluations, and cost analyses and utilizes mixed methods approaches, and has generated evidence on opportunities and challenges to implement LtP effectively, and the learning to inform policy and practice. Complementary tools were employed in these three interconnected studies to assess classroom experiences at the teacher-level. These include Teacher Classroom Observation Tool (TCO) (Lee & Brown, 2020), ASSETS tool (D'Sa et al., 2022), Teacher Stress Inventory (Fimian, 1984) and in some studies, the Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale (Tschannen, Moran, & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). The Uganda study particularly used the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory to measure the exhaustion and disengagement dimensions of burnout (Demerouti et al., 2003). Overall, the tools displayed good signs of validity and reliability. Key findings in the study from Uganda highlight the relationship between teachers' classroom practices and continuous professional development mechanisms as classroom teaching practices, teacher-level outcomes (e.g., wellbeing, motivation), and the implementation of continuous professional development activities in three refugee settlements (Bidi Bidi, Adjumani and Palabek) and host communities consisting of 18 schools in Western and Northern Uganda. These results provide insight into how the PlayMatters intervention supports teachers, strengthens their practices and enhances the school environment in which they work. Key findings from the study in Somali Region of Ethiopia, derived from 18 primary schools (8 refugee, 10 host community), 6 of which were included in the qualitative sample selected based on teacher classroom observations at baseline, presents the implementation fidelity and found positive gains from the baseline to the endline in all constructs of educators' instructional practices, attitudes and beliefs about LtP, and educators' occupational wellbeing. It also highlights the significant but positive changes from baseline to endline in domains related to social-emotional learning, literacy, numeracy, and well-being of children. This study sheds light on promising approaches to improving teachers' competence and children's learning and wellbeing in a crisis context through the implementation of LtP to scale up further in other contexts and the mainstream education system. Presentations in this panel inform how practitioners and policymakers can ensure quality teaching and student holistic learning and well-being utilizing LtP in crisis-affected contexts through strong educational assessment practices.



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## PAPER ABSTRACTS

100	Beyond the Test: Rethinking Classroom Assessment to Foster Holistic Learning
101	<p><b>Transforming Classroom Assessment for Holistic Learning: Exploring Innovative Practices in Rural Schools of Mpika District, Zambia.</b></p> <p><b>Linda Pande</b> lpande@exams-council.org.zm</p> <p>Innovative classroom assessment practices play a crucial role in enhancing holistic learning by taking into consideration cognitive, affective, and psychomotor development. However, rural primary schools in Zambia, face significant challenges in implementing different and effective assessment strategies due to resource constraints, inadequate teacher preparedness, and policy limitations. This study therefore, examined the effectiveness of innovative classroom assessment practices in six selected rural primary schools in Mpika district, Zambia, to enhance holistic learning. A qualitative case study approach was adopted, utilizing semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, focus group discussions, and document analysis to collect data from six head teachers, 30 teachers, and 120 learners across six rural primary schools in Mpika district of Zambia. Purposive sampling was used to select schools and participants based on their experience with assessment methods. Thematic analysis was used to identify key patterns in assessment practices and their impact on learners' overall development. Findings of the study indicated that assessment in rural schools is largely exam-oriented, with minimal use of alternative and formative assessments, limiting opportunities for alternative methods such as portfolio assessments, project-based learning, and peer evaluations. However, schools that integrated innovative assessment strategies reported improvements in learner engagement, critical thinking, and practical skill development. Major challenges reported included limited teacher training, lack of teaching materials, and large class sizes, which hindered the adoption of effective assessment methods. Key themes investigated include Impact of Innovative Assessment on Learner Challenges in Implementing Alternative Assessment, Teacher Preparedness and Professional Development and resource constraints. While standardized tests remain a component of evaluation, emphasis is also placed on ensuring that learners from rural schools benefit from holistic and inclusive education. The study concluded that rethinking classroom assessment in rural schools requires a shift from traditional testing to more inclusive, practical, and holistic assessment methods. It recommends teacher professional development programs, increased access to assessment resources, and policy reforms that support diverse assessment strategies in rural settings.</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> classroom assessment, holistic learning, innovative assessment practices, formative assessment</p>



**102 From testing to Transformation: Rethinking classroom assessment for 21st Century learning.**

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Traditional classroom assessment methods often prioritize rote memorization and standardized testing, neglecting essential skills for 21st century learners. This study explores the impact of rethinking classroom assessment on student learning outcomes and teacher instructional practices. The general objective was to systematically review the existing evidence on the effectiveness of the alternative assessment approaches in promoting 21st century learning skills (critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication) among secondary school students. Specific questions were; What are the current trends and innovations in classroom assessment that align with 21st century learning principles?, How do formative and performance-based assessment strategies impact student engagement and learning outcomes in modern classrooms?, What are the challenges and barriers faced by educators in implementing 21st century assessment practices? And How can classroom assessment be transformed to better support lifelong learning skills such as critical thinking, collaboration and communication? The studies focused on students and the alternative assessment approaches targeted were competency-based and project-based assessments. The researcher used qualitative studies which were published in English between 2008 and 2024. The information gathered using existing data from forty (40) published academic articles, peer-reviewed relevant journals and authoritative reports and policy documents. Data was collected using standardized forms to ensure consistent and thorough data extracted from the selected studies, finally organized and analyzed through thematic synthesis. It was concluded that rethinking classroom assessment approaches in promoting 21st century learning skills among secondary school students is the way to go. This is done by moving away beyond traditional assessment methods, educators can foster critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communications skills for students to excel in this challenging world. The study recommended that schools and educators should prioritize the implementation of alternative assessment approaches that focus on measuring 21st century skills, such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communication skills, to better prepare students for success in this challenging real world.

**Keywords:** Rethinking classroom assessment, transformation, testing and 21st century skills.



**103 INTEGRATING REFLECTIVE ASSESSMENT IN A FLIPPED CLASSROOM MODEL FOR AN ENGINEERING PHYSICS COURSE**

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This study investigates the integration of reflective assessment strategies into a flipped classroom model to enhance engagement and academic achievement in an Engineering Physics course. Traditional summative assessments often fail to capture students' ongoing learning progress and reflection. In contrast, this intervention focused on formative, student-centred practices aimed at fostering deeper conceptual understanding and inclusive learning. A quantitative case study design was employed, involving first-year engineering students at a South African university. Data were collected from weekly tests, a mid-semester class test, and final examinations, and were analysed using descriptive and comparative statistics. The flipped classroom model incorporated online pre-class content, in-class collaborative activities, and whiteboard-based problem-solving tasks. Results indicated a notable improvement in academic performance and student engagement. The class test average increased from 64.5% (traditional cohort) to 78.6% (flipped cohort), and the pass rate in the flipped group (94.7%) significantly exceeded that of the traditional group (72.3%). The study concludes that embedding reflective assessment within a flipped classroom structure can substantially enhance academic outcomes and engagement in STEM education.

**Keywords:** Reflective assessment, flipped classroom, engineering physics, inclusive learning.

## 104 Assessing Teacher Instructional Practices and School Readiness in ECE Classrooms in Ethiopia

**Kassa Michael<sup>1</sup>, Ann O'Connell<sup>2,3</sup>, Winnie Wilberforce<sup>3</sup> Mulugeta W/Michael<sup>1</sup>, Fiseha Teklu<sup>1</sup> Meseret Teshome<sup>1</sup>, Jackie Goodway<sup>3</sup>, Arya Ansari<sup>3</sup> and Laura Justice<sup>3</sup>**

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Early childhood education in Ethiopia is a high priority for the country. As part of a collaborative research training effort between the Ohio State University in the United States and Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia, we conducted a pilot study aimed at assessing and characterizing the educational, structural, and environmental context of ECE classrooms in Ethiopia, and examining relationships between classroom and teacher characteristics and children's school readiness skills. Ten AAU PhD students were trained and participated in this research. We observed  $n = 25$  classrooms and early childhood teachers across 10 schools using the Teacher Instructional Practices and Processes System (TIPPS; Seidman et al., 2015). From within four of these schools (two urban and two rural), we assessed  $n = 60$  students using the International Development and Early Learning Assessment (IDELA; Pisani et al. 2016) which measures students' early learning skills across 5 primary domains: emergent literacy, emergent numeracy, motor development, socio-emotional skills, and executive function. In this paper, we provide a brief overview of the history of ECE in Ethiopia, a profile of ECE teacher practices and their classroom environments, and descriptive and correlational summaries of early learning skills across IDELA domains and in relation to the TIPPS. Relative to teachers in rural schools, urban teachers had higher scores on classroom processes and practices; however, no differences were observed on the IDELA subscales between urban and rural children. Grade-level increases were observed for numeracy, literacy, and the overall IDELA scales. Controlling grade differences, several TIPPS subscales were associated with IDELA subscales for literacy and motor skills as well as to the overall IDELA scores. These pilot results are promising for understanding teacher classroom processes using the TIPPS and in planning for larger-scale studies to investigate links between teacher practices and children's school readiness and early learning outcomes.

**Keywords:** TIPPS, IDELA, school readiness, ECCE

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# **Teacher-Made Tests' Specificity and Sensitivity in Measuring Students' Academic Performance at Ethiopian Public Universities: an Intervention Study**

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The study was aimed to investigate the specificity and sensitivity of teacher-made tests (TMTs) at Ethiopian public universities, utilizing a quantitative research approach, quasi-experimental design, purposive sampling, and the CTT. It found that at pre-instruction, the specificity was found to be .6 to .61 < .7, with an  $F(2, 77) = .163$  at  $\alpha = .849 > .05$ , indicating that similarly, universities qualify students unfairly; for the students' academic performance, an  $F(2, 219) = .146$  at  $\alpha = .865 > .05$ , signifying students floating knowledge gauging are the same across universities. At post-intervention sensitivity, PPDI is .07 < .2 for all universities with an  $F(2, 77) = .017$  at  $\alpha = .983 > .05$ , showing no sensitivity to instruction the same to all. Sensitivity from psychometrics: CVI found between .60 and .61 < .83, whereas IC reliability was  $\alpha = .59$  to .65 < .7 with an  $F(2, 77) = .069$  at  $\alpha = .933 > .05$ , representing across universities that TMTs are content- and construct-wise insensitive. Sensitivity from performance perspectives: P was between .45 and .51, which was in the range of acceptable between .25 and .75 but < .6 with an  $F(2, 77) = .146$  at  $\alpha = .864 > .05$ , whereas D was .005 to .06 < .2 with an  $F(2, 77) = 2.372$  at  $\alpha = .100 > .05$ , attesting that across universities TMTs aren't best sensors to students' actual performance. Students' academic performance at post-instruction was found to be similar across universities, with an  $F(2, 219) = .137$  at  $\alpha = .872 > .05$ , inferring students sinking knowledge-gauging are the same across all. The study is novel, but teachers' test-developing competency necessitating further research.

**Keywords:** Specificity; Sensitivity; Instruction; Teacher-made tests

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## Revisiting Educational Assessment and Examination in Teaching of History in the University System

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Teaching and learning of history is as old as when man became conscious of himself, his environment and began to share ideas and knowledge from one generation to another. This became formal in modern schools with defined curriculum were established. This led to the systematic introduction of Assessment and grading of learners for placement and other reasons. With the founding of universities and teaching of history, Assessment and examination services became part of university curriculum. However, overtime this has been a major challenge in the teaching and learning of history at the university level as there is no unified system of assessments. It is in the light of this that this study examined methods of student's educational assessments and examination overtime. The study intends to identify, evaluate or assess the system of educational assessments and examination of history in university system and suggest ways out. As a historical study, the study shall use content methods(Key Informant Interview and related literatures) of data collection and analysis before drawing conclusion. From data collected, it was observed that pen and paper method of assessments and examination were used. The study therefore recommended that apart from this, oral method of question and answer and students' more involvement in the process be promoted.

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## Classroom Assessment and the Acquisition of 21st Century Skills in among Primary schools in Kenya

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Granted that the goals of education have shifted to include wide-ranging skills to be acquired by the 21st century learner, ensuring that learners develop and acquire these skills poses a major challenge for educators. These skills include problem-solving, collaboration, critical thinking, creative thinking and communication (UNICEF, 2015). The Sustainable Development Goal 4.7 focuses on global citizenship education and education for sustainable development. The components of the education system, therefore, must be aligned to ensure development and attainment of 21st century skills. Due to the rapid process of globalization, frameworks have been developed to address the competencies required to succeed socially and in the world of work. However, the assessment of 21st century skills is still novel (Care & Kim, 2018), a scenario that impedes assessment of acquisition of these skills (Tan et.al, 2017). This, therefore calls for a shift in teaching and assessment approaches in order to adequately equip learners with skills to cope with real-life situations. That classroom assessments, which are formative in nature, are key in the development and acquisition of 21st century skills cannot be gainsaid. Mixed method study design approach involving 2 case studies was adopted. Purposive and random sampling was used to select respondents for the study. A variety of tools comprising assessments, Focus Group Discussions (FGD), interviews and observation schedules were used to gather data from respondents. Indeed, the merits of feedback from classroom assessments abound it provides insights on what and how students are learning in time for teachers to modify

or personalize instruction; it allows teachers to assess a broader range of skills; it makes the assessment itself a learning experience and deepens student engagement with content, among others. This improvement in student learning requires that teachers transform the assessment of learners in their classrooms. This paper, therefore, focuses on how classroom assessment techniques utilized by teachers in primary schools influence the learners' development and acquisition of 21st century skills, specifically the 4Cs – critical thinking, creative thinking, communicating, and collaborating.

**Keywords:** Assessment, classroom assessment, 21st century skills, 4Cs

**Effectiveness of Competency Based Assessment on Students' Classroom Engagement in Secondary Schools in Uganda**

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## **The Quality of School-Based Practices in Enhancing National Examination Achievement: A Contextual Case Study on Experiences in Secondary Schools of Ethiopia**

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This research dealt with identifying the predictive quality of secondary school students' classroom achievement on national examination results. Correlation survey design with concurrent mixed approach to data was used. Data were obtained from existing school archives through careful identification of subjects where ten-top achievers in each one of four sampled schools in Asella Town were considered (n=100). Moreover, references were made to key-informant principals (n=2) , officers (n=2) and secondary school teachers (n=40) for complementary purpose. The findings revealed that, students' school-based achievements were strong predictors of the national examination results in some schools ( $r^2=.82$ ) where as they were weak predictors in others ( $r^2=.29$ ). In that, there was significant difference between public and private schools on the level of prediction. There was also a significant difference in the level of prediction among private schools themselves. Findings showed shortage in classroom arrangements and facilities; weak experiential exchanges and guidance services, and shortage in identifying model skills among teachers and students to have been the bottleneck issues in enhancing quality of school-based preparation for national examination.

**Keywords:** Quality; School-Based; Achievements; National Examination ; Results



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## Investigating Geography Teachers' Assessment Practices and Experiences on Fieldwork in Secondary schools in Lesotho

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Evolving pressures of the 21st century such as new technology continue to reshape the world today. Fieldwork in Geography, therefore, enhances the ability to learn how the world is changing to ensure sustainability and adaptability to the continuous change. Teaching and learning through fieldwork encourage experiential learning and application of geographic skills. The learners' hands-on experience enhances spatial awareness and critical thinking as they apply and connect geographical concepts and processes in real life context. Fieldwork also promotes inquiry-based learning as learners engage in real-world geographical issues through data collection, interpretation and analysis. This implies that effective assessment of fieldwork in Geography plays a key role in ensuring that learners acquire necessary and compatible skills in applying Geography theoretical knowledge to conduct investigations and to present findings effectively. These skills are transferable in future learning and in real life context. This study employed a concurrent mixed method to investigate Geography teachers' assessment practices and experiences in fieldwork at secondary level. The study was underpinned by Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Theory model. Kolb's model suggests that optimal learning takes place when learners have a balance of concrete experience, reflective ability, reflective observation and abstract conceptualisation. The sample consisted of 54 purposively selected Geography teachers from nine purposively selected schools per region (northern, central and southern) in Lesotho. An online questionnaire (consisting of closed and open-ended questions) and document analysis were employed to collect data. The data was analysed through thematic analysis and interpreted through Kolb's model. The findings revealed that while teachers perceive fieldwork as an opportunity for learners to connect the geographical theory learned in the classroom with reality as they apply it to the real-world context, learners' responses reflect limited exposure to fieldwork research. Teachers indicated that they assess their learners on fieldwork through report writing, individual and group presentations, oral question and answer, quizzes and tests. They also pointed out that inadequate geographical instruments, large groups, time and financial constraints are factors that contribute to the low performance of candidates in fieldwork. It is recommended that teachers expose learners to more fieldwork and incorporate geographical knowledge and skills to be demonstrated during fieldwork.

**Keywords:** Geography fieldwork, teacher perception, fieldwork assessment practices

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The study examined the effectiveness of students' competency based assessment (CBA), degree of students' classroom engagement and relationship between competencies based assessment and students' classroom engagement. The following were research questions. 1) How has been the effectiveness of students' CBA in Secondary Schools in Uganda? 2) What has been the degree of students' classroom engagement in Secondary Schools in Uganda? 3) What is the relationship between competencies based assessment and students' classroom engagement? A cross-sectional research design aligning on a quantitative approach was adopted for the study. The stratified sampling technique was used to select 50 secondary schools from each of the four regions of Uganda (Central, Western, Eastern, and Northern) making the 200 secondary schools in total whereby 4 senior four teachers and 10 senior four students were selected from each of the secondary schools. Thus, sample size was 800 teachers and students and 2,000 students who responded to a three point Linkert scale (never, fair, often) questionnaire. Subjective measures seeking teachers and student's opinions on the two variables under study were thus obtained. Analysis was comprised of descriptive statistics as well as inferential statistics involving Spearman correlation. Results related the first research question "How has been the effectiveness of students' CBA in Secondary Schools in Uganda?" showed that more teachers (72%-86%) than students (68%-79%) were of the view that CBA was often effective. Results related to the second research question "What has been the degree of students' classroom engagement in Secondary Schools in Uganda?" showed that most teachers (69%-82%) and students (62%-85%) reported that students were often engaged in the classroom. For the third research question "What is the relationship between competencies based assessment and students' classroom engagement?" the teachers' results revealed a positive significant relationship between effectiveness of students' CBA and students' classroom engagement ( $\rho = .859$ ,  $p = .000$ ). Students' results showed a positive significant relationship between effectiveness of students' CBA and students' engagement ( $\rho = .847$ ,  $p = .000$ ). The findings, therefore, imply that CBA was effective and contributed to improvement in students' engagement in the classroom. It is thus recommended that some areas of CBA such as affective engagement, behavioral engagement and cognitive engagement need to be improved to realize much better students' classroom engagement and eventually achievement.

**Keywords:** competency based assessment and classroom engagement

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**Investigating the impact of integrating College Based Assessment in National Examinations, the Case of Teacher Training Colleges in Malawi.**

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Students in Teacher Training Colleges (TTCs) in Malawi, sit for national examinations administered by the Malawi national Examinations Board (MANEB) at the exit of their studies. However, 40% of the students' final grades are generated by integrating the final examinations with College Based Assessment (CBA). This study was conducted to investigate the impact of integrating CBA into national examinations in Malawian TTCs. The research aimed at providing a comprehensive understanding of the integration process by examining its benefits, challenges, and implications for policy and practice. The study employed a mixed-methods research design, data was collected through Google Forms which were circulated to purposively selected key stakeholders namely; students, lecturers, and college administrators. The findings highlight several positive impacts of CBA, notably its role in enhancing the teaching and learning process, promoting assessment for learning, and preparing students with lifelong skills beyond the college environment. However, the study also identified significant challenges such as inadequate resources, high service costs, and unfavorable student-to-lecturer ratios. Overall, the study offers valuable insights for policymakers and education stakeholders, emphasizing the need for strategic support and collaboration to strengthen college-based assessment and its integration into national examination systems.

**Keywords:** Assessment for learning, Assessment Impact, Continuous Assessment, Valid Scores

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**Mapping the pursuit of knowledge on educational assessment and evaluation practices: A bibliometric analysis of global trends and growth patterns**

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In the past decades, educational assessment and evaluation have become visible academic research fields, highlighting their central contribution to enhancing teaching and learning outcomes. In this context, the present research investigated the development of knowledge in these fields towards learning outcomes during the past two decades via a bibliometric analysis. For making our findings reliable and reproducible, we employed the PRISMA model in our search and data extraction process. The analysis included 505 articles published across 359 journals, book series, monographs, and conference proceedings, with an average of 12.3 citations per article, thus highlighting the academic significance of this field. The results clarified noteworthy trends in academic output, citation impact, and contributions of various stakeholders, conceptual developments, and collaboration networks. The results highlight the imperative of sustained discourse and cooperation in research to maintain the ongoing relevance, rigor, and responsiveness of assessment practice amidst the evolving education field that enhances the learning outcomes. Furthermore, this research suggests that future studies in educational assessments and evaluation ought to emphasize integrating innovative approaches that leverage technology in addressing the varying needs of learners. In addition, it is important to highlight the significance of inclusive assessment methods that consider demographic factors such as gender, age, and cultural background.

**Keywords:** educational assessment, evaluation, instruction, learning outcomes, global trends

**113 Competency Based Assessments for Holistic Learning: A Case of Primary Schools in Kenya**

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Assessment of learners is critical as it provides feedback, monitors learner progress, guides the overall teaching and learning, thus enhancing learning outcomes. Identifying assessment strategies to objectively evaluate learners' progress in a subject is as important as establishing curricular content and curriculum delivery methods. Traditional assessment methods often centred around standardised tests limit the scope of learning and fail to capture the breadth of competencies required by learners in the 21st century. The use of Competency Based Assessments (CBA) on the other hand focusses on nurturing every learner's potential by building learners' competencies to demonstrate what they can do as the outcome of learning as opposed to what they know (KNEC 2021) based on the Multiple Intelligence theory. CBA fosters critical skills necessary for success in the modern world, such as critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and emotional intelligence. This paper discusses approaches adopted by KNEC and teachers in assessment of learners at school and classroom level aimed at holistic learning. A convergent parallel mixed method design was adopted. Teachers teaching in Grades 4, 5 and 6 filled in an online questionnaire. KNEC subject officers were interviewed. Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected and descriptive analyses done to provide results on variables under this study. The results were presented in bar graphs and tables. Qualitative data was analysed by identifying themes, categories and direct speech and reported in line with the research objectives. The study revealed that majority of teachers in primary schools in Kenya were using the CBA assessment strategies and tools. The study further identified challenges such as resource constraints, inadequate professional development, resistance to change, accountability measures, alignment to standards, assessment literacy and technological integration that hinder optimal use of the CBA strategies and tools. The study recommends, among others, continuous professional development of the teachers, sensitization of education stakeholders including parents as well as training of teachers in the use of the CBA strategies and tools to end assessment literacy.

**Keywords:** Project based learning, lifelong learning, holistic learning.

**114 Students' Perceptions of Fairness in Classroom Assessment in Secondary Schools of Assosa Zone, Benishangul-Gumuz Regional State, Ethiopia**

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This study investigated secondary school students' perceptions of fairness in classroom assessment within the Benishangul-Gumuz Regional State of Assosa Zone, Ethiopia, addressing a critical gap in understanding how diverse demographic factors and specific assessment practices influence these perceptions in a developing context. A sequential explanatory mixed-methods design was employed. Quantitative data were collected via a survey completed by 346 secondary school students (Grades 9-11). Subsequently, qualitative data were gathered through semi-structured interviews with 30 students and focus group discussions with 36 participants, providing in-depth narratives. Multi-level modeling (MLM) was used for quantitative analysis, while thematic analysis was applied to qualitative data. Findings revealed that overall perceptions of assessment fairness were low. Quantitatively, significant main effects were found for grade level, with higher grades perceiving less fairness, and for residence, with rural students perceiving significantly less fairness. A significant interaction effect between gender and residence indicated that rural female students reported the lowest perceptions of fairness. Qualitative themes further illuminated the underlying reasons for these perceptions, highlighting the critical roles of clarity and transparency of assessment criteria, fairness of assessment methods, timely and constructive teacher feedback, impact of resource availability, perceived bias and impartiality, and the consequences and interpretation of results. The study underscores the urgent need for educators and policymakers to prioritize clear communication of assessment criteria, diversify assessment methods, provide effective feedback, and critically address resource inequities and perceived biases, particularly in rural areas and for female students, to foster a more just assessment environment. Future research should explore these dynamics longitudinally and evaluate specific interventions aimed at enhancing perceived assessment fairness.

**Keywords:** Assessment fairness, student perceptions, mixed methods, demographic factors, Ethiopia, Benishangul-Gumuz Regional State.



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## Enhancing Teaching and Learning in Public Universities in Central Uganda: The Role of Alternative Assessment

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This study investigated the influence of teaching methods and the moderating role of alternative assessment on learning outcomes in public universities in Central Uganda. Guided by two objectives, examining the relationship between teaching strategies and learning, and assessing the moderating effect of alternative assessment, the research focused on Makerere and Kyambogo Universities. The study adopted an Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods design. Quantitative data were collected from 382 students using structured questionnaires and analyzed with SPSS and AMOS using descriptive statistics, regression, and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Qualitative data were gathered through interviews with 56 key institutional stakeholders to enrich the interpretation of the statistical findings. Quantitative findings revealed strong, positive relationships between lecture-based instruction ( $\beta = 0.45$ ), student-centered teaching ( $\beta = 0.65$ ), and technology-based instruction ( $\beta = 0.72$ ) with learning outcomes, all statistically significant at  $p < 0.001$ . SEM analysis showed that alternative assessment significantly moderated the relationship between each teaching method and learning, with total effects of 0.42 (lecture-based), 0.51 (student-centered), and 0.39 (technology-based), respectively. Qualitative insights supported these findings, emphasizing the value of authentic, practical, and collaborative assessments. Students and administrators highlighted that alternative assessments improved critical thinking, application of knowledge, and engagement, though concerns about grading consistency and feedback delays were noted. The study concludes that while traditional teaching remains prevalent, integrating student-centered and technology-enhanced strategies, supported by alternative assessments, significantly improves learning outcomes. Recommendations include revising national policies to mandate learner-centered instruction, incentivizing the use of authentic assessments, and enhancing lecturer capacity through professional development. The National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) should incorporate alternative assessment standards in quality assurance frameworks and require universities to develop contextually relevant assessment guidelines. These strategies are essential for aligning higher education practices with 21st-century learning goals and improving academic outcomes in Uganda's public universities.

**Keywords:** Alternative Assessment, Authentic Assessment, Teaching. Learning, Lecture based Instruction, Technology based Instruction and Student Centered Learning

Statement of the Problem

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## Measuring Holistic Learning Outcomes of Refugee and Ethiopian National Children in the Somali Region of Ethiopia

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Learning poverty and the global learning crisis requires national and global actors to reimagine the skills children require to succeed, pedagogies and approaches to developing such skills, and the tools to measure children's development. Education for children, especially those who have been affected by conflict and crisis, like those living in the Somali region of Ethiopia, need foundational literacy and numeracy in addition to other skills such as social, creative, and emotional skills. Moreover, an explicit focus on children's psychological wellbeing is critical when children, like refugee children, have experienced traumatic events like forced displacement and crisis (Shonkoff 2012). This paper presents the contribution of a promising approach, learning through play, to comprehensively enhance and measure children's holistic learning and wellbeing using performance-based and self-report tools as a child assessment battery. It draws on data from 322 children in grades 2-4 from 18 schools in the Somali region of Ethiopia who participated in an implementation research study conducted during the 2023-2024 academic year. This study sought to test the PlayMatters theory of change, to investigate the baseline to endline changes in PlayMatters' outcomes and understand the fidelity and quality of implementation. We find that measuring child-holistic learning outcomes, tailored to play-based learning and contextual realities, in children's first language is feasible, even in emergency contexts. These tools measure skills include but are not limited to literacy, numeracy, emotional attribution, emotional regulation, responses to bullying, overall wellbeing, and mental health. Additionally, we find that these tools can be valid and reliable, as well as valuable for informing instructional practices and policy decisions. Finally, we present implications of this battery of tools for improving pedagogies and policies to support children across Ethiopia and Africa to learn and thrive.

**Key term:** holistic, Literacy, Learning Outcomes, Numeracy, Refugee, Socio-emotional

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## The Practices and Challenges of Formative Assessment in Assuring Quality Education in the Secondary Schools of Jimma Zone

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The purpose of this study was to investigate the practices and challenges of formative assessment (FA) in ensuring quality education (QE) in the secondary schools of Jimma Zone. To this end, the study used a cross-sectional survey design that included questionnaires, interviews, and document analysis to collect data. Multi-stage sampling was applied to select sample schools and respondents. Data were gathered from secondary school teachers ( $n = 48$ ), students ( $n = 264$ ), three department heads, four principals, and three supervisors. In this study, both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed for quantitative analysis, while thematic analysis was utilized for qualitative analysis. The findings revealed that teachers employed a variety of FA techniques, primarily focused on tests and assignments, which hinder quality education. Regarding teachers' use of FA techniques, this study found no significant differences across schools or in terms of teachers' age, gender, educational qualifications, and experience. The findings also indicated that although the secondary schools were more advanced in the process of formative assessment, teachers did not follow the proper FA procedures; instead, they reported relying primarily on content coverage for their assessments. Additionally, the results showed that the practice of FA was significantly influenced by the assessment process. Based on these findings, the researcher concluded that there were evident implementation gaps in teachers' use of FA. To address these challenges, this study recommended that the Jimma Zone education office, the Woreda education office, supervisors, principals, department heads, and teachers should focus more on the FA process to overcome the challenges related to FA practices and ultimately enhance quality education.

**Keywords:** Practice, process, challenge, formative assessment, secondary school

118 Exploring authentic assessment in teacher education: perceptions, practices, and barriers in three colleges of Southern Ethiopia

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Moving beyond testing and integrating alternative forms of assessment, especially in the contexts of vocational and professional education, has a solid foundation and is being practiced globally. This study investigates the perceptions, practices, and challenges of authentic assessment (AA) in three teacher education colleges in Southern Ethiopia. It also explores the influence of demographic variables, including gender, field of specialization, years of teaching experience, and college of teaching, on AA perceptions and practices among teacher educators. Using an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, data were collected from 61 teacher educators and 9 college deans through surveys, interviews, and document analysis. The data were analyzed quantitatively using SPSS-26 and qualitatively through thematic analysis. Descriptive statistics, univariate ANOVA, and thematic analysis were used to analyze the data. Findings showed that while teacher educators understood AA well (Mean=3.28, SD=1.27), their actual use of AA was moderate to low (Mean=2.64, SD=1.23). Gender, field of specialization, and college of teaching significantly influenced the practice of AA, while years of teaching experience did not. Regarding the practice of AA, most educators underused AA tools, relying mainly on student presentations, constructed response items, and projects without following relevant guidelines and procedures. Conventional objective types of assessments dominate teacher educators' evaluation schemes in the colleges. Key challenges to implementing AA included resistance to change, student and teacher educators' reluctance, lack of time, large class sizes, and low job satisfaction among teacher educators. The study suggests that reforms are needed, including establishing policies and guidelines for AA by the Ministry of Education through establishing a unit responsible for college assessment. Colleges should raise awareness of AA and ensure that at least half of the course evaluations are authentic. Teacher educators must also be encouraged to implement their knowledge of AA to enhance authenticity and move beyond conventional and objective assessment methods.

**Keywords:** Authentic assessment, teacher education, perceptions, practices, challenges, Southern Ethiopia.

**200 Leveraging Technology in Educational Assessment**

**201 Leveraging Digital Technologies to Transform Educational Assessment in Africa: Insights from the ALiVE Initiative**

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This paper explores how digital technologies can transform educational assessment in Africa, with a particular focus on the Assessment of Life Skills and Values in East Africa (ALiVE) initiative. Drawing on comprehensive field data from Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, the paper analyses the use of digital tools for assessing competencies beyond academic knowledge, including problem-solving, collaboration, respect, and self-awareness. The study outlines the methodologies, technological integrations, challenges, and policy implications of digitally enabled life skills assessment, offering a roadmap for scalable and context-sensitive educational reform. The digitization of educational systems has gained global momentum, but Africa faces unique opportunities and constraints in harnessing these technologies for assessment. The ALiVE initiative, spanning from 2020 to 2023, provides a robust case study of a regionally contextualised approach to assessing life skills and values among adolescents in East Africa. This paper examines how digital technologies such as mobile data collection, interactive assessment interfaces, and real-time analytics were employed to enhance validity, scalability, and inclusivity in the ALiVE project.

**Keywords:** Digital Literacy, Self-awareness, Problem Solving, Collaboration

202	<p><b>Effect of Adoption of Technology on Candidates' Performance in the West African Senior School Certificate Examination during the Pandemic in Nigeria</b></p> <p><b>Ayobode Mayokun, AKINBULUMA</b>  <b>Lagos Section, Research Department</b>  <b>Oriyomi Olorunwa, OLUBANWO</b>  <b>Lagos Section, Research Department</b>  <b>WAEC International Office, Lagos - Nigeria</b>  <b>oriyomiolubanwo2015@gmail.com</b></p> <p>This study investigated the effect of the Adoption of Technology on Candidates' Performance in the West African Senior School Certificate Examination during COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria. The population comprised all secondary school principals/teachers and candidates who sat WASSCE (SC) in 2020. Multistage sampling techniques was used to select the sample. A total of 803 respondents were involved in the study, comprising 500 teachers/principals and 303 undergraduates. Two instruments, comprising of two questionnaires and a proforma were developed, validated and used to collect data from the respondents. The reliability indices of .78 and .82 were obtained for teacher/principal and undergraduate questionnaires respectively. Quantitative data collected were analysed using frequency counts and percentages while the qualitative data were analysed thematically. The study revealed that YouTube videos, Google classroom, WhatsApp, Radio, and Television were some of the technological platforms that were adopted to teach and learn during the pandemic. The study further revealed that the adoption of technology led to a better performance in some subjects compared to the years before and after the pandemic. However, some respondents reported that there was lack of proper supervision of teaching and learning activities during this period. It was therefore recommended that teachers should further be trained on the use of technological facilities for educative purposes and that government should continue to sponsor radio and television educative programmes to consolidate the teachings in schools, as a form of blended method of teaching.</p> <p>Keywords: Candidate, Nigeria, pandemic, technology, television, WASSCE</p>
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**203 Testology and Technology: how the human factor can leverage and enhance the use of AI in making good tests**

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Technology is becoming more dominant and leading innovations in educational assessment. The introduction of the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI), more specifically the application of General purpose engines for writing test questions, is considered by many experts as a paradigm shift in assessments. The use of AI in general has clear advantages when creating test items automatically and more efficient. The way in which AI-powered algorithms analyze existing item banks with test questions is generating items in a much higher speed and efficiency. But, the use of General purpose AI models also has some serious drawbacks, in terms of speed, costs, reliability, ethical concerns and legal issues. Customisable AI models might offer an alternative that is worth serious consideration for development of educational assessment tools. Whatever AI model used, the human factor cannot be missed. The use of AI in item generation will change the role of the test expert, but a human check will still be needed. In many large scale assessments that are used for making valid judgments to inform decision making, it is essential to find a good combination of innovative item development and responsible human decision making. Besides the human factor that should not be forgotten, the use of AI technology for test development will also have its limitations and drawbacks in the specific context of Africa.

**Keywords:** Testology, Automated item generation, General purpose AI, Customisable AI, Human Factor

**204 Assessment of the Computer-Based Testing (CBT) System in Ethiopia's Secondary School Leaving Certificate Examination (2016 E.C./2024 G.C.): Practices, Challenges, and Future Prospects**

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This study evaluated the implementation of Computer-Based Testing (CBT) in Ethiopia's Secondary School Leaving Certificate Examination (2016 E.C./2024 G.C.), focusing on current practices, challenges, and future prospects. A mixed-methods approach was used, combining quantitative exam results from over 29,000 CBT and 208,000 Paper-Pencil Based Testing (PPBT) candidates, along with survey data from CBT candidates and administrators. Qualitative insights were gathered through focus group discussions with ICT and exam administration experts. Findings indicate that while CBT improves exam security, efficiency, and administrative transparency, its effectiveness is constrained by infrastructure gaps, limited digital readiness—especially in school-based centers—and inconsistent system reliability. University exam centers experienced better outcomes due to greater resources and training, highlighting disparities and the critical role of digital literacy. Despite these challenges, CBT holds transformative potential for Ethiopia's examination system. Realizing this potential requires urgent investments in infrastructure, digital skills development, and clear policy frameworks to ensure equitable, reliable, and sustainable modernization of national assessments.

**Keywords:** computer-based testing, public examination, digital literacy, exam security, infrastructure, Ethiopia, secondary school leaving exam

**205 Awareness, Availability and Utilization of Digital Technological Tools in the Assessment of Students in Nigerian Technical Colleges**

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Digital Technological Tools (DTTs) are devices, systems and resources that generate store or process data. Digitalization of the learning and assessment processes in the education sector has become a national concern. As technology continues to advance, the education sector is also adopting more digital options in learning and assessment such as e-marking, computerised adaptive testing, online submission amongst others. Assessment is an integral part of learning, it constitutes an important component of the learning process. Consequently, this paper aimed at investigating the awareness, availability and utilization of digital technological tools in the assessment of students in technical colleges in Nigeria. To achieve this objective, four research questions guided this study while one hypothesis was tested. The study adopted a -descriptive survey design by employing quantitative and qualitative research approaches. The population comprised all technical college teachers and students across the country's six geo-political zones. A simple random technique was used to select 400 teachers and 600 students. Data was collected using one validated instrument: Questionnaire on the Awareness, Availability and Utilization of Digital Technological Tools in Assessment (QAAUDTTA) with Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.87 respectively. The quantitative data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation statistics. The results showed that teachers' and students' awareness of digital technological tools for assessment was to a great extent. The results also revealed that digital technological tools for assessment are available to a little extent and utilized to a little extent. However, major challenges including irregular power supply, inadequate ICT facilities, security issues, lack of funds, lack of ICT literate teachers, poor internet connectivity, and high internet subscription fees were the major challenges inhibiting the effective utilization of DTTs in the assessment of students. Based on the findings of the study, the researchers recommended among others that government at all levels should provide adequate digital technological tools in the colleges, provide uninterrupted internet services, affordable internet data, adequate bandwidth, regular power supply, regular in-service training for teachers on new technological innovations and have well trained personnel to handle the tools for optimum utilization in the assessment of students in technical colleges in Nigeria.

**Keywords:** Assessment, Technical Colleges, Digital Technological Tools, Availability, Utilization.

**206 AI-Powered Examination Malpractice Detector**

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Examination Malpractice has seen a massive increase in the past decade, with perpetrators continuously becoming sophisticated. With the emergence of technologies such as AI, generative AI exam answers have been marked as legitimate candidate responses due to lack of mechanisms to detect AI-written responses and candidates' knowledge. Both Invigilators and candidates themselves have been identified as sources of AI examination malpractice cases. These have been most prevalent in Online examinations but seem to be taking center stage in even manually written examinations where students and invigilators sneak in with internet-enabled smart devices that allow the use of AI in the examination room for cheating. This study aims at closing these gaps by proposing an online system that uses AI for anomaly detection, collusion detection and classification of suspicious candidate exam responses. Intelligent machine learning algorithms are applied on a data set that has a mixed bag of legitimate candidate responses and AI generated responses to establish the extent of examination malpractice using AI. The outcome of this research is a tool that can be applied by Exam assessment bodies to mitigate against the risk of awarding candidates scores they did not deserve through early detection during marking of exams. Implementation of this solution for large-scale assessments is further detailed in this research. Successful implementation of this AI-driven Malpractice detector by ZIMSEC may lead to economic development through the production of legitimate, skilled students from the education system who are able to engage in economic development businesses through their quality qualifications. This innovative solution has far-reaching implications for academic institutions, professional certification bodies, and high-stakes testing organizations, ultimately upholding the value and credibility of educational assessments.

**Key Words:** Malpractice, Artificial Intelligence, Exam Cheating

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## Unlocking the Benefits of Computerised Item Banking: Strategies to enhance exam quality

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The development of valid and reliable test items is conditional on the fact that the items have been subjected to item analysis, which ascertains that they have acceptable psychometric properties. The current Zimsec question paper development process has a single quality control cycle that involves the expert judgement and the two statistical approaches (cohortreferencing and prior achievement). Item analysis, a key step that provides a language for improving the quality of the items is not part of the work flow. There is lack of documented evidence to support the validity and reliability of Zimsec assessment tools. The instruments could therefore be of lower precision in estimating candidates' abilities and achievements. Although the use of item banks is associated with many potential benefits, in Zimbabwe the potential of computerized item banks is still not sufficiently utilized. The purpose of this study is to highlight the significance of incorporating item analysis into the Zimsec question paper development cycle and to explore strategies of how to incorporate this step with a view of enhancing the quality of Zimsec assessment tools and hence the qualitative merit and the integrity of the nation's educational enterprise. Information collected through document analysis, informal interviews and focus group discussions revealed that it is possible to have a software platform in place that can effectively manage the process of item analysis and provide the validity and reliability information of the test items. A question paper development process that incorporates item analysis, a second quality assurance cycle, was proposed. Only items of acceptable psychometric properties (IRT calibrated) will be deposited into the item bank. This proposal if implemented will not only enhance the quality of the examinations, it will also enable the administration of alternative forms of assessments such as computerised adaptive tests (CATs) and On-demand testing.

**Keywords:** validity, reliability, item analysis, psychometric properties, item response theory (IRT)

**208 South African student teachers' use of Artificial Intelligence tools and ethical considerations in responding to assessment tasks**

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With the rapid advancements in artificial intelligence (AI) globally, student teachers are increasingly using AI tools such as ChatGPT and Claude to assist them with academic assessments. While these tools offer significant advantages, their use also raises ethical concerns related to academic integrity, authenticity, and the role of technology in education. This study explored how student teachers use AI tools to tackle assessment tasks and examined their understanding of the ethical implications of using AI to tackle assessment tasks. The qualitative approach was used to conduct this interpretive case study at a South African teacher training institution with purposively selected students enrolled in a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (PGCE) program. Data was generated through assessment tasks and reflective writings from thirty student teachers. The findings of this study suggest that student teachers use AI to brainstorm ideas, generate responses to assessment questions, and improve their writing quality. Furthermore, the student teachers noted that improper use of AI-generated content can lead to inaccuracies, a lack of clarity, and ethical concerns, including academic dishonesty, misinformation, and over-reliance on AI that results in lack of creativity. The study recommends that to ensure ethical use, student teachers should treat AI as a support tool rather than a substitute for their own work. To maximise the benefits of AI while upholding academic integrity, teacher training institutions should update their AI guidelines frequently to cope with the rapid changes in AI tools, educate student teachers on responsible AI use, and promote a balanced approach to assessment that enhances, rather than replaces, critical thinking and originality.

**Keywords:** Artificial Intelligence, assessment, student teachers, learning process



## **Digital Transformation in WASSCE: A Comparative Study of Paper-Based and Computer Based Assessment Approaches (2024 PC2)**

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The West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) is a summative assessment administered to determine the academic achievement of both Senior Secondary School students and Private Candidates (PC) in the English speaking West African Countries. WASSCE over the years was conducted as a paper-based examination. However, with the global shift from traditional PaperBased Testing (PBT) to Computer-Based Testing (CBT), and in line with the integration of technology into assessments processes, the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) Nigeria, in 2024, introduced a hybrid CBT mode of assessment known as Computer-Based West African Senior School Certificate Examination (CB-WASSCE) in its First Series of examinations for Private Candidates. For the conduct of WASSCE for Private Candidates, 2024 - Second series (PC 2) diet of examinations, both the PBT and CBT modes were deployed. The dual mode approach helped to accommodate diverse candidate preferences and varying levels of access to technology. This study compared candidate performance in the WASSCE (PC 2) 2024 between Paper-Based Test (PBT) and Computer-Based Test (CBT) modes. It further assessed vulnerability to examination malpractice and evaluated key psychometric properties (validity, reliability) of the assessment. Two core and compulsory papers (English Language and General Mathematics) were used for the research. Employing a secondary data analysis approach, this research utilized examination data from the WAEC ICT Division for the 65,049 candidates who sat the examination. The data were analyzed using a quantitative approach, employing descriptive statistics such as percentages. The mean performance of candidates in each group was analyzed using T-test. The results showed that candidates who participated in the PBT mode performed better in both subjects with a mean difference of 7.296 in English Language and 12.983 in General Mathematics. Further findings showed that CBT offered greater security against malpractice with 19 (0.85%) cases recorded compared to 2,498 (3.98%) cases recorded in PBT mode. Based on the findings, the study recommends a phased or blended approach combining the strengths of both modes to balance fairness, accessibility, and exam security. It recommends infrastructural developments by stakeholders geared towards increased adoption of CBT mode while efforts should be made to improve candidates' digital literacy and familiarity with CBT environments to enhance performance.

**Keywords:** candidate performance, computer-based testing (CBT), examination malpractice, paperbased testing (PBT), psychometric properties

**210 Shift in Public Examination Landscape: Prospects and Challenges of West African Senior School Certificate Examination as Computer-Based Examination in The Gambia**

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This study investigated the prospects and challenges of conducting the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) as a computer-based Examination (CBE) in The Gambia. The study adopted survey research design. The population comprised final year senior secondary school students, ICT teachers, principals, ministry of basic and secondary education (MoBSE) officials and the West African Examinations Council (WAEC) staff. Multi-stage sampling technique was used to select a sample made up of 267 students, 61 ICT teachers, 25 principals, 12 MoBSE officials and 9 WAEC staff. Three sets of questionnaires made up of open and close-ended items and a focus group discussion guide were developed and used to collect data from the respondents. The quantitative data were analysed using frequency counts and percentages while the qualitative data were analysed thematically. The study revealed, among others, that some schools do not have the basic facilities needed for conducting WASSCE as a Computer-based examination while some facilities were inadequate. There is also the lack of preparedness by MoBSE to conduct WASSCE as a CBE in terms of the procurement and installation of adequate ICT equipment and software. However, majority of respondents in each category agreed that CBE is faster, cheaper, and more convenient in the assessment of candidates and processing of the results in WASSCE in The Gambia. It was recommended that the government through the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education (MoBSE) should draft a CBE Policy and map out its implementation guidelines. It was further suggested that ICT should be introduced as a teaching and examinable subject to help in preparing students for the examination. WAEC on its part should train staff on CBE, create stakeholders awareness, provide robust item pool and use IRT to calibrate the items, and pilot CBE in selected schools with facilities across the country.

**Keywords:** Computer-based examination, ICT teachers, MoBSE, students, WAEC, WASSCE

**211 Prospects and Challenges of Conducting West African Senior School Certificate Examination As a Computer-Based Examination in Ghana**

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This study investigated the prospects and challenges of WAEC conducting WASSCE as CBE in Ghana. It employed the survey research design. The population comprised heads of school, teachers, students of SHSs in Ghana, and officers from the GES Directorate and WAEC. A multi-stage sampling technique and purposive sampling was employed to select participants for the study, consisting of 1,496 students, 147 ICT teachers, 100 heads of school, 18 and 9 WAEC and GES officers respectively. Data were collected with questionnaires and interview guides. The instruments were subjected to expert critique, while the reliability of the instrumentation was calculated using Cronbach's Alpha. Reliability coefficients of 0.74, 0.61, and 0.63 were obtained for the instruments administered to the students, ICT teachers, and heads of school respectively. The instruments were administered by officers from the Accra Section of the Research Department (AS-RD). The quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics: frequency distribution, percentages and charts, while the thematic approach was used to analyse the open-ended items and interview responses. The results indicated that the Senior High Schools have attained a considerable level of preparedness in terms of availability of ICT facilities and equipment, internet access, power supply and students' proficiency in the use of computers. WAEC has also attained a considerable level of preparedness for a Computer-based WASSCE in terms of item bank, availability of ICT facilities and staff orientation. Moreover, it was revealed that conducting WASSCE as a CBE would be economical and could reduce examination malpractice. However, the study revealed, among others, poor ICT and internet infrastructure and many students' ineptness in the use of a computer as challenges that could undermine the conduct of WASSCE as CBE. The study thus recommends, among other things, that the Council pilots CBE in some selected schools before officially rolling it out; GES should have a clear-cut ICT policy for pre-tertiary institutions that ensures that students are ICT proficient.

**Keywords:** Computer-based examination, WAEC, WASSCE, Students

**212 Leveraging Security-Driven Technology in Educational Assessment: Enhancing Quality Learning and Informed Decision-Making**

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This study explores the integration of security-focused technologies in educational assessment and their impact on learning outcomes and decision-making. Traditional assessment methods often suffer from bias, inefficiencies, and integrity risks. In contrast, digital assessment platforms enhanced with secure printing, biometric verification, encrypted storage, and blockchain-based authentication address these gaps by improving reliability, scalability, and data protection. Using case studies of educational institutions and examination bodies that implemented Zunoma’s secure solutions, the research identifies improvements in exam credibility, fraud reduction, and data-driven policy formation. However, challenges such as cost, digital literacy, and system integration remain. The findings highlight the critical need for strategic investment and institutional support to ensure the widespread adoption of secure assessment technologies. The study concludes that embracing technological innovations is essential to maintaining the integrity, equity, and efficacy of modern educational assessments.

**Keywords:** Technology, Educational Assessment, Security, Secure Printing, Learning Outcomes

**213 Analysis of E-Registration Policy Formulation for National Examinations in Malawi**

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This study aimed to analyse the formulation of an Electronic Registration Policy for registration of candidates for national examinations in Malawi by the Malawi National Examinations Board (MANEB). Using pragmatic purposive sampling, the study drew its participants from MANEB, District Education Offices, schools, students, private schools' association, teachers' union and parents-teachers association. The study generated data using semi-structured interviews, focus group discussion and documents analysis. Analysis of the generated data used Framework Analysis and the results indicate that the formulation of the policy adhered to laid-down policymaking best practices. The results further show that the policy has high prospects of addressing most challenges associated with manual registration and payment namely: use of bulky documents, duplication of tasks and processes, data capturing inefficiencies and embezzlement of examination fees, just to mention but a few. This notwithstanding, the results reveal some pockets of resistance, especially on e-Payment, from few parents and guardians who still prefer paying through the school, thereby defeating efforts to combat examination fees embezzlement. This could, however, be addressed through aggressive civic education.

**Keywords:** e-Registration, e-Payment, manual registration, policy formulation, MANEB, Malawi.

**214 Leveraging Jamii X-Change Technology in Educational Assessment in Tanzania**

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This study proposes a system architecture design for a Student Data Lake integrated with Jamii XChange, Tanzania's national interoperability platform, to improve educational assessment practices. With the growing volume and variety of student data across Tanzania's education system—ranging from examination records and attendance to digital learning footprints—traditional siloed databases are no longer sufficient for timely and accurate assessment. The key design challenge lies in enabling secure, scalable, and real-time integration of disparate educational datasets from various ministries, agencies, and institutions while ensuring privacy, data governance, and interoperability. To address this, the research adopts a secure-by-design approach and conceptualizes a data lake architecture that leverages X-Road protocols (underlying Jamii X-Change) for federated access, metadata-driven governance, and layered analytics. The system comprises four layers: data ingestion, data lake storage, semantic integration, and analytics visualization. It also includes role- 12 based access control and encryption to ensure data privacy and compliance with Tanzanian legal frameworks. A mixed-methods research methodology was employed. Qualitative interviews and quantitative

surveys were carried out to assess feasibility, usability, and security perceptions. Technical simulation of interoperability was performed using pilot data in Morogor. However, concerns around data privacy, institutional silos, and limited infrastructure remain critical. This proposed system offers a scalable, secure, and interoperable foundation for real-time educational assessment, teacher feedback loops, and evidence-based policy making. Further pilot implementations and stakeholder capacity-building are recommended to validate its operational viability.

**Keywords:** Student Data Lake, Jamii X-Change, Educational Assessment, Interoperability,

**Secure-by-Design, Leveraging technology**



## 215 **Leveraging Digital Platforms to Implement Pre and Post Examination processes**

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The focus of the fourth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) is to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Within SDG 4, one of the targets (4.4) emphasizes the importance of relevant skills, including technical and vocational skills, for employment, decent jobs, and entrepreneurship, which encompasses the integration of technology in education. In Botswana, the integration of ICT in teaching and learning was articulated through the Education & Training Sector Strategic Plan (ETSSP). It was further tracked by the COVID-19 pandemic, aiming to provide assessment with minimal concessions and deviations. While Botswana Government ensured internet connectivity to most institutions of learning, providing devices and other resources to enable the implementation of e-learning platforms, Botswana Examinations Council (BEC) also augmented and fast tracked the implementation of digital e-assessment platforms to run examination processes. The advancement became more noticeable with the commencement of the pandemic, aiming to provide assessment with minimal concessions and deviations. Despite advancements in educational technology, many examination bodies, particularly in developing countries, continue to rely heavily on manual systems for managing pre and post examination processes. These traditional approaches are often characterized by inefficiencies, high operational costs and security vulnerabilities. This study employed a quantitative exploratory design to investigate perceptions of BEC staff and examiners/teachers regarding the use of digital platforms in pre- and post-examination processes. Purposeful sampling targeted individuals actively engaged with the e-platforms. Data was collected through an online questionnaire comprising both closed and open-ended items, enabling the capture of statistical trends and qualitative insights. Descriptive statistics and thematic analysis were used to analyse the data, offering a comprehensive view of stakeholder experiences and recommendations. In the context of e-marking and e-authoring, it was found that not all examiners had internet access, and there was a challenge stemming from a lack of ICT skills. The implementation of e-recruitment for examination personnel and e-authoring of examination papers were found to yield cost savings as they eliminated expenses related to courier services, printing materials, and overtime compensation annually. It was recommended that conventional processes and procedures be adapted to align with the requirements of e-platforms to prevent disruptions and redundancies.

**Keywords:** Digital Assessments, E-Platforms, E-marking, E-Authoring, E-Recruitment

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## **Incorporating Information Communications Technology (ICT) in School -Based Assessment in Tanzania.**

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The integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in school-based assessment practices has emerged as a transformative approach to enhance educational efficiency. This paper explores teachers' application of ICT tools in classroom assessment and highlights challenges encountered. A mixed-methods approach was employed for data collection, wherein quantitative data were obtained via closed-ended questions and qualitative data through open-ended questions. Questionnaires were administered to 129 primary and secondary school teachers across 28 randomly chosen regions of Tanzania, aiming for a representative national perspective. The collected data were analyzed using Excel, with findings presented in percentages. The findings indicate that the majority of teachers use ICT tools primarily for the preparation of assessment/typing questions (59%), data storage (54%), and processing testing/examination data (51%), as opposed to marking (16%) and feedback communication to stakeholders (20%). Notably, more secondary school teachers (42%) utilize ICT compared to primary school teachers (29%). Teachers suggest that adequate supply of ICT tools (77%), comprehensive teacher training (43%), ensuring internet availability (14%), providing ICT support (7%), enacting bylaws to enforce ICT use in assessment (3%), and ensuring electricity availability (0.8%) are crucial. This study underscores the importance of government action on these suggestions to encourage teachers to embrace ICT as a vital component in the evolution of assessment practices.

**Keywords:** Teachers, learners, information and communication technology, and assessment.

**217 The Effectiveness of the Electronic Marking System at Lesotho General Certificate of Secondary Education: A Case of Eklavvya Electronic Marking System**

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Electronic marking (e-marking) refers to the use of digital technology in marking candidates' responses. In a case where candidates are not assessed electronically, their handwritten responses are scanned and uploaded into the system for marking through the use of an electronic device. This approach may lead to lower spending on resources as it minimises or eliminates the use of pen and paper in marking. However, there can also be some challenges faced, especially in developing countries like Lesotho, where there is an unreliable supply of electricity and internet for a smooth running of the system. This qualitative multiple case study, therefore, aimed to explore the opportunities and challenges involved in the use of the Eklavvya electronic marking system at Lesotho General Certificate of Secondary Education (LGCSE) as well as the implications for quality and fairness in assessment. The study was grounded on the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) developed by Davis in 1989. The model describes the six factors that influence the acceptance of technology namely: external variables, perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, attitude towards the use, behavioural intention, and the actual use of technology. This model helped the researcher to examine possible factors that can influence the effectiveness of the Eklavvya Electronic Marking System at LGCSE. This multiple case study used a qualitative approach within the interpretive paradigm. The study purposely used all the nineteen (19) markers who participated in the e-marking of the 2023 June supplementary examinations and two (2) Subject Officers from the Examination Council of Lesotho (ECOL) whose subjects were marked electronically in the June 2023 supplementary examinations. The participants were first issued with an electronic semi-structured questionnaire and then interviewed telephonically. Thematically, the collected data was analysed according to the emerging themes. The study revealed that e-marking is efficient, consistent, and time-saving, although it requires a reliable internet connection and well-trained markers. The study then recommends well-planned training for all relevant personnel and the development of infrastructure towards a sustainable supply of electricity and internet throughout the country.

**Keywords:** effectiveness, Eklavvya Electronic Marking System, Lesotho General Certificate of Secondary Education, digital technology, opportunities, challenges and Theory of Planned Behaviour.

**218 Leveraging Gamification in Technology-Based Assessments: Enhancing Student Engagement in Uganda's Vulnerable Communities**

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This mixed-methods study examines how gamified technology-based assessments can transform learning experiences for students in Uganda's vulnerable communities. The research addresses three key objectives: evaluating gamification's impact on student motivation and participation, assessing its effects on learning outcomes in resource-constrained settings, and developing sustainable implementation strategies. Focusing on 300 students (12-18 years) and 50 educators from 10 strategically selected schools, the study employed a concurrent triangulation design combining quantitative analysis of standardized STEM assessments with qualitative insights from focus groups and interviews. The intervention's results were striking: gamification boosted student motivation by 0.83 points ( $p < 0.001$ ) and improved learning outcomes by 0.68 points ( $p < 0.001$ ) on 5-point scales, demonstrating its potential as a powerful pedagogical tool. However, the study revealed critical moderating factors - teacher training and technological infrastructure accounted for significant portions of these gains ( $p < 0.001$  and  $p = 0.002$  respectively). While benefits were consistent across demographics, students with weekly+ technology access showed 0.21 points greater motivation gains ( $p < 0.001$ ), highlighting how digital divides may limit equitable impact. The qualitative findings identified three key themes: (1) progress tracking drove engagement, (2) competitive elements required cultural adaptation, and (3) offline functionality was essential for unreliable infrastructure. These findings advance both theory and practice by demonstrating how gamification can succeed in low-resource settings when properly adapted. The study provides a replicable framework featuring offline-capable tools, tiered teacher training, and community co-design - addressing the critical gaps identified in implementation. This work not only contributes to global discussions on equitable educational technology but also offers specific solutions for Sub-Saharan African contexts working toward SDG4 targets.

**Keywords:** Gamification, educational technology, vulnerable communities, STEM education, Uganda, digital divide

**219 Enhancing Feedback from the Assessment of Science Practical Subjects through ICT Integration; a case if Kenyan Teacher Colleges.**

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The Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) centralized the assessment of practical science subjects within teacher training colleges starting in 2022, in alignment with the shift towards competency-based evaluation for teacher education. While this new assessment approach aims to enhance the quality and relevance of practical skills for science educators, it has posed a challenge in providing authentic scores to KNEC. Previously, school-based assessments frequently exhibited score inflation, raising serious concerns regarding examination integrity. To mitigate this issue, a system was developed requiring scores to be backed by portfolios, with evaluations conducted in distinct phases to ensure independent scoring at each stage. This study examined an innovative online assessment platform for teacher education, designed to add a layer of oversight to ensure a more objective and transparent evaluation of practical skills. By merging physical monitoring with digital assessment tools, the research sought to enhance the reliability and objectivity of assessing the practical aspects of science subjects. The study employed a survey design targeting 150 teacher trainees, which represents 23.08% of the population of science teacher trainees across one public and four private teacher training colleges. Stratified sampling was utilized to represent Chemistry and Biology subjects according to the population ratios from each college, ensuring diverse representation. Additionally, interviews were conducted with ten department heads to gain insights into the effectiveness of School-Based Assessment (SBA) in evaluating practical competencies. Previous research suggests that a sample size exceeding 20% can yield reliable result, especially when depth of insight is prioritized (Cohen & Manion, 2000). The qualitative data collected from the department heads further enriched the analysis by corroborating diverse insights from the teachers. Heap analytics were employed to monitor and analyze the online platform's performance, revealing both the strengths and challenges experienced during the implementation of SBA. This initiative aims not only to refine the assessment process but also to build trust among various stakeholders, including teachers, trainees, curriculum developers, employers, and education ministry officials. Ultimately, the findings will inform best practices in the assessment of science subjects, ensuring that training outcomes align with the competencies needed for future educators in a dynamic educational landscape.

**Keywords:** Competencies, Irregularities, Assessment

**220 Integrating Smartphones as Mobile Learning Tools in the Teaching, Learning and Assessment of English Language: Perceptions of Lesotho Secondary School Teachers**

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Mobile learning (m-learning) has become a trend in 21st-century teaching, learning and assessment. However, utilisation of mobile devices among learners for classroom practice has remained an issue of global concern since most schools prohibit the use of these devices. Therefore, this qualitative study seeks to explore perceptions of Lesotho secondary school teachers on integrating smartphones as m-learning tools in the teaching, learning and assessment of English Language. The study was underpinned by Constructivism theory. Purposive sampling was employed to select eight teachers from eight secondary schools in the Maseru District. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews, using an open-ended questionnaire and was analysed thematically. The findings revealed that the use of smartphones in English language teaching, learning and assessment is limited and strictly controlled. The study also found that teachers generally support the integration of smartphones into classroom teaching, learning and assessment due to their perceived educational benefits. The finding further uncovered that school authorities prohibit learners from using smartphones for classroom learning to manage security issues. The research also revealed that school policies that ban or heavily restrict smartphone use significantly hinder teachers' ability to integrate mobile technology into their teaching. The study recommends that school policies should strike a balance between leveraging the educational potential of smartphones and mitigating risks of misuse or distraction. It is recommended that schools should implement structured protocols for supervised smartphone use during lessons to ensure devices are used strictly for educational activities.

**Keywords:** Integrating, m-learning, smartphones, English Language, assessment, perceptions, constructivism theory.



**221 The Impact of Jamb UTME Item Bank on Technology Integration and Test Administration in Nigeria Educational Assessment**

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The integration of technology into educational assessment has transformed the methods of test development, administration and evaluation globally. The Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) has adopted an item banking system as part of its technological advancement efforts. The importance of item banking to public examinations cannot be over-emphasized giving its contribution to examination security. It potentially allows for the creation and depositing of several calibrated test items which can also be grouped into parallel forms from which tests can be withdrawn and deployed to a group of candidates. The use of item banking became imperative in test administration with the adoption of the Computer Based Test (CBT) as a testing mode in 2013 by the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB). Thus, from the 2013 UTME, the Board began the assembling of a pool of over 1000 test items each of the twenty-five subjects tested in the UTME from which it can withdraw items for use. JAMB item banks are repositories of extensive information regarding test development and psychometric characteristics of each item using the fastest software. The purpose of this paper is to highlight Impact of JAMB UTME Item Bank on Technology integration and Test Administration in Nigeria Educational Assessment. Advantages such as its cost-effectiveness, contribution to examination security and ability to help establish curriculum goals and objectives allows testing bodies to identify the relative difficulty of particular items. The study adopts descriptive approach and data were collected through the use of questionnaire from JAMB officials, educators, stakeholders and candidates to evaluate the efficiency, reliability and challenges associated with the item bank. The study used theory of Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and the Diffusion of Innovations (DOI) to understand the relationship between candidates observed score and their true ability considering the measurement of the test items. The paper concluded by reiterating the need for testing bodies to be more aware of technologies that could help maintain the sanctity of the examinations they conduct. The paper recommended the adoption by testing bodies of a robust item banking system that provides the automation, standardization, and scalability essential to developing and maintaining effective tests for a more efficient test administration in Nigeria and Africa, in general.

**Keywords:** Assessment, Integration, Item Bank, Technology Integration, Test Administration and Development, UTME.

## 222 Driving Digital Transformation in Assessment: KNEC's E-Assessment Journey in Teacher Education for Informed Decision-Making

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The Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) is spearheading e-assessment reforms in teacher education since 2021, aligning with Kenya's Vision 2030, Digital Economy Blueprint, and Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) on inclusive and equitable quality education. Accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the rollout of Competency-Based Education (CBE), KNEC's 2021–2026 Strategic Plan prioritizes digital transformation through phased implementation of e-assessment systems. This study sought to explore stakeholder perceptions, institutional readiness, and the strategic implications of KNEC's phased adoption of e-assessment in teacher education. It examined the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) to support future scalability and policy direction in light of growing teacher education programmes, assessment centres, learning areas, and candidature. The study adopted a descriptive survey design and a multi-stage sampling approach to capture diverse stakeholder perspectives. Using a descriptive survey design, 350 stakeholders including trainees, tutors, centre managers, KNEC, MoE, and KICD officers were engaged through stratified, purposive, and simple random sampling across 62 teacher training colleges. Data were collected via online questionnaires (Google Forms, Microsoft Forms), cleaned using SQL, and analyzed using Stata version 18. Descriptive statistics summarized quantitative data, while thematic analysis was applied to qualitative responses. Study findings revealed strong endorsement of e-assessment: 92% cited effective change management, 90% affirmed system reliability, and 88% supported the phased implementation model. Areas for enhancement included ICT infrastructure, digital literacy, and the need for a robust item bank. Opportunities identified include AI for automated item generation and marking, decentralized marking to reduce costs, and big data analytics to inform decision-making. Regional digital disparities and system downtimes remain key threats. The study recommends sustained ICT investment, policy reform, and strategic integration of emerging technologies. KNEC's phased model presents a replicable roadmap for scalable, secure, and inclusive e-assessment across Africa.

**Keywords:** E-assessment, Digital Transformation, Phased Implementation Strategy, Change Management, Teacher Education, SWOT Analysis, AI Integration, Big Data, Decentralized Marking.

**223 Leveraging Technology in Educational Assessment: Enhancing Quality Learning and Decision-Making through Computer-Based Test in Nigeria**

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The integration of technology in educational assessment is transforming the way examinations are conducted, particularly in developing countries like Nigeria. This study explores the implementation of Computer-Based Test (CBT) by the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) in Nigeria, analyzing its impact on examination integrity, assessment efficiency, and informed decision-making. Using a mixed-methods research design, data were gathered from UTME candidates, JAMB officials, and CBT center operators. Findings reveal significant gains in examination security and result processing, alongside challenges including digital inequality, infrastructure deficits, and limited accessibility for candidates with special needs. The study concludes with targeted recommendations aimed at optimizing the use of CBT for equitable and effective educational assessment in Nigeria.

**Keywords:** Educational assessment, Computer-Based Test (CBT), digital literacy, technology in education, JAMB, examination integrity, Nigeria.

**224 A Deep Learning Framework for Longitudinal Face-Based Candidate Re-Identification in Educational Assessment Systems: A Case Study of Uganda's PLE and UCE**

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The integrity of candidate identity across national examination cycles is foundational to fair and credible educational assessment. In many low- and middleincome countries (LMICs), including Uganda, identity fragmentation due to demographic inconsistencies, impersonation, and manual registration procedures undermines longitudinal candidate tracking between key stages such as the Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) and the Uganda Certificate of Education (UCE). This paper proposes APRe-ID, a robust deep learning-based framework for longitudinal face-based candidate re-identification in assessment systems. APRe-ID integrates a ResNet50-SE embedding backbone with ArcFace angular margin loss to learn age-invariant identity embeddings. A structured metadata-aware gallery filtering layer reduces search complexity while preserving candidate coverage. To improve decision accuracy, we incorporate a binary verification classifier over cosine-similarity-enhanced features. Experiments on a real-world dataset of 20,000 images, spanning PLE 2018 to UCE 2022 demonstrate a 98.4% Top-1 CMC, 0.997 ROC-AUC, and high robustness to occlusion, blur, and age shifts. This work pioneers the application of longitudinal deep Re-ID in African educational contexts, aligning with UNEB's strategic goals for biometric integrity and digital transformation.

**Keywords:** Longitudinal Re-Identification, Face Recognition, ArcFace, Metric Learning, Educational Biometrics, Uganda National Assessment Systems, AI for Education, Identity Verification, CMC, ROC-AUC

**225 The validity of virtual labs for assessing science practical skills**

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There are various methods to assess science practical skills at secondary school level, each of which may have a different impact on teaching and learning. Literature has addressed the distinction between direct and indirect assessment of practical skills (Abrahams & Reiss, 2015), and questions have been raised about the validity of indirect assessment methods which could promote undesired practices such as teaching to the test. Alternative to practical exams, where students do a written paper instead, are an option. However, such written exams do not require students to manipulate equipment and there is potential for negative washback. Our study uses a critical literature review to explore virtual labs as a potential means to assess science practical skills. Virtual labs are a popular teaching tool, however, in assessment they have received less attention. We focused on exploring the validity of virtual labs for the summative assessment of science practical skills. Using the Crooks et al. (1996) chain model as a theoretical framework, we elucidate threats, benefits and opportunities for the validity of virtual labs in summative assessment comparing physical labs and alternative to practical exams. Our review used relevant literature obtained through database searches, screened against criteria and coded using MAXQDA. We argue that virtual labs can potentially assess a subset of science practical skills, and because they require virtual manipulation of equipment, they represent an improvement over written examination. However, there are several threats to validity that would need to be carefully considered, including the impact on classroom practices. A key factor is the quality and design of the software, which needs to be designed to mimic physical practical assessment as closely as possible. Poor quality software design can lead to linear rather than open ended experiences, which can restrict the constructs being assessed. The impact on physical practical skills also needs considering, for example, whether the use of virtual labs in assessment would reduce the amount of real physical experimentation in the classroom. There is also the question as to whether certain practicals might be more suited to virtual labs than others, and whether this might influence the curriculum.

**Keywords:** Practical skills assessment, Virtual labs, Science, Secondary school, Validity

300	Aligning Educational Assessment to Curriculum and Classroom Experiences
301	<p><b>Evaluating the Impact of Formative Assessment Intervention and Experiences of Secondary Teachers in Teaching High-Order - Thinking Skills in Physics</b></p> <p><b>Dr. Evaristo Tukamuhabwa</b>  <b>Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB)</b>  <b>evaratukamuhabwa@gmail.com.</b></p> <p><b>Dr. Bashir Kishabale</b>  <b>Kyambogo University, Department of Curriculum.</b>  <b>Teaching, Instruction &amp;Media studies</b>  <b>bkishabale@kyu.ac.ug</b></p> <p>Formative assessment may be useful pedagogical practice to strengthen the teaching of high order thinking skills (HOTS) in physics. This study investigated the impact of a formative assessment intervention on students' achievements in HOTS physics tests (pre- and - post) when their teachers were supported to implement the instructional intervention and for secondary school teachers' if their practices in teaching HOTS have changed after intervention; finally teachers' experiences with the intervention. This study employed mixed methods, sequential embedded approach with single group, pretest, intervention (training), and post-test instruments. Data was gathered from 14 secondary schools involving 14 teachers and 280 Senior four secondary school students in Kabale District, Uganda. Students' test scores were used to measure the achievement in physical HOTS items along with classroom observations and interviewed the teachers' experiences. Students' achievement data were assessed for internal reliability and validity by applying Rasch Partial Credit Model (RPCM) followed by descriptive analysis and a one sample t-test. The observed and interviewed teacher data were analysed by categorising the content and thematic analysis, respectively. Results of student's achievement in physics HOTS items was found significantly improved from pre-test (1.61 logit, SD = 1.59) to post-testing (-1.61 logit, SD = 1.21), at <math>Z = 11.40</math>, <math>p = 0.00</math>. Post- intervention classroom observation showed that teachers practiced the integration and implementation of some formative assessment strategies. Teachers' experiences proved to be in support of formative assessment of higher- order- thinking skills as a pivotal to strengthen physics teaching. Teachers should continue applying the intervention strategies to allow students gain scientific skills for use in everyday life.</p> <p>Keywords: Formative assessment in physics, higher order thinking skills, intervention, secondary school physics teachers.</p>



**302 Teachers' Practices and Challenges in Implementing Formative Assessment in Tanzania's Competency-Based Curriculum for Secondary Education**

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The Education and Training Policy (ETP) of 2014, 2023 edition in Tanzania emphasizes the role of continuous assessment as a means to enhance teaching and learning under the competency-based curriculum (CBC). This curriculum advocates for the development of essential 21st century skills, including critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, and creativity. To support this, formative assessment is promoted through tasks such as practical activities, projects, and real-world problem-solving that provide continuous feedback to inform instruction and support student learning. Despite this policy direction, there exists a significant gap between the intended formative assessment practices and actual classroom implementation. Many secondary school teachers struggle to effectively integrate formative assessment into daily teaching due to various systemic challenges. This study investigates teachers' practices and the challenges they face in implementing formative assessment in alignment with the CBC objectives. Using a survey research design, data were collected through questionnaires administered to 1,210 randomly selected secondary school teachers across Tanzania. Data analysis was conducted using simple frequency counts, mean, scores, and percentages. The findings revealed that while 75% (908 teachers) recognize the importance of formative assessment, only 50% (605 teachers) regularly incorporate it into weekly instruction. Moreover, only 55% (666 teachers) believe the current curriculum moderately supports formative assessment practices. Key challenges identified include lack of teacher training (51%, 617 teachers), large class sizes (73%, 883 teachers), limited instructional time (45%, 545 teachers), inadequate teaching and learning resources (49%, 593 teachers), and insufficient administrative or policy support (61%, 738 teachers). These gaps highlight a misalignment between policy intent and practical implementation. To bridge these gaps, teachers recommend targeted interventions including professional development workshops (78%, 944 teachers), increased provision of teaching resources (80%, 968 teachers), reduced workload (67%, 810 teachers), and stronger administrative support (55%, 666 teachers). The study underscores the need for a coherent strategy that integrates formative assessment into instructional practice through policy support, teacher training, and resource allocation to realize the transformative goals of the CBC.

### 303 The Early Years School Based Assessment Experience in Kenya

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This study aimed at investigating learners' acquisition of competencies at Early Years Education in Kenya. A descriptive survey design was adapted to assess, analyse and report on the performance levels demonstrated at Grade 3 in the Competency Based Curriculum. The target population was all the Grade 3 learners registered in the age-based pathway of Competency Based Curriculum in Kenya in the year 2024. A census and rather than a sample enabled 1,304,355 learners to participate in the study. The constructivism and Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Theories provided the theoretical premise, and the Revised blooms taxonomy was applied in English and Integrated learning Activities while in Mathematics activities the Depth of Knowledge was used in developing the Table of Specifications to balance items in terms of cognitive and difficulty levels. The test items were pretested for reliability and an item analysis for difficulty and discrimination to inform review. The test items were categorized into strands and sub strands per subject and learners' performance reported at four performance levels of expectation: Below, Approaching, meeting and exceeding Expectations The descriptors were derived from the intended learning outcomes as spelt out in the Curriculum designs. The scoring of learners' work was done by the teachers as guided by rubrics provided by KNEC. Analysis of the scores was found to be objective as the frequency of learners performing at the various level was depicted an almost normal distribution. However, the scope of score analysis at KEYA was limited as learners' performance was reported in only the four performance levels. Similar School Based Assessment at Grades 4 and 5 resonate the objectivity in scoring. The analysis of performance was done using frequencies and means per strand and subject. The study's findings reveal that more than half of the learners were Meeting Expectation in all the tasks assessed in English activities. In Mathematics activities, in the sub strands Mass and Capacity and Position and direction, Shapes, relatively high proportion of learners performed at Meeting Expectation with 79.22% and 88.40% respectively. Majority of learners in ILA performed at Meeting and Exceeding Expectation in five out of eight tasks.

**Key words:** Competency, Performance, Expectations, School based Assessment

**304 Competence-Based Curriculum Assessment Approaches and Classroom Experience in Lower Secondary Schools in Eastern Region of Uganda**

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The study examined the influence of competence-based curriculum assessment approaches on classroom experiences in lower secondary schools in the eastern region of Uganda. The study was guided by three research objectives which are: to examine the influence of formative assessment on classroom experience; to assess the impact of summative assessment on classroom experience; and to examine the influence of diagnostic assessment on classroom experience in lower secondary schools in the eastern region of Uganda. The study employed a cross-sectional survey design and adopted both qualitative and quantitative methods. The study population comprised 220 participants, and a sample of 136 respondents was selected, including students, teachers, and school administrators. Data were collected using questionnaires and interview guides. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS to generate descriptive and inferential statistics, while qualitative data were analyzed using thematic content analysis. The findings revealed that 63.9% of respondents regularly gave feedback during lessons, 68.4% used peer assessment, and 67.7% reported adjusting teaching methods based on formative assessments. However, 73.5% disagreed that formative assessments aligned with curriculum competencies. Formative assessment showed a statistically significant positive relationship with classroom experience ( $r = .508$ ,  $p < .01$ ). In relation to summative assessment, 69.9% of respondents used it to evaluate achievement and 80.8% aligned their tests with curriculum outcomes, though 65.5% did not share results with learners for reflection. Summative assessment had a strong positive correlation with classroom experience ( $r = .795$ ,  $p < .01$ ). Regarding diagnostic assessment, only 37.5% conducted it at the start of a topic, and 72% did not use past data to inform teaching. Nonetheless, 69.9% agreed that diagnostic tests improved lesson planning, and the correlation with classroom experience was moderate but significant ( $r = .342$ ,  $p < .01$ ). The study concluded that while competence-based assessments positively influence classroom experiences, gaps remain in learner involvement, curriculum alignment, and the application of assessment results. It was recommended that schools strengthen professional development in formative and diagnostic practices, enhance student participation in the assessment process, and ensure curriculum-aligned and inclusive evaluation strategies for improved teaching and learning outcomes.

**Keywords:** formative assessment, summative assessment, diagnostic assessment, competence-based curriculum, classroom experience, lower secondary schools.

**305 Restructuring Educational Assessment Practices in Ugandan Secondary Schools: Bridging the Gap between 21st-Century Skills, Curriculum Objectives and Classroom Experiences**

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In 2020, Uganda introduced a Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) for Lower Secondary Education to develop 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and digital literacy. This study assessed current assessment practices, institutional challenges, and alignment between UNEB and school-level mock exams. A convergent parallel mixedmethods design was used. Quantitative data were collected from 123 UNEB item writers, who were selected purposively based on their dual role as experienced teachers and items writers. They were selected across 17 sub-regions of Uganda and 8 subject groups. Qualitative data included content analysis of 2024 UNEB and mock exam papers and curriculum syllabi. Descriptive statistics and ANOVA were computed using SPSS, while qualitative data were analyzed using Bloom's Revised Taxonomy and a 21st-century skills framework. Findings revealed major institutional challenges: teacher shortages (65.4%), overcrowded classrooms (54.5%), inadequate laboratories (66.7%), and limited ICT access (41.5%), all hindering effective assessment. Teachers effectively integrated critical thinking and problem-solving, but collaboration, affective skills, and digital literacy remained under-assessed. Project-based learning was inconsistently implemented, and alternative tools like peer/self-assessment and portfolios were underutilized. Comparative analysis showed UNEB examination better aligned with 21st-century skills than mock exams, especially in assessing cognitive domains, though both neglected affective and psychomotor domains. However, both well assessed critical thinking, problem solving and communication but under assessed Smathematical, ICT/digital literacy and collaboration skills. ANOVA showed no significant difference between the two, revealing systemic issues. Policy recommendations include reducing teacher workload, enhancing infrastructure, strengthening ICT integration, institutionalizing project-basedlearning, and improving teacher training in authentic assessments. The study concludes that while CBC implementation shows progress, institutional reforms are essential for achieving its competency-based goals.

**Keywords:** Competency-Based Curriculum, skills of the 21st century, Curriculum Assessment, Evaluation, and Secondary Education.

## 306 Adapting Scenario Based Assessments for School Based Assessment of 21st Century Skills: The ALiVE Experience

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How to assess twenty-first century skills continues to challenge measurement experts in education. Scenario-Based Assessment (SBA), a strategy used in the Assessment of Life skills and Values in East Africa (ALiVE) project, offers some benefits for these performance-based skills. In this article, SBA will be defined and described together with a discussion of assumptions made in developing such assessments. The creation of tools for assessing three life skills and the value of respect will be used to illustrate issues encountered in the process. The daily life activities of adolescents in home, school and community environments in East Africa provided the substance for stimulus scenarios to which adolescents responded in this large-scale assessment program of more than 45,000 adolescents. The technical processes undertaken by the test development team will be described across stages of idea creation, think aloud, and dry run; culminating in a pilot in Kenya in order to generate data for reviewing scale development before the large-scale assessment. Through this process, lessons were learnt that may inform future use of SBA in contexts like those in which ALiVE operate, including school-based assessments. In Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, education is undergoing reform to include values and competencies as integral components of learning (Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development, 2017). The inclusion of competencies and values as part of the learning process broadens and challenges the form and use of assessment as these newly adopted competencies will require different assessment mechanisms. The use of SBA is presented as a different approach that is applicable to less content-focused learning where there is no absolute range of performance, since what is being assessed are naturally occurring competencies. Sabatini et al. (2019) argue that there is need to move beyond the constraints of the traditional passage and question format of reading comprehension tests and instead use scenarios to allow individuals the opportunities for self-expression. The development of SBA tasks needs to be undertaken in such a way that the tasks target the intended population in a known context, and for a known purpose.

**307 Improving Learning through Effective Classroom-Based Assessment: Insights from Primary Schools**

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This study was prompted by consistently low Primary School Leaving Examinations (PSLE) performance from 2020 – 2022. Most candidates performed at the average of grade C and D instead of grade A and B. This means there is inconsistency between the curriculum intents and quality of learning among the pupils. So, the aim of the study was to find out to what extent the classroom-based assessment done by teachers at school play role in enhancing learning for pupils. Specifically, this study dealt with the following objectives: To identify the types of questions used by teachers in enhancing learning; to find out the assessment criteria used by teachers in classroom for enhancing learning; and to find out the approaches used by teachers for monitoring learning outcomes as strategy for enhancing learning. This was a case study sampling three primary schools based on urban, sub-urban and rural areas. The study used mixed research methods in its approach. The instruments used for data collection were observation, questionnaires, documentary review and interview. Sample for this study which included teachers and students was selected by use of stratified -random sampling and purposeful sampling techniques. The findings showed that the assessment done in classrooms was not effective to the extent of enabling pupils to perform at A and B grades. Ineffective classroom-based assessment was caused by teachers to a great deal to use inadequate assessment activities and tools, irrelevant assessment tools, inadequate assessment criteria and bad approaches when assessing learners, something that led to majority candidates in PSLE to perform at C and D grades. For that matter, the study concluded that the role of classroom-based assessment in improving learning at schools was low. Hence, it recommended the assessment bodies to build capacity to teachers on how to conduct effective classroom-based assessment for enhancing pupils' learning.



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## Enhancing the Integrity of High-Stakes Science Practicals: The Role of ZIMSEC Science Kits in Standardizing Assessment in Secondary Education in Zimbabwe

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This study examines the impact of the Zimbabwe School Examinations Council (ZIMSEC) implementing standardized, confidential science kits on the fairness and standardization of high-stakes science practical examinations at both Ordinary and Advanced Levels. This initiative addressed ongoing disparities in access to practical science resources among secondary schools, promoting equity, validity, and consistency in assessing students' scientific competencies. Using a mixed-methods research design, the study combines data collected through structured surveys, semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions involving examiners, school administrators, science teachers, and students. Comparative analyses and logistical evaluations were conducted to assess the effectiveness of the science kit model in improving examination delivery and student outcomes. The findings indicate that providing standardized science kits has led to measurable improvements in students' practical examination performance, with an average increase of 4.20% at the ordinary level and 5.33% at the Advanced level observed across the sampled examination centers. This suggests that practical science performance has generally improved across both levels, with stronger gains seen at the Advanced Level, likely due to more mature learners and smaller class sizes. Participants attributed these gains to the enhanced uniformity in examination conditions created by the controlled use of standardized materials, timely preparation, and responsive support from ZIMSEC. Examiners and educators noted that the kits simplified assessment preparation and contributed to procedural consistency across different school contexts. Despite these positive outcomes, the study highlights persistent challenges, including logistical issues in nationwide kit distribution and concerns regarding the long-term financial sustainability of the initiative. Based on these findings, the study recommends establishing a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation framework, expanding professional development programs for science educators, refining distribution mechanisms strategically, and diversifying funding sources. In conclusion, ZIMSEC's science kit initiative represents a scalable and contextually relevant model for enhancing the quality, equity, and reliability of science practical assessments in Zimbabwe and possibly other low-resource education systems.

**Keywords:** fair assessment, standardization, Science Practical Examinations, Standardized Assessment, High-Stakes Testing, ZIMSEC, Educational Equity, Practical Skills Development, Teacher Support and Training.

**309 Exploring Teachers' and Learners' Perceptions of Curriculum, Teaching and Assessment in Lesotho Advanced Secondary Certificate (LASC) Pilot Program**

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The Lesotho Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) has introduced a new Grade 12 qualification named Lesotho Advanced Secondary Certificate (LASC). It follows a one-year program designed to bridge the gap between ordinary level and tertiary level. It is currently in the piloting phase at some selected schools in Lesotho since February 2025. Being a new program, LASC was exposed to challenges such as some selected pilot schools declining to implement it, and generally low enrolment in schools where piloting is underway. It is a concern on what level of preparedness the teachers and learners at such pilot schools are, in terms of the relevance of the curriculum, usefulness of the teaching and assessment frameworks used in the classrooms, and the availability of necessary resources required for the program to continue successfully till completion. It was also important to wonder whether teachers and learners understand LASC well, including its benefits to both teachers and learners, and their general impressions about it. The purpose of the study was to investigate the teachers' and learners' perceptions regarding LASC curriculum, teaching and assessment at pilot schools in order to assess their readiness. The research question focused on teachers and learners' readiness for LASC including their perceptions in aligning assessment with curriculum in their day-to-day classroom practices. It also explored whether they have encountered any challenges, including the mitigation strategies implemented. The study followed a qualitative approach whereby questionnaires which required a mixture of objective and open-ended responses based on the research question were administered to LASC pilot schools' teachers and learners, for them to complete. Data was collected from 10 teachers and 10 learners who were purposively sampled. Thematic analysis was then done to identify patterns in the responses which were then categorized into two major themes, benefits and challenges of LASC. The study results after analysis indicate an appreciation of a well-designed curriculum, an average level of preparedness for LASC, a need for more teachers' capacitation and more dissemination of knowledge about LASC, including a need for motivational and career guidance programmes especially to learners. In conclusion the study was meant to inform MOET on how prepared schools were, in order to map strategies carefully for monitoring the program progress.

**Keywords:** perceptions, LASC, pilot schools, preparedness, assessment, curriculum, mitigation strategies, capacitation, monitoring

**310 Reporting learners' competencies in Junior School, Kajiado North, Kenya**

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The study examined the reporting of learner's competencies in Junior School, Kajiado North, Kenya. The specific objectives of the study were to :find out the socio demographic characteristics of teachers and how it influences reporting of learners competencies in Junior school :find out the availability and use of curriculum designs in learning and assessment process: establish whether the teacher's have been retooled in Assessment ;find out the type of assessment tools designed for classroom assessment ; examine Assessment related challenges experienced by the teachers and how it affects reporting of learners competencies in Junior school. Assessment feedback is critical for accountability and improving quality learning. Formative assessment is therefore important in determining learners' competencies and potential. The Kenya National Examinations Council develops school-based assessment to provide feedback to all relevant stakeholders and for accountability purposes and to make informed decisions. The teachers are also expected to design classroom assessments for feedback and improve on the mode of instruction. The study was guided by Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligence. Ex post facto research design was adopted. The study adopted a mixed approach and targeted 16 public schools, and 8 public schools were purposively sampled. A total of 80 Junior school teachers ,10 Junior school teachers from each of the selected schools. Observation and interview schedule were used for data collection. Descriptive statistics was used for data analysis and presented in the tables and figures. The study findings revealed that the teacher' s capacity in Assessment was inadequate and had a challenge in designing classroom assessments and did not have capacity to report effectively on learners' competencies, teacher-learner ratio was high that affected the identification of learner's potential in preparation for the selection of different pathways. Continuous professional development for teachers in Junior school is recommended.

**Keywords:** Accountability, Assessment records, Curriculum designs, Junior School, Pathways

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# **Unpacking Teachers' Perspectives on Aligning High-stakes Examinations to Curriculum and Classroom Experiences at the School Leaving Qualification in Eswatini**

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The subject on aligning summative assessments to curriculum and classroom experiences has attracted the interest of several scholars. Scholars have addressed the relationship between high-stakes examinations with the curriculum and classroom experiences from different perspectives. One major challenge for assessment bodies is aligning summative assessments to curriculum and classroom experiences. The Examinations Council of Eswatini (ECESWA) offers high-stakes examinations at the school leaving qualification. The effective alignment of high-stakes examinations to the curriculum and classroom practice is worthy of exploration for both practicing teachers and the ECESWA. Guided by Biggs' (1996) constructive alignment theory, this paper describes teachers perceptions on aligning high-stakes examinations to the curriculum and classroom experiences at the school leaving qualification. Using the qualitative approach the author conducts an in-depth analysis to show how high-stakes examinations are aligned to the curriculum and classroom experiences in Eswatini. Purposive and convenience sampling methods were used to identify and select teachers as key informants for this study. Using a combination of structured and in-depth interviews and focused group discussions, teachers' views on the alignment of high-stakes examinations to the curriculum and classroom experiences at the school leaving qualification in Eswatini were documented. Data was analysed using a narrative approach. The study revealed that high-stakes examinations across the school leaving curricula were constructively aligned to the curriculum, and allowed students to demonstrate what they know and can do based on their learning experiences. By achieving alignment, high-stakes examinations have become integrated into the curriculum and guide the teaching and learning process thus becoming fair, reliable and valid. The study concludes that constructively aligned high-stakes examinations in Eswatini emphasise the centrality of the intended learning outcomes while also determining teaching and learning. This resonates with the argument that a 'constructively aligned' assessment is one in which the intended learning outcomes articulate what students should know and be able to do on completing a course. The paper recommends that high-stakes examinations continue to evolve to meet the ever changing needs of the curriculum and classroom experiences to help towards student achievement.

**Keywords:** summative assessment, curriculum, constructive alignment theory, classroom experience

**312 Are the National Senior Certificate (NSC) Examinations Predictable? Insights from Economics and Geography (2020–2024)**

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This study examines the predictability of Economics and Geography question papers administered by the Department of Basic Education (DBE) from 2020 to 2024 and the impact on the credibility and fairness of the National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations. Predictability in high-stakes assessments can limit opportunities for learners to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills, essential for higher education and the workplace. Economics and Geography were selected due to consistent upward performance trends, raising concerns about whether recurring patterns in question papers contribute to these outcomes. While predictability is widely acknowledged as a potential issue, the relationship with external moderation and broader implications for assessment integrity remain underexplored. This qualitative study employs document analysis and semi-structured interviews to assess the extent of predictability in NSC Economics and Geography papers. Document analysis includes a review of question papers, CAPS documents, moderation instruments, post-exam reports, and Umalusi's quality assurance reports. Interviews with examiners and moderators provide additional insights into challenges and opportunities in question paper development and moderation. Findings indicate that NSC Economics and Geography examinations adhere to structured assessment principles, ensuring fairness and alignment with the curriculum. Predictability exists but does not necessarily compromise validity. Instead, structured formats enhance consistency while avoiding direct question repetition, which has been mitigated through moderation (Brown & Abrahams, 2023). Geography's format familiarity influenced engagement, while the 2024 restructuring of papers may have improved performance (Smith, 2022; Umalusi, 2024). However, while CAPS provides a clear framework, the prescriptive nature may inadvertently reinforce predictability in question papers. The study highlights the need for enhanced moderation strategies to balance structure with innovation in question design. Recommendations include strengthening external moderation, implementing a pre-writing phase, and adopting item banking to improve quality assurance and reduce unintended predictability.

**Keywords:** Predictability, National Senior Certificate, Department of Basic Education, Credibility, Integrity, Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement

**313 Alignment of Classroom Instruction with Assessment: The Role of Professional Teacher Training and Years of Teaching Experience**

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The purpose of this study was to investigate whether or not professional teacher training and years of teaching experience has a role for aligning classroom instruction with assessment. 215 participant teachers were selected using systematic random sampling technique from fourteen departments of Hawassa University. In addition, 22 teachers were observed while teaching in the classroom. Adapted questionnaire instrument for measuring service quality of management institutions [(INSTAQUAL (Kumar, 2014); Assessment Experience Questionnaire (AEQ)], Shihab Jimma (2011); Assessment for Learning Measurement Instrument (AfLMI), Larry, Michael and Zita, (2013)] and self-developed observation items were employed to gather data. The data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential analysis procedures. The descriptive analysis as a whole revealed nearly similar mean score for awareness and skill of implementing the alignment of classroom instruction with assessment. Independent sample t-test yielded statistically significant difference between teachers who were professionally trained and untrained along the dimensions of awareness and skill of implementing the alignment of classroom instruction with assessment. One way analysis of variance depicted as there was no statistically significant difference in the awareness and skill of implementing the alignment because of the level of teachers' professional training (Certificate, Diploma, Bachelor Degree, Master's Degree and PhD). Similarly, as to the result of one way analysis of variance, statistically significant difference was not found in the awareness and skill of implementing the alignment of classroom instruction with assessment along the dimensions of years of teaching experience. It was recommended that emphasis should be given to enhance teachers' awareness and skill of implementing the alignment between classroom instruction and assessment, strategies should be designed to minimize the challenging factors that hinder the practical implementation of the alignment, and frequent capacity building strategies supported by strong supervision regarding the progress seems crucial. Capacity building strategies supported y strong supervision regarding the progress seems crucial.

**Key terms:** Alignment, professional teacher training, teaching experience, instructional activity, instructional assessment,



**314 Assessment of the Implementation of School-Based Assessment in Grade 12 Mathematics: A Case of the Gauteng Province Department of Basic Education in South Africa**

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The study aimed to investigate the utilisation of school-based assessment (SBA) in Grade 12 mathematics from the perspective of educators within South Africa's Gauteng Department of Basic Education. Adopting a mixed-method sequential exploratory research design, the study was conducted in two phases. The first phase employed a qualitative approach, involving in-depth interviews with Grade 12 mathematics educator\|s to explore the SBA framework, its implementation, associated challenges, and educators' recommendations. Semi-structured questions guided the discussions, and thematic analysis was used to identify recurring patterns and themes in the responses. Findings from the qualitative phase informed the development of a questionnaire, which was subsequently administered to a separate group of 38 teachers in the second, quantitative phase of the study. This phase also included an analysis of learner performance data, utilising numerical summary measures, graphical representations, and Pearson chi-square tests to examine statistical relationships. The study found that, despite various implementation challenges, SBA plays a vital role in mathematics education in South Africa and has a significant positive impact on learners' likelihood of passing Grade 12 mathematics. Additionally, the research proposed an SBA systemic change model comprising seven key conditions, emphasising stakeholder involvement, input in decision-making, and effective relationship management as essential elements. The study suggests that educational authorities should shift the focus from examinations to enhancing teaching and learning to ensure the successful implementation of SBA in Grade 12 mathematics.

**Key words:** Mathematics Education, School-based assessment, Assessment, High-Stakes examination, Mathematics teachers' perspectives on SBA, Accountability, Compliance and SBA, SBA in the 21st century

**400 Ensuring Inclusive Assessment Practices to Address Diverse Learners' Abilities, Talents and Competencies.**

**401 Differentiated Assessment implementation between Quintiles 1-3 and 4-5 Primary schools in South Africa: Teachers' perspectives.**

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The 2011 Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) mandates that South African schools implement a uniform curriculum while adapting delivery and assessment methods to accommodate all learners. This requirement recognises the limitations of traditional assessment practices, which often fail to account for learners' diverse talents, abilities, and competencies. Despite the welldocumented benefits for learners, the adoption of differentiated assessment has not been as widespread as expected. The literature identifies several potential reasons for this limited adoption, including ineffective school organisation and functioning, insufficient resources and materials, inadequate teacher training, a curriculum that lacks clarity on learning outcomes, insufficient parental support, and teacher perceptions. In the South African context, these factors are likely influenced by the socioeconomic status of the schools. As such, this study aims to compare teachers' perspectives in South African primary schools across quintiles 1 to 5 regarding the degree of implementation of differentiated assessment. Through comparative analysis, this study seeks to identify the strategies and factors influencing differentiated assessment, where it is implemented and where it is not implemented, and the obstacles that hinder its delivery. A mixed-method approach will be utilised for data collection. An online questionnaire will be distributed to primary school teachers across the quintiles, wherein telephonic and/or face-to-face interviews will be used to probe the questionnaire results further. The schools identified for participation were sourced from the DBE EMIS database, which provides various contact details and the jurisdictions of the schools. The sample size targeted for the survey is 50 primary school teachers representing 25 teachers from quintiles 1-3 and 25 teachers from quintiles 4-5. The findings are anticipated to demonstrate that while differentiated assessment, as advocated by policy, aims to be inclusive and expansive, its practical implementation is not uniform across the quintiles. Instead, the extent of implementation is arguably influenced by the socioeconomic factors of the schools. Ultimately, the insights from the study seek to contribute to the literature by encouraging debate and discourse concerning best practices for the application of differentiated assessment across quintiles.

Keywords: Differentiated assessment, teachers, quintile, best practice, inclusive education

**402 Primacy and Recency Effects in Learning: Teachers' Perceptions and Influencing Factors of Slow Learner Performance in Uganda**

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This study explored teachers' perceptions of recency and primacy effects among slow learners in Ugandan schools, focusing on the key personal, environmental, cognitive, and emotional factors influencing slow learning. A cross-sectional survey design was adopted, targeting a sample of 384 primary school teachers selected from 112 public schools across 16 sub-regions in Uganda. A predominantly quantitative research approach was adopted, supported by qualitative insights from open-ended responses. The sample was drawn from an estimated national population of 135,397 public primary school teachers using a stratified, three-stage cluster random sampling design. Data were collected using a researcher-developed structured questionnaire comprising four-point Likert-scale items and open-ended questions. Quantitative data were analysed using STATA 18, applying descriptive statistics and Pearson's Chi-square tests at the 5% significance level to examine associations across teacher demographics. Findings reveal that most teachers recognise the presence of recency and primacy effects among slow learners. While teacher attitudes towards these learners were largely positive, undiagnosed physical impairments emerged as the most significant personal contributor to slow learning. Environmental factors such as unsupportive home learning conditions, and emotional challenges including parental neglect and low learner self-esteem, were also highlighted. Teachers emphasised the importance of inclusive strategies such as differentiated instruction, individualised support, targeted counselling, and fostering parental engagement. Teachers perceive recency and primacy effects as significant cognitive phenomena affecting classroom performance among slow learners. Undiagnosed physical disabilities, negative parental attitudes, and poor home learning environments are viewed as key contributors to slow learning. To support inclusive assessment and learning, teachers recommend increased parental engagement, the use of differentiated teaching strategies, and improved school–community collaboration. The study concludes that empowering teachers through targeted professional development and fostering school-based support structures is critical to ensuring equitable learning and assessment opportunities for all learners, including those who are slow to learn.

**Keywords:** Slow learners, primacy effect, recency effect, teacher perceptions, learning barriers

**403 Language of Instruction and Its Influence on Educational Outcomes and Cultural Inclusion in Ethiopia: A Systematic Review**

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Modern education in Ethiopia began in 1908, and the curriculum predominantly used Amharic and foreign languages for instruction. The 1994 Ethiopian Education and Training Policy announced a multilingual education model for political and pedagogical benefits. However, only 33 languages have been adopted as teaching mediums. The primary objective of this review was to appraise the efficacy and identify the barriers associated with the language of instruction in Ethiopia. A systematic literature review was conducted on studies published from 2015 to 2024 across Scopus, Sciencedirect and Springerlink databases. The PRISMA 2020 checklist was used to ensure a rigorous and transparent review process. Written in English or Amharic, peer-reviewed, educational policies and related to the mother tongue instruction were used as inclusion criteria. Data extraction and quality assessment were performed independently by the authors. Eleven studies met the inclusion criteria and selected for review. Key findings of this study are improved literacy scores, reading ability, comprehension, enthusiasm for reading, inclusivity, and supported a multilingual educational model in Ethiopia. However, its implementation often prioritizes political interests over pedagogical benefits. Thus, it is recommended that policy implementation be inclusive, with a focus on maximizing pedagogical benefits for all demographic groups.

**Keywords:** Ethiopia, Instructional Language, Language Policy, Mother Tongue, Multilingual Education

**404 Leveraging assessment data for equity in agricultural examination between urban and rural examinees in Botswana**

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The Botswana junior certificate examination agriculture results persistently show that there is difference in academic performance between urban and rural examinees. This study examines the differential item functioning of Botswana agriculture national junior certificate examination based on school location. The study adopted the descriptive research design utilising the census approach to examine 40 multiple choice item responses from 40343 examinees for the year 2018. Secondary data on candidates' responses to each item were obtained from Botswana Examination Council (BEC). The 3-parameter logistic model of Item Response Theory (IRT) was utilised for purposes of data analysis. Raju's procedure was employed for the DIF determination using DifR package within the R-studio environment. The study revealed that items had varied levels of difficulty, 15% of the items exhibited poor discrimination, and some items had high guessing indices. It was also revealed that agriculture science items had both uniform and nonuniform DIF across demographic variables. Furthermore, findings indicate that 3 items show DIF regarding school location in the 2018 BEC examination. Whereas 2 items favoured students from rural schools (i.e., Q21, Q24), 1 item favoured students from urban schools (Q32). These findings offer critical implications for educational policymakers, curriculum designers, and assessment practitioners in Botswana, emphasizing the need to leverage educational assessment data inclusive assessment practices. The study concludes resource disparities and different agricultural exposures between rural and urban examinees contribute to most DIF items. It was recommended that BEC should consider validating their examination items using Item Response Theory.

**Keywords:** Item Response Theory, Raju, Botswana junior certificate examination, Logistic model, Academic Performance

**405 Inclusive Assessment Strategies for Diverse Learners in Uganda's TVET System.**

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This study explored inclusive assessment strategies in Uganda's Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) system, focusing on addressing the diverse needs, abilities, and competencies of learners. Recognizing the limitations of traditional theory-based assessments, the research investigated alternative approaches that better capture learners' practical skills for labor market relevance. Using a mixed-methods approach, data were collected from 322 respondents selected from a population of 2,000 TVET students, educators, and policymakers. Structured questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and document reviews were used. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS (descriptive statistics, T-tests, ANOVA, regression analysis, and Chi-square tests), while qualitative data were thematically analyzed. The findings revealed that students exposed to project-based assessments scored significantly higher (Mean = 78.4, SD = 5.7) than those assessed through traditional exams (Mean = 71.2, SD = 6.4), with a statistically significant difference (T-test,  $p < 0.001$ ). ANOVA results showed a significant effect of exposure to performance-based assessments on practical skills development  $F(2,397) = 5.24$ ,  $p = 0.006$ , with students frequently exposed scoring the highest (Mean = 81.3). Regression analysis indicated that technology access significantly predicted student performance ( $\beta = 0.41$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ,  $R^2 = 0.34$ ). Chi-square results highlighted significant differences in barriers faced by rural versus urban institutions ( $\chi^2 = 8.72$ ,  $p = 0.013$ ), with rural institutions facing greater challenges. Qualitative findings confirmed gaps in educator training, institutional support, and technological access, particularly in rural areas. The study concluded that adopting inclusive, competency-based assessments, supported by technology and educator capacity building, is critical for nurturing a skilled and inclusive workforce. Recommendations included strengthening teacher training, expanding technological infrastructure, developing a national inclusive assessment policy, and fostering a cultural shift toward valuing practical skills. Future research should examine the long-term effects of inclusive assessment strategies on graduates' employability and socio-economic advancement.

**Keywords:** Inclusive assessment, Diverse learners, TVET, Competency-based education, Technology integration, Uganda.



**406 Understanding Inclusive Assessment: Perspectives and Practices in Basic Education for Diverse Learners in Tanzania**

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Assessment is a foundational element in education, helping identify students' strengths, areas of need, and appropriate learning support strategies. For learners with disabilities, traditional assessment methods often fail to capture their full potential. This paper examines inclusive school readiness and the collaborative role of parents and teachers in assessment practices within Tanzanian schools. Data from 42 schools reveal that while teachers employ diverse assessment strategies, technological integration remains limited. Findings underscore the necessity of capacity-building and resource allocation for inclusive assessment tools. This paper advocates for flexible, authentic assessment methods and enhanced stakeholder engagement to support learners with disabilities.

**Keywords:** Inclusive education, inclusive assessment, assessment, learners with disabilities.

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# **Exploring Teachers' Perspectives, Practices and Challenges on Inclusive Classrooms Assessment in the Mainstream Classrooms**

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Inclusion in classroom assessment is a complex and multidimensional construct that should not assumed to apply only to learners with physical special needs. limiting inclusion can make it hard for teachers to meet the students' diverse learning needs in the classrooms with learners without formally identified special needs. These classrooms comprise students with unique cognitive learning abilities, styles, backgrounds, and experiences. This qualitative multiple case research design study explored teachers' perspectives, practices, and challenges in mainstream classrooms in the context of inclusive assessment for learners without formally identified special needs. Twelve purposively selected Mathematics and Science teachers from three high schools in Maseru, Lesotho participated. The schools were purposively selected on their performance (high, average and low) in the Lesotho General Certificate Secondary Education (LGCSE) national examinations. The study was framed by Box, Skoog & Dabbs (2015) development model of Personal Practice Assessment Theories (PPATs), which assisted the researcher to describe teachers' assessment purpose and influence of the contextual elements on their classroom practices. Data generated through the online open-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interviews was thematically analysed. The findings revealed that while teachers have positive perspectives on learner diversity and inclusive classroom assessment, and perceive formative classroom assessment purpose, they dominantly use tradition methods focused more on the product that the learning process: individual written work, quizzes and tests. The finding also revealed that teachers perceived themselves as inadequately competent to address the diverse learners' cognitive abilities and further revealed that teachers' limited assessment knowledge and skills, lack of time, pressure to cover syllabus content, and large class sizes as challenges constraining teachers' classrooms assessment practices in responding to learner diversity. It is recommended that teachers development institutions should consider means to equip teachers with alternative contemporary and differentiated assessment practices that cater for diverse learners' needs, thereby addressing shortcomings in their practices.

**Keywords:** diversity, inclusion, classroom assessment, teachers' perspectives, and practices.

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## **Towards Equitable Learning: Designing Bilingual Assessment Frameworks for Multilingual Contexts**

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As bilingual education gains traction worldwide—particularly in contexts of decolonisation, linguistic diversity, and inclusive pedagogy—the need for assessment practices that align with bilingual principles has become urgent. Traditional monolingual assessments often fail to capture the full range of multilingual learners’ capabilities, particularly when second language proficiency is still emerging. This paper presents the École et Langues Nationales (ELAN) initiative, which aims to improve the quality of education by promoting the joint use of French and national languages as mediums of instruction. The goal is to ensure quality, inclusive education that respects linguistic diversity. ELAN supports countries in adopting bilingual education, and as a next step, it seeks to reform learning assessments to better evaluate the knowledge and skills of learners who speak a non-dominant language at home.

**Keywords:** bilingual education, multilingual assessment, ELAN, translanguaging, language of instruction.

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**Inclusive Assessment Practices to Address Diverse Learners' Abilities, Talents, and Competencies taking JAMB as a case study**

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Inclusive assessment is an art of teaching that recognizes and accommodates learner's diverse abilities and competencies from multi-cultural background. In Nigeria, the concept of teaching is characterized by linguistics, ethnicity and socio-economic diversity, therefore, implementing inclusive assessment strategies is crucial for equity. The Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) as an examination body is saddled with the responsibility of scrutinizing and placement of qualified students into various programmes of learning in tertiary institutions across the country. Traditional assessment models like the Paper and Pencil Test (PPT) model previously implored JAMB often fail to capture the full spectrum of learners' abilities, talents, and competencies, particularly those from diverse backgrounds. This paper explores the gradual implementation of inclusive assessments of candidates by JAMB using summative and formative models to capture diverse learners' abilities and competencies. . It examines the limitations of standardized assessments and advocates for a shift towards multifaceted approaches that promote equity, fairness and accessibility similar to that practiced in China and Japan. The paper concludes with recommendations for professional development, inclusion of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools and policy changes that support the widespread adoption of inclusive assessment practices.

**Keywords:** Assessment, JAMB, Inclusive, Strategies, Education

**410 Inclusive Education: Are We on the Right Track? Insights from Sauti Zetu (Our Voice) Project in Tanzania**

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Education for all has been a core priority for Tanzania since independence. The country ratified the Salamanca Statement in 1994 and, in 2009, ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol. In alignment with these commitments, the government has undertaken significant policy shifts and implemented various measures, including the formulation of three consecutive National Strategies on Inclusive Education: the first (2009–2017), the second (2018–2021), and the third (2021/22–2025/26). The current strategy builds on past achievements while addressing national priorities and emerging challenges in inclusive education. Civil society organizations (CSOs) have played a pivotal role in championing the implementation of inclusive education strategies through direct support to schools, research, and advocacy. The ongoing strategy has gained significant traction, with a specific objective integrated into the Five-Year Education Sector Development Plan (ESDP). In this context, CSOs under the Regional Education Learning Initiative Africa (RELI Africa) launched an initiative called Sauti Zetu (“Our Voice” in English), aimed at holding the government accountable for delivering inclusive education. The consortium, comprising six organizations operating across different local authorities, shares a common goal: promoting citizen engagement, enhancing transparency, and strengthening government responsiveness in implementing the National Strategy on Inclusive Education (2021/22–2025/26). Initial findings reveal that while the government is committed to promoting inclusive education, further efforts are needed to achieve its goals. Monitoring data highlights several challenges, including the lack of accessible school infrastructure, inadequate toilets for children with disabilities, absence of changing rooms for adolescent girls, and limited availability of assistive devices and teaching materials. Additionally, teachers’ capacity to implement inclusive education remains insufficient, leading to a lack of a culture of inclusivity in schools. The growing digital divide further exacerbates disparities, as innovative technologies continue to leave the most marginalized children behind. These findings were validated through discussions with school authorities and government officials, sparking debates at the district level on ensuring the right to inclusion is upheld. Schools were supported in developing School Improvement Plans to address identified gaps, empowering citizens to hold the government accountable for providing quality inclusive education for all children. At the 41st Annual Conference, of the Association for Educational Assessment in Africa (AEAA) the authors will present the successes of promoting social accountability monitoring to strengthen school leadership and improve learning outcomes for the most marginalized children.

**Keywords:** Inclusive Education, Transparency, Accountability, Education for All, Government responsiveness, and Citizen Participation.

**411 Project-Based Assessment and Transition of Learners with Intellectual Disabilities: Kenyan Teachers' Perceptions**

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Kenya's Competency-Based Education (CBE), guided by the Basic Education Curriculum Framework (BECF), aims to nurture learners' potential and equip them with 21st-century skills. The framework provides two curriculum pathways: Age-Based and Stage-Based. The Stage-Based Pathway is designed for learners with severe Intellectual Disabilities (ID) who cannot benefit from the regular curriculum, even with adaptations. This curriculum focuses on independent living skills and vocational competencies to enhance the smooth transition of learners into adulthood and the world of work. Since there has been no structured assessment in the previous education systems in Kenya, the framework advocates for Project-Based Assessment (PBA), an approach that gives such learners the opportunity to demonstrate their competencies. Consequently, since the inception of the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC), the Kenya National Examinations Council (KNEC) has annually developed standardized project-based tools to be administered by teachers in this curriculum pathway across the country. This study thus examines teachers' perceptions on the role of PBAs in learner transition, guided by the following objectives: to establish the teachers' perceptions on the role of PBAs in the transition of learners with intellectual disabilities; to establish the challenges in implementing PBAs effectively in Stage Based Curriculum. A descriptive survey design was adopted for this study that targeted teachers implementing the Stage-Based Curriculum. Purposive sampling identified ten counties across eight regions. Based on rural/urban location, stratified and random sampling selected two special schools and two special education units that implement the stage-based curriculum per county. Random sampling selected 10 teachers per school and 2 teachers per unit, while all the 40 headteachers of the sampled schools and units were purposively included, totalling 280 respondents. Data was collected through document analysis, interviews, observations, and structured questionnaires, and analysed using descriptive statistics. Findings revealed that teachers in stage-based curriculum perceive PBAs as effective tools for facilitating the acquisition of functional skills, enhancing communication competencies, promoting independence, and supporting individualized transition goals. However, limited learner conceptual capacities, need for individualized learner support, Communication barriers, limited skills retention in learners, inadequate teacher capacity, and insufficient resources emerged as some of the challenges affecting PBAs in special schools. To improve implementation of PBAs and enhance learner transition, the study recommends continuous retooling of teachers, provision of the necessary resources, parental empowerment and engagement, and development of relevant policies.

**Keywords:** Stage-Based Pathway, Intellectual Disabilities, Project-Based Assessments



**412 Inclusive And Digital-Driven Assessments: The Utme Approach In Addressing Diverse Learners' Abilities'**

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Digital technologies have increasingly altered the educational landscape since the era of COVID-19 with a profound impact on learning, as observed in the digital delivery of assessment by the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB). For JAMB, the wave of digitisation in assessment delivery began way before the COVID-19 era, specifically in 2015 where the existing paradigm was changed from the traditional mode of assessment via the Paper-Pencil Test (PPT) to the Computer Based Test (CBT). Accordingly, the Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME) became an inclusive and digital-driven assessment addressing diverse learners' abilities, talents and competencies and at the same time providing accessibility and credibility. The purpose of this paper, therefore, is to highlight the Board's assessment practices that have contributed to addressing diverse learners' abilities, talents and competencies providing accessibility and credibility through the deployment of the UTME. The data for the study was extracted from the application and admission statistics of PWDs from 2019-2023 UTME data, as well as the reports from examination officials in the 2024 and 2025 UTME across the six geo-political zones. The paper which is a position paper adopts the use of simple descriptive analysis as research method and the stratified purposive sampling technique where PWDs are extracted from the UTME registration and admission records between 2019 and 2023. Findings revealed that JAMB's digital assessment, the UTME has greatly widened the door of access to tertiary education in Nigeria by catering to the peculiarities of all candidates, reduced incidences of examination security breaches at the same time, improved score reporting, and invariably enhanced improved accessibility and credibility. The implication of this is that, the UTME conducted by JAMB has become more accessible, credible and accountable, as it provides better examination security. Other examination bodies are, thus, encouraged to align their assessments to innovative practices that provide wider access, credibility and accountability.

**Keywords:** Inclusive; Diverse learners'; Accessibility; Credibility; UTME

**413 "Evolving Landscapes of Accessibility in Educational Assessment: A Decade-Long Analysis of Cambridge International Access Arrangements (2015-2025)"**

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Access arrangements represent a critical mechanism for ensuring equitable assessment opportunities for students with special educational needs, disabilities, or temporary impairments. This longitudinal analysis examines the evolution of access arrangement usage within the Cambridge International education system over the last decade. This research investigates trends in access arrangement utilisation, identifies emerging patterns in accommodation types, and analyses the impact of digital transformation and global disruptions on accessibility provision in international education contexts. We conducted a comprehensive quantitative analysis of Cambridge International access arrangements data spanning 2015-2025, encompassing over 400,000 individual arrangements across multiple examination series. Data sources included official Cambridge access arrangements databases and regulatory guidance documents. Statistical analysis examined growth patterns, accommodation type distributions, and temporal variations including COVID-19 impacts. The study reveals a 73% overall increase in access arrangement usage, from 37k arrangements in 2015 to 64k in 2025. Notable trends include: (1) dramatic growth in extended time provisions over 25%, indicating recognition of more substantial learning needs; (2) substantial expansion of supervised rest breaks, reflecting increased mental health awareness; (3) steady adoption of digital accommodations alongside declining traditional methods; and (4) resilient recovery patterns following COVID-19 disruptions. These findings demonstrate the education sector's growing responsiveness to diverse learning needs while maintaining assessment integrity. The research provides evidence-based insights for policy development, resource allocation and future accessibility planning in international education systems.

**Keywords:** Access arrangements, educational assessment, inclusive education, disability accommodation, international education, digital accessibility

**414 Towards an Equitable Qualification for Learners in Schools of Skills: A Freirean Perspective**

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Grounded in Paulo Freire's critical pedagogy, this paper explores the need for a distinct qualification for learners at Schools of Skills in South Africa, equivalent to NQF Level 1 (Grade 9). The proposed General Education Certificate (GEC) for Grade 9 learners in ordinary schools may not adequately address the unique learning needs of learners with moderate cognitive barriers. The study investigates whether South Africa should introduce distinct exit-level qualifications tailored to these learners, ensuring equitable access to meaningful certification aligned with their abilities and career pathways. A qualitative secondary data analysis was conducted using Umalusi's study on the provision of the GEC to learners in Schools of Skills as a primary data source. The main study adopted a mixed-methods research approach, incorporating an online survey with closed and open-ended questions, Semi-structured interviews with six school principals and an official from a Provincial Education Department, and School observations. In addition, this study utilised desktop research to identify best practices from international models of inclusive education. The findings highlight the critical need for specialised qualifications, improved support systems, and formalised certification pathways to enhance learning outcomes for these learners. This research aims to inform the development of a more inclusive and adaptable education system that promotes employability and social inclusion for all learners.

**Keywords:** Critical pedagogy, Learners with special educational needs, Qualifications, Schools of Skills, Inclusive Education.

**415 The Inclusive Assessment Conundrum**

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Inclusive assessment aims to provide equal academic opportunities for all candidates, which, consequently, has led to assessment bodies worldwide developing policies and practices that are sensitive to candidates' diversity. However, this seems to be a conundrum for examination boards because assessment was once seen as an act of objective measurement, which set standards for all candidates. Some scholars emphasised that inclusiveness or access does not mean lowering standards. Regarding the inclusivity phenomenon, examination boards have adopted an approach that emphasizes equity and social justice. Historically and primarily, assessment was meant not to 'include' but to objectively evaluate students against a set of standards and exclude candidates who could not fit these standards. The issue of the same set of standards for all candidates for an assessment, and inclusiveness based on catering for diverse abilities of candidates, creates a conundrum for inclusive assessment because assessment is supposed to discriminate. The question is how much assessment bodies have been successful in achieving inclusiveness. Is achieving a 100% inclusiveness possible for assessment bodies whilst they still insist on standards and discrimination in assessment? What aspects of access, equity, and social justice has the Examinations Council of Eswatini considered in attempting to achieve inclusiveness? This is a conceptual paper that aims to instigate a vigorous interrogation insofar as professionals view inclusive assessment and to discuss why the author views inclusive assessment as a conundrum. The paper presents the inherent conundrum of inclusive assessment with regard to the shift from assessment being primarily not meant to 'include' to embracing access, equity, and social justice, whilst sharing the Examinations Council of Eswatini's experiences about embracing inclusiveness. Some of the thoughts would be touching on inclusiveness vs discrimination of assessment tools, bias, sensitivity in designing assessment tools, and policies.

**Keywords:** Diversity, Conundrum, Inclusive assessment

**416 The Real African Language- insights for assessments**

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Inclusive education in South Africa aims to ensure that all learners, regardless of their abilities, disabilities, backgrounds, or socioeconomic status, have equal access to quality education; however, this inclusivity is undermined by the marginalisation of African languages. Particularly those of Bantu origin in curriculum development and assessment, where frameworks are often modelled on Germanic languages despite the country's 12 official languages and the diverse typological parameters of global languages. This exclusion perpetuates systemic inequities in education and overlooks the rich epistemologies inherent in African languages, which afford epistemic access for speakers of African Bantu languages. This versioning endorsed at assessment are endorsed by Umalusi as a quality council and custodian of standards. It is within the latter remit of recursive standard setting and maintenance that this study is located, to frame quality framework indicators for the assessment of African home languages. This paper adopts linguistic citizenship paradigm to evaluate Bantu African language assessed curricula to illustrate the vast linguistic differences between the Germanic languages they are versioned from. This paper sampled one language from the Nguni to perform a comparative evaluation against English assessed curricula especially. The study adopted the Common Framework of Reference for Indigenous Languages (CFRIL) to conduct the comparative evaluation of all Home languages across both IsiZulu and English. The findings indicate that the agglutinative nature of African languages allows for extensive use of prefixes and suffixes to modify meaning, yet Germanic-based assessment methods often ignore or inadequately account for this, leading to oversimplified or irrelevant evaluative criteria. This mismatch not only misrepresents African linguistic systems but also positions them as inferior or less systematic, perpetuating a colonial legacy of linguistic hierarchies. On the contrary the English language designs often prioritise linear sentence structures and rigid syntax rules, which fail to capture the semantic and pragmatic nuances of African languages. Ultimately the paper demonstrates that a Germanic versioning of Bantu African language curricula undermines the country's inclusive education endeavour, compromises the assessment and assessment outcomes of Bantu African languages in basic education. This paper concludes with recommendations for further research and practical implementation of assessment practices tailored to African linguistic realities, fostering equity and inclusivity.

**Keywords:** Linguistic citizenship, African language curriculum frameworks, African language assessment, Indigenous language, Inclusive education

**500 Leveraging Educational Assessment Data for Decision-making and Accountability**

**501 Leveraging UTME Assessment Data For Decision-Making and Accountability in Nigeria's Higher Education**

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The Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME), conducted by the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB), is not just an entrance assessment for Nigeria's tertiary institutions but also a powerful tool for generating assessment data and fostering accountability. JAMB, re-defines, the concept of higher education in Nigeria through its assessment practices and data which help guides decision-making and policy direction in the country. It achieves this through the UTME which is a high-stakes digital examination administered through the Computer Based Test (CBT). The purpose of this paper is to bring to the fore, how the UTME assessment data is being leveraged for effective decision-making and enhanced accountability in Nigeria's higher education system. The paper, being a qualitative and/or a position paper, deploys the simple descriptive analysis to explore how the UTME's role in educational assessment informs policy decisions, and how its accountability mechanisms enhance credibility, fairness, and efficiency in Nigeria's tertiary education system. The application and admission statistics of candidates for the period of five years (2019 – 2023) and the JAMB examination forensic reporting overview of the conduct of the UTME for 2024 and 2025 formed the data for the analysis. Findings showed that JAMB's interventions/strategies such as the deployment of the CBT, Biometric verification and authentication, candidates test scores, data security and protection, application and admission analytics for candidates among others have helped to improve educational assessment data for decision-making and ultimately, accountability in the provision of higher education in Nigeria as the higher institutions admit only suitably qualified candidates using the data analytics provided them by the Board. An example of this is the use of the biometric data analytics of candidates provided by the Board to further screen candidates before they are finally admitted. Paper concludes that JAMB as a foremost assessment body in Nigeria delivers quality assessments and educational assessment data to its numerous stakeholders, as it ensures that the UTME measures accurately the abilities of its candidates and at the same time provide reliable educational assessment data for the purposes of admission. Paper, thus, recommends among others; increased examination security through robust data security and protection to help improve assessments integrity and the quality of higher education in Nigeria in particular and Africa, in general.

**Keywords:** JAMB; UTME; Accountability; Assessment; Data; Higher Education.



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# **Leveraging Assessment Data to Evaluate Learning Outcomes and Inform Iterations in a Structured Pedagogy Government Accelerated Learning Program in Sidama, Ethiopia**

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The Luminos Fund delivers transformative accelerated education programs that focus on foundational literacy and numeracy for out-of-school children, enabling them to catch up to grade level and transition into government schools. In Ethiopia, where over 4.5 million primary-age children are out of school, Luminos supports the government in implementing, evaluating, and strengthening a government-owned Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) delivered by government teachers within the conventional school system. In 2023-24, Luminos partnered with the Sidama Education Bureau to pilot a fit-for-purpose structured pedagogy intervention in 40 government ALP classrooms, reaching 1,500 out-of-school children. The intervention included detailed daily lesson plans, teacher training, routine supervision, and robust classroom-level data collection. To evaluate the impact of the intervention on student learning, Luminos commissioned an external Early Grade Reading and Mathematics Assessment (EGRA/EGMA). Between 7-10 students per pilot classroom were assessed at both baseline (October 2023) and endline (May 2024). Students from 34 randomly selected standard ALP classes (without the structured pedagogy approach) served as a comparison group. Results show students in the structured pedagogy intervention achieved significantly higher learning gains than their peers in standard ALP classes. On average, reading scores increased by 29 correct words per minute, compared to 6 correct words per minute in standard ALP classes. This paper explores how the Luminos Fund leveraged a combination of continuous and summative assessment data—collected through a weekly supervisor assessment tool, an internal Rapid Assessment Instrument, and an external EGRA/EGMA—to make decisions about the structured pedagogy intervention. It highlights specific examples of how these data sets were used to monitor program implementation fidelity, guide teacher supervision and training, iterate on teaching and learning materials, and build government support to scale the intervention both within Sidama and to new regions.

**Keywords:** EGRA, EGMA, evaluation, learning outcomes, structured pedagogy, accelerated learning, fidelity monitoring

## 503 Leveraging the National Standardized Test (NST) in Ghana for SDG 4.1.1 Reporting and National Education Accountability

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Using a national assessment for SDG 4.1.1 reporting will provide more control to governments and maximise the local use of the data, while also meeting global reporting commitments. Although data from such assessments has not been accepted by UIS to date, the publication of the eligibility criteria for global reporting provides a framework to enable the use of such national assessments in future. The NST is a school-based assessment of English and mathematics in Ghana that takes place in Primary 2, Primary 4 and Primary 6. The NST, supported by the World Bank, is administered in all state schools, with the most recent administration in July 2024. ACER UK and NaCCA have been working together since April 2024 to ensure that the NST meets the UIS eligibility criteria and are in the final stages of collating the evidence from the NST 2024 administration before submission to UIS. In this session, we will share details of the work involved in ensuring that the NST met the UIS eligibility criteria and collating the evidence in an appropriate way for submission. This will include ensuring:

- the assessment instruments were appropriately aligned to the global proficiency framework
- an appropriate test development process was implemented and documented
- the administration arrangements were clearly described in the administration manual and implemented consistently
- a clear understanding of how the population assessed relates to the total population of learners in Ghana
- that appropriate analysis was carried out of the results to demonstrate reliability of the
- instruments
- that global benchmarks were set on the NST using the Pairwise Comparison Method
- there were clear plans in place for maintaining standards over time for the next administration of the NST

As the national body responsible for the NST, NaCCA will share their lessons learnt from the process that will be helpful to others embarking on a similar journey. As a partner providing technical assistance, ACER UK will also share their experience, including tools that they have developed to support the collection and evaluation of evidence. This session will be invaluable for those wanting to use their own national assessment for SDG reporting.

**504 The interplay between psychometric properties of items and Cognitive Levels of Bloom's Taxonomy in assessment design: A case of five MCQ examination papers from the ECZ**

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The study aimed to conduct a psychometric analysis of items from five School Certificate (SC) multiple-choice question (MCQ) examination papers administered in Zambia between 2018 and 2022. The objective was to evaluate the quality of MCQs in terms of their psychometric properties at SC level and assess the extent to which they are aligned with the test specifications and Bloom's Taxonomy. A purposive sample of 840 items was selected, with data drawn from item analysis reports and past examination question papers. Each item was independently reviewed by two teachers and mapped onto one of the six cognitive levels. Intercoder reliability was determined using the Cohen's Kappa ( $\kappa$ ) formula, and discrepancies were resolved through consensus. The findings revealed that most items (over 80%) fell within the acceptable range (0.2 – 0.8). Difficult items ( $<0.2$ ) were minimal across all papers, ranging from 3.13% to 8.50%. A small proportion of items in Chemistry (10.63%) and Physics (5.63%) were classified as too easy ( $>0.8$ ). Most items showed excellent ( $DI > 0.35$ ) ability to differentiate between high and low performing students. On the other hand, there was a significant misalignment between the test specifications and actual test designs, with lower-order thinking skills being overrepresented and higher-order skills underrepresented across all subjects. Similarly, there existed a weak correlation between item difficulty (ID) and cognitive skill levels ( Biology:  $r = 0.162$   $p = 0.041$ , P.o.Accounts:  $r = 0.144$   $p = 0.068$ , Physics:  $r = 0.057$   $p = 0.473$ , Geography:  $r = 0.010$   $p = 0.893$ , Chemistry:  $r = 0.004$   $p = 0.965$  ). The study revealed that most items concentrated at lower cognitive skill levels, regardless of their ID. Generally, the MCQs used in this study demonstrated sound psychometric properties. However, items with extreme ID —either too easy or too difficult— exhibited poor discrimination ability and have a higher likelihood of containing non-functioning distractors. It is therefore, recommended that comprehensive training be provided to item writers. Such training should focus on the principles of MCQ construction, including the development of plausible distractors and alignment of ID with cognitive demand. Additionally, pretesting of items prior to their use in live examinations should be conducted.

**Keywords:** Item Difficulty, Discrimination Index, Non-Functioning Distractor, Distractor Efficiency, Cognitive skill level.

**505 Leveraging Students' School Literacy Practices and English Composition Writing Assessment Data for Accountability and Decision-making in Lagos State, Nigeria**

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The study investigated students' school literacy practices and their academic performance in English composition writing for accountability and decision-making in public senior secondary school students in Lagos State, Nigeria. Four research questions guided the study. Descriptive survey research design was adopted. The population comprised all Lagos State public senior secondary two students. Multi-stage sampling technique was used to select 540 students from three educational districts in the state. An essay composition writing test and a students' questionnaire were used for the data collection. Thereafter, five seasoned English Language examiners assessed the scripts. Results revealed that students were exposed to 40 school literacy practices with low level of exposure on the average; they performed woefully in the four English composition writing assessment variables, especially mechanical accuracy; and did not leverage their school literacy practices for English composition learning purpose. Hence, it was recommended among others that public senior secondary school students in Lagos State should leverage the relevant school literacy practices and frequently make appropriate use of them to improve their English composition writing skills.

**Keywords:** School literacy practices, academic performance, English composition writing

**506 Leveraging UTME Assessment Data for Decision-Making and Accountability in Nigeria's Higher Education**

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The Unified Tertiary Matriculation Examination (UTME), conducted by the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB), is not just an entrance assessment for Nigeria's tertiary institutions but also a powerful tool for generating assessment data and fostering accountability. JAMB, re-defines, the concept of higher education in Nigeria through its assessment practices and data which help guides decision-making and policy direction in the country. It achieves this through the UTME which is a high-stakes digital examination administered through the Computer Based Test (CBT). The purpose of this paper is to bring to the fore, how the UTME assessment data is being leveraged for effective decision-making and enhanced accountability in Nigeria's higher education system. The paper, being a qualitative and/or a position paper, deploys the simple descriptive analysis to explore how the UTME's role in educational assessment informs policy decisions, and how its accountability mechanisms enhance credibility, fairness, and efficiency in Nigeria's tertiary education system. The application and admission statistics of candidates for the period of five years (2019 – 2023) and the JAMB examination forensic reporting overview of the conduct of the UTME for 2024 and 2025 formed the data for the analysis. Findings showed that JAMB's interventions/strategies such as the deployment of the CBT, Biometric verification and authentication, candidates test scores, data security and protection, application and admission analytics for candidates among others have helped to improve educational assessment data for decision-making and ultimately, accountability in the provision of higher education in Nigeria as the higher institutions admit only suitably qualified candidates using the data analytics provided them by the Board. An example of this is the use of the biometric data analytics of candidates provided by the Board to further screen candidates before they are finally admitted. Paper concludes that JAMB as a foremost assessment body in Nigeria delivers quality assessments and educational assessment data to its numerous stakeholders, as it ensures that the UTME measures accurately the abilities of its candidates and at the same time provide reliable educational assessment data for the purposes of admission. Paper, thus, recommends among others; increased examination security through robust data security and protection to help improve assessments integrity and the quality of higher education in Nigeria in particular and Africa, in general.

**Keywords:** JAMB; UTME; Accountability; Assessment; Data; Higher Education.

**507 Factors Associated with Academic Achievement of Primary School Learners in Numeracy in Uganda**

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The main objective of this study was to examine the factors associated with academic achievement of primary school learners in Numeracy in Uganda. Extra support rendered by teachers, distance travelled to school, provision scholastic materials, school feeding, school ownership, parental involvement in school activities, and availability of menstrual health materials were regarded as the independent variables, while learners' academic achievement level in Numeracy was the dependent variable. The study employed an explanatory sequential design of the mixed method research approach, and a sample size of 3,864 Primary six learners from 14 districts who sat for a standardized Numeracy test were used in the study. Qualitative data was collected from learners, teachers, parent representatives and Headteachers. A logistic regression model was used to examine the factors associated with learners' academic achievement in Numeracy. Qualitative data analysis was done through thematic content analysis. Findings of the study show that learners supported by teachers in discussion groups were significantly associated with increased odds (OR=2.24; 95%CI: 1.90 - 2.63) of better academic achievement in Numeracy compared to those whose teachers regularly tested without corrections, learners that travelled over 1 kilometre to school were significantly associated with reduced odds (OR=0.66; 95%CI: 0.57 - 0.76) compared to those that travelled less than 1 kilometre, learners that are provided with adequate scholastic materials had significantly increased odds (OR=1.97; 95%CI: 1.67 - 2.33) for better academic achievement compared to those who were not provided with adequate scholastic materials, and learners whose parents were involved in school activities were associated with increased odds (OR=1.26; 95%CI:1.03-1.53) of better academic achievement compared to those whose parents did not involve in school activities. The government should motivate primary school teachers through enhanced remuneration, government authorities and education partners should develop and implement a policy aimed at building school dormitories or more schools to reduce on school-home distance, should come up with a policy that subsidizes tax on basic educational materials, schools should establish partnership with local community organizations and sponsors to create programs aimed at ensuring all learners have access to scholastic materials, the government and education partners should develop parent education programs and outreach initiatives aimed at creating a supportive and inclusive school environment that encourages parental participation in school programs

**Keywords:** academic achievement, scholastic materials, Item Response Theory, learners, test



508 **Qualification awarding and cross-border recognition: case studies from South Africa, Kenya and Ghana**

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The evaluation of foreign qualifications within the South African National Qualifications Framework (SANQF) is a fundamental process that facilitates both national and international learner mobility by ensuring the recognition of learning achievements across borders. This paper will examine key policies such as the Policy and Criteria for Evaluating Foreign Qualifications within the South African NQF (as Amended) in March 2024, guiding principles, procedures, and criteria used in the evaluation process, ensuring that recognised foreign qualifications are aligned with national education standards—covering the National Qualifications Framework, Basic Education Standards, Higher Education Standards, and Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) Standards—as well as broader regional, continental, and global conventions. A literature review will provide a theoretical and contextual foundation for the study, drawing on academic research, policy documents, and comparative education studies. Key references will include, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) 2019, which outlines global conventions on the recognition of qualifications and their implications for cross-border mobility. The discussions will also make references to National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs) i.e. South Africa, Kenya and Ghana and Regional; Southern African Development Community Qualification Framework (SADCQF) and the African Continental Qualification Framework (ACQF) which detail the national frameworks and policies governing qualification evaluation. This paper provides an in-depth exploration of qualification awarding and cross-border recognition systems, criteria, and processes in three selected countries: South Africa, Ghana, and Kenya. It aims to demonstrate how each country independently applies policies and legislative frameworks to confer qualifications and recognise foreign credentials. Furthermore, the paper will clarify the roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders within the recognition value chain. By engaging with this session, participants will develop a deeper understanding of the processes involved in qualification awarding and recognition in South Africa, Kenya, and Ghana, particularly in relation to cross-border recognition and people mobility, giving effect to the ADDIS convention and other legal instruments. The discussion will incorporate real-world scenarios to illustrate best practices and common challenges in the evaluation of foreign qualifications. Additionally, a comparability table will be presented to enhance understanding of the qualifications awarded in these three countries, with particular focus on school-leaving qualifications.

**Keywords:** Foreign qualification evaluation, NQFs, mobility, school.

509 **LaNA – A Novel Assessment to Inform Education Policy and SDG Reporting**

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The Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (LaNA) is a novel standardized international assessment designed to monitor foundational reading and mathematics skills at the end of primary school. Developed by the IEA and the TIMSS & PIRLS International Study Center, LaNA offers a less complex, more accessible alternative to traditional international large-scale assessments, specifically tailored to the needs of education systems in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs). In 2023, a linking study conducted in six countries (Burkina Faso, Egypt, Nigeria, Pakistan, the Palestinian National Authority, and Senegal) established statistical connections between LaNA and the TIMSS and PIRLS achievement scales, enabling the development of new Basic International Benchmarks. These benchmarks extend the lower end of the existing scales and provide valid indicators of minimum proficiency in support of SDG 4.1.1b reporting. LaNA is not only a diagnostic tool for foundational learning but also a vehicle for capacity building in assessment implementation, data use, and education system monitoring. It is now available for stand-alone administration, offering an evidence-based pathway for countries to inform policy and strengthen participation in global education accountability frameworks. The paper outlines LaNA's development and 2023 Linking Study design, shares key findings, and demonstrates how the assessment supports evidence-based policymaking and progress toward SDG 4.1.1.

**Keywords:** LaNA, SDG 4.1.1, Literacy, Numeracy, International Assessment, Evidence

**510 Low Achievement of Students in Mathematics in the FTNA: What Story are the SIRA Reports Narrating?**

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For the past decade performance data in Mathematics showed low pass rates particularly at lower secondary education level despite the significance of the subject in science, technology and innovation. This study examined the Form Two National Assessment (FTNA) data in Tanzania. The study analysed the factors that lead to poor performance, identify problematic content areas and explored students' perceptions on the factors for low achievement in Mathematics. To achieve this, the study used the Students' Item Response Analysis (SIRA) reports issued by The National Examinations Council of Tanzania (NECTA) from 2015 to 2024 as data source. In addition, a focussed group discussion was conducted to Form Two students to explore students' opinion on the factors that lead to poor performance in mathematics. Data analysis employed content analysis to identifying problematic content areas. The process involved coding and categorisation to establish merging themes. Similarly, qualitative data obtained through focussed group discussion was coded, categorized and emerging themes were identified. The results indicated that, content area taught in Form I and II were problematic to majority of the students. Out of the 20 content areas (topics) taught at this level, students had better performance in six areas, with at least average performance in three years in the studied period. The remaining 14 proved to be problematic, whereby the performance was generally weak with five content areas having at least average performance once. Similarly, analysed SIRA reports revealed that: Insufficient knowledge in specific content areas; incorrect application of mathematical formula, concepts, theorems and laws and inability to interpret word problems and diagrammatically presented problems were the major factors for poor performance. On the other hand, students perceive: Nature of mathematics subject; lack of motivation from peers and adults and low self-esteem as factors which lead to low achievement. From these findings, the study recommends a review of mathematics pedagogy in educational institutions offering Teacher Education. It also suggested Mathematics teachers to engage in professional development activities to equip themselves with most up-to-date mathematics teaching strategies.

**Keywords:** Mathematics Education, students' performance

**511 Evaluating Science JCE Item Parameters Using Item Response Theory: Insights from Botswana's 2018 Examination**

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In order to ensure and promote the quality of education and maintain competitive standards both locally and internationally, it is paramount for examination bodies to develop assessment tools with good characteristics of item parameters. This is to ensure that examinees are not tested on items that are beyond their scope which may risk the ability of obtaining the correct information about the ability and/or performance of the candidates. Although it is not always quite easy to achieve this, it is nonetheless still critical to look for such evidence to minimize the effects of having poor quality assessment instruments which could lead to misclassification of candidates, more especially when such information from assessments is used to make decisions such as that of selection. It is on this background that this study was conducted, for self-evaluation, to gauge the strength of the characteristics of the item parameters of the 2018 JCE examinations and estimate the ability of the candidates who took the same examination through Item Response Theory (IRT). The study randomly sampled Science and used the entire population of 38 274 examinees in public schools. The analysis followed a qualitative approach, where the 3-parameter logistic (3 PL) IRT model was chosen. Item model fit could not be achieved for most of the items. As for the item parameters, the results revealed that the estimates obtained satisfied the desired values usually observed in practice and the utility towards the major testing purpose of the examination. The analysis on examinee theta estimates revealed that most of the examinees were well suited for the examination while there was also a substantial number of candidates whose ability estimates were too low for the examination. A few candidates had high ability estimates beyond what is usually observed in practice. Regional differences in examinee ability estimates were also observed.

**Keywords:** IRT, JCE, theta, model fit, item parameters.

**512 The Use of Assessment Data for Decision-Making and Accountability: A Desk Review of Educational Assessment Data in Ethiopia, since 2000.**

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This study aimed to evaluate how educational assessment data in Ethiopia has been leveraged for decision-making and accountability in the education sector since the 2000s. This study specifically examines how low-stakes educational assessments, such as national learning assessments and high-stakes public examination initiatives, influence decision-making, accountability, and policy reforms. The study employed a desk review research approach to analyze key educational assessment data's systematically. The study used a purposive sampling strategy to choose documents that provide important insights about assessment use in decision-making, accountability, and policy reforms. Thematic content analysis was used to discover recurring themes, trends, problems, and policy implications regarding the utilization of assessment data. The results show Ethiopia has made notable progress in applying national learning evaluations and standardized tests that have affected curriculum creation, resource allocation, and national education policies. However, there are still some problems that need to be addressed, including policymakers' limited use of data, teachers' poor interpretation and application skills, and uneven accountability frameworks. Assessment results have been used to monitor the quality of education, but they are still sporadically incorporated into policy implementation and decision-making processes, frequently without systematic feedback mechanisms. As a result, the results of the assessment have not been appropriately applied to improve the quality of education. In conclusion, even though Ethiopia's educational evaluation findings have influenced policy and increased accountability, the country's full potential has not yet been reached. Decision-making and assessment data must be closely connected in order to drive meaningful educational advances. This study recommends improving educators' and policymakers' data interpretation skills, creating a transparent and systematic feedback loop between assessment results and policy decisions, promoting the use of formative assessments to supplement high-stakes exams, improving data accessibility for broader stakeholder engagement, and encouraging collaboration between national and international education agencies to align assessment practices with global standards. To ensure the delivery of high-quality education and efficient instruction, the paper encourages policymakers, international organizations, donors, and civil society to consider ways to improve the abilities of national authorities and/or citizens to conduct, enhance, and most importantly use national learning assessments.

**Keywords:** Educational Assessment Data, Decision-Making, Accountability, Ethiopia

**513 Looking closely at learner performance in South Africa's National Senior Certificate Home Language Examinations: 2014 - 2024**

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High-stakes examinations, such as exit-level examinations for school leavers, demand fairness in every respect. It is for that reason that Umalusi (2012) arrived at a conclusion that there is a need to ensure comparability of examination standards across years so that no learner is unduly advantaged or disadvantaged by the year in which they wrote their examination. The examination standards first languages, referred to as home languages (HL) in South Africa, at the end of grade 12 was a particular case in point for the 2012 study. This study is now seriously out-dated. Against this backdrop, this paper analysed the performance standards of grade 12 learners in the National Senior Certificate (NSC) Home Language (HL) examinations in South Africa covering the period 2014-2024. This was done in an attempt to shed some light on whether or not the standards of HL examination are equivalent from one year to the other. The research questions under investigation were: How did performance standards compare in the NSC HL examinations administered to Grade 12 learners between 2014 to 2024? Were the performance standards consistent throughout the 11 official HLs and, if not, in what respect did they differ within and across years? To answer the questions, both qualitative and quantitative research methods of comparisons were used to analyse the performance trends in the NSC HL performance data for the period 2014 – 2024. The analysis was conducted per paper to look for patterns of similarities and differences in how HL learners performed in each of the examined components over time using Umalusi database and the Department of Basic Education's (DBE) NSC technical reports as sources of data. Several findings arose from the study. First, generally no grade 12 learner fails HL examinations. Second, whereas the performance differed across papers, the language and literature papers displayed a similar statistical behaviour, with the exception of the covid years (2020-2021). The overall finding was that the creative writing paper is the single biggest cause for the variability in performance across the HL examinations and years.

**Keywords:** comparisons, equity, fairness, performance, construct, grade 12; home language; National Senior Certificate



**514 'O' Level Mathematics Quality Instruction Enhancement Strategy: Application of Zimbabwe researcher School Examinations Council (ZIMSEC) Examiners' Examiners' reports in Secondary Schools**

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This study investigates the role of Zimbabwe School Examinations Council (ZIMSEC) O Level Mathematics examiners' reports as a strategy for enhancing the quality of secondary mathematics instruction. The research addresses four central objectives: (1) to determine the reception rate of ZIMSEC O Level mathematics examiners' reports among teachers; (2) to assess how these examiners' reports are currently utilised in instructional practice; and (4) to propose instructional methods that can improve the effectiveness of report utilisation. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the study combines qualitative data from semi-structured interviews and focused group discussions with quantitative data from structured surveys administered to 132 secondary mathematics teachers. The qualitative component explores teachers' perceptions, challenges, and strategies in interpreting and applying examiner feedback, while the quantitative component quantifies report reception, frequency of use, and perceived usefulness, and examines correlations with instructional quality indicators (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Findings reveal a moderate reception rate of 42.4%, indicating that less than half of the targeted teachers received the examiners' reports within the last three years. Among those who received the examiners' reports, the majority found them relevant and actionable, particularly for lesson planning, remediation, and identifying common learner misconceptions. However, significant barriers to effective utilisation of the reports were identified, including limited access, lack of training, time constraints, and insufficient resources. Collaborative use of examiners' reports in departmental meetings and professional development workshops was reported in some schools, but such practices are not widespread. The study proposes a framework for integrating examiners' report insights into instructional practice, grounded in data-driven instruction, collaborative professional development, and continuous feedback mechanisms (Mandinach & Gummer, 2016; DuFour & Eaker, 1998; Black & Wiliam, 2009). Recommendations include improving dissemination, providing targeted professional development, and fostering collaborative analysis of examiners' reports. The research underscores the potential of examiners' reports to enhance mathematics instruction and learner outcomes, provided that systemic barriers are addressed and a culture of data-driven decision-making is cultivated among educators. This work contributes to ongoing efforts to improve educational quality in Zimbabwe and offers practical strategies for leveraging assessment data in instructional improvement.

**Keywords:** examiners' report, reception rate, report utilisation, instructional enhancement

**515 Understanding and Implementing Promotion, Progression, and Condonation requirements in Mpumalanga Schools: Perspectives of Teachers and principals**

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The South African education system continues to deal with numerous challenges that impact the quality and accessibility of education for several learners, these include high dropout rate of which becomes more conspicuous from grade 9 and the same trend continues to be evident in grade 10 and 11. Data from Statistics SA collected between 2019 to 2021 revealed a dropout rate of 30%. This is not a surprise as South Africa is known as one of the worst-performing education systems in international surveys like TIMSS and PIRLS. The Department of Basic Education introduced the progression policy in 2011 to curb the high rate of dropout of learners. The policy allows conditions for learners to be progressed and condoned. Even though the learner progression policy has good intention to support learners, one cannot ignore the different practices of the same policy and requirements from different schools. With schools not being equal, there is lot of evidence on the literature that the ineffective implementation of the progression policy could defeat the education system's intention to remedy the high dropout rates of learners in schools. It is from this background that a study was conducted to investigate grade 9 teachers and principals experiences and perspectives on the implementation of the progression policy in Ehlanzeni district of Mpumalanga province. Qualitative approach was relevant to capture rich data and contextual insights using semi-structured interviews and documents. A sample of fifteen participants was purposively selected consisting of three grade 9 teachers: three principals and three circuit managers of the participating schools. Data was analysed using thematic analysis. The findings reveal limited understanding of the progression policy; use diverse practices on the implementation of the progression policy; inconsistent procedures followed by schools; and negative attitude of teachers towards the progression policy. The findings highlight a need for a comprehensive training and support for teachers and principals on the implementation of the progression policy. Findings of this study will assist the Department in addressing the policy gaps and ensure that policy implementation is enhanced at all levels. Furthermore, it will strengthen the management of progression at school and district levels.

**Keywords:** Promotion, progression, condonation; teachers, School Management Teams, office-based officials

**516 Enhancing the Utilization of Grade 9 Checkpoint Assessment Data in Eswatini Secondary Schools**

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In today's global education landscape, the effective use of assessment data has emerged as a critical driver of instructional improvement, accountability, and learner support. Eswatini's introduction of the Grade 9 Lower Secondary Checkpoint Assessment (LSCA) aligns with this trend, aiming to provide diagnostic insights that inform teaching practices and facilitate timely interventions. However, the actual utilization of LSCA data in schools remains inconsistent and underdeveloped. This study investigates the effectiveness of LSCA data use in Eswatini's secondary schools by examining current practices, identifying key challenges, exploring strategies for improved integration, and assessing professional development needs. Guided by the Data-Driven Decision-Making (DDDM) Framework and the Assessment Literacy Model, the research adopted a sequential explanatory mixed-methods approach. Surveys were administered to 54 Grade 9 teachers across eight purposefully selected schools, followed by in-depth interviews with Heads of Centres, inspectors, and subject panel secretaries. The study first examined how LSCA data is collected, disseminated, and used at school level. Findings reveal that dissemination is largely centralized, with limited classroom-level access and no standardized processes for data sharing or collaborative review. Secondly, the study identified multiple challenges in interpreting and applying LSCA data. Teachers expressed difficulty understanding diagnostic frameworks, lacked time and resources to analyze data, and reported minimal support for instructional use. Thirdly, in exploring strategies for enhancing integration, the study found that schools with informal collaborative practices showed better engagement, suggesting the need for structured, school-wide data cycles. Finally, the research assessed educators' professional development needs, revealing a strong demand for continuous, practical training in data analysis and pedagogical application. To address these gaps, the study recommends the development of a national LSCA Data Use Manual, the institutionalization of regular data reflection cycles within schools, and the rollout of blended professional development programs tailored to context. Alignment of internal assessments with LSCA benchmarks and improved access to timely, comprehensible data are also essential. By aligning its inquiry with clearly defined objectives and theoretical perspectives, this study contributes practical insights and policy-relevant strategies for embedding LSCA data into instructional decision-making and strengthening the culture of evidence-based practice across Eswatini's education system.

**Keywords:** Lower Secondary Checkpoint Assessment (LSCA), data utilization, instructional decision-making, diagnostic assessment, accountability.

**517 Are NSC subjects becoming less difficult? Evidence-Based Analytical Hierarchy Process**

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The National Senior Certificate (NSC) examinations serve as a critical benchmark for assessing academic proficiency in South Africa. Ongoing debates questioned whether NSC subjects are becoming less difficult, often based on traditional analyses of pass percentages. This raises concerns about the credibility of the NSC to the public. Umalusi, the Quality Council for General and Further Education and Training, is responsible for standardising learners' raw marks at the exit point. Umalusi employs the Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP), which generates eigenvalues from Subject Pairwise Analysis (SPA) to track the ranked relative subjects' difficulty over time to decide on raw mark adjustments. However, the use of eigenvalues remains underutilised by examination boards for evaluating subjects' difficulty in sustaining their proposed adjustment decisions. This study sought to evaluate whether the NSC subjects are becoming less difficult through eigenvalues analysis from the 2020 – 2024 November examinations. A quantitative trends analysis design was adopted using established eigenvalues generated from 12 high enrolment subjects from the Umalusi database for the Department of Basic Education (DBE). Employing descriptive analysis, the eigenvalues were analysed by computing outlier years from the Interquartile Range (IQR), followed by scatter plots with linear regression trendlines to identify subjects' difficulty trends. The results indicate that 33.33% of subjects are becoming more difficult, evidenced by decreasing eigenvalues, whereas 50% of subjects are becoming less difficult, sustained by increasing eigenvalues. Meanwhile, 16.67% of subjects showed stable difficulty. These results indicate that not all NSC subjects are becoming less difficult. Instead, it shows a variety of trends in subject difficulty over five years, suggesting different adjustments for each subject. Therefore, the study recommends that examination boards may consider adopting eigenvalues to assess subject difficulty in making informed decisions and for accountability.

**Keywords:** National Senior Certificate (NSC), Subject Pairwise Analysis (SPA), Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP), eigenvalues, Interquartile range (IQR), linear regression trendlines.

**518 Assessing Learning and Development Gains: The case of ASR Baseline and Endline**

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Following the humanitarian crisis caused by conflict and draught in the Northern Southern part of the country, more than half a million children denied access to quality pre-primary education. In response, the LEGO Foundation Childhood Development Activity initiated program tpo provide preschool-aged children with opportunities for engaging in quality play-based learning. These programs aim to enhance wellbeing, improve learning outcomes, and promote holistic development, thereby ensuring that children are prepared for the transition to primary education. Among the initiatives, the Activity reached age 6+ children with the 8-week Accelerated School Readiness (ASR) program to make sure that they have readiness before primary. In this context, this presentation highlights the findings of the ASR study focusing on the ASR completion rates, children's learning and development gains, and their performance in primary. To address the above research questions, the study used a longitudinal design to measure learning outcomes among ASR cohorts in two phases. Accordingly, the first phase of the study employs a pre-post study design, which involves collecting baseline and end-line data aimed at measuring early learning and development skills among 650 children who attended the 8-week ASR program. The International Early Learning and Development Assessment (IDELA) was used to measure overall development status, as well as early literacy, numeracy, motor, and socio-emotional development. The second phase of the study tracks these cohorts of children into Grade 1. Using a quasi-experimental approach, the study compares the learning achievements in Grade 1 for those children who attended the ASR program with those of children of the same age and similar education trajectory, but who did not participate in the ASR program. This presentation highlights the study's first phase findings about the children's completion rate, learning and development gains from the Activity, and the transition rates to primary. The author will discuss the implications of the results to inform accelerated or remedial programs that can mitigate learning losses for children in emergency settings.

**519 Teachers' Professional Development Training Practice in Higher Education Institutions in Ethiopia and Its Spillover Impact on Students' Learning Outcomes**

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This study examines teachers' professional development training practices in higher education institutions, assesses their impact on student learning outcomes, and investigates the challenges and opportunities associated with them. A qualitative, instrumental case study approach grounded in constructivism was employed. This design allowed for an in-depth exploration of teachers' lived experiences and subjective interpretations of professional development, helping to create a more effective future. Twenty key informant teachers were selected using purposive sampling based on their participation in the Higher Development Program and the English Language Improvement Project, as well as their teaching experience post-training. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and document reviews to ensure credibility. Thematic analysis was used to code, categorize, and interpret the qualitative data, identifying recurring themes and patterns in teachers' experiences. The study highlights the need for higher education institutions to adopt more holistic and tailored approaches. This involves providing ongoing support, addressing resource limitations, using student responses for improvements, incorporating technology strategically, and valuing collaboration to ensure maximum performance. Among the many forwarded recommendations, a few are to foster a supportive learning environment, support professional learning communities, and foster partnerships between higher education institutions, government agencies, and private organizations to develop and deliver high-quality TPD programs.

**Keywords:** Learning Outcomes, Professional Development Training Practices, Spillover Impact



**520 The nexus between youth involvement in education and irregular migration to South Africa in Hadiya, Ethiopia: Situational and Impact Analysis**

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The phenomenon of irregular migration of youth from rural Ethiopia, particularly from Hadiya and Kambata ethnic groups to South Africa by dropping education has become increasingly rampant. The phenomenon is imposing unintended effects on educational outcomes and the education sector yet it is given little attention. Given increasing incidence of irregular migration from Hadiya Zone to South Africa, it is essential to understand the nexus between migration and educational outcomes. The objective of the current study was to explore the nexus between youth involvement in education and irregular migration to South Africa in Hadiya, Central Ethiopia region by taking the case of Lemo woreda high schools. The research was conducted in four rural kebeles and four secondary schools in Lemo Woreda, Hadiya Zone, Central Ethiopia regional state. Qualitative research approach with methods of in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and Document review were employed. The participants were purposely selected, the participation was voluntary and the data were thematically analyzed. The findings of study indicated that intention and practices of the youth to migrate to South Africa undermining educational involvement and outcomes, disrupting educational continuity and limiting access for educational resources. Migration and migration attempt to South Africa by dropping their education were triggered by economic hardship, limited job opportunities, peer pressure, and losing hope in education. Perceived limitations of educational system in meeting their current and future economic needs presents migration as the only viable option. Even though the remittance inflow has a role for economic growth and access to education, irregular migration is undermining education of future generation and leading to noticeable decline in educational outcomes. The findings indicate a link between the irregular migration to South Africa and declining educational outcomes. This calls for serious, integrated policy interventions to mitigate the unintended effects and quality education to future generations. Solving the core reasons for irregular migration is the long-term solution to mitigate the problem. It requires collective effort to improve educational outcomes by working on the educational process starting from grass root. Awareness creation on irregular migration unintended effects, value of education, creating adequate work opportunities in Ethiopia, implementing strict migration policies, and arranging legal migration opportunities were the key recommendations.

**Key words:** irregular migration, educational involvement, high school, youths and impact

**600 Innovations and Strategies to Combat Examination Malpractices**

**601 Examination Malpractice at High-Stakes Examination of the Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) in Luweero District**

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Examination malpractice has become increasingly pervasive in high-stakes assessments such as the Primary Leaving Examination (PLE), involving various stakeholders in this unethical conduct. Under Section 5(2)(b) of the UNEB Act, Cap 259, the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB) retains the results of schools and candidates implicated in malpractice pending investigation. If found culpable, results are annulled, adversely affecting both individual futures and institutional reputations. This study elucidates the principal causes of examination malpractice and proposes pragmatic, actionable solutions to mitigate it. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the research amalgamates qualitative interviews with students, educators, administrators, and policymakers, alongside quantitative analysis of malpractice trends and performance data over the preceding five years. A comparative review of effective practices from other nations enriches the local findings. The study underscores significant contributors to malpractice, including the academic pressures faced by students, inadequate preparation, a prevailing culture of impunity, institutional pressures on schools to exhibit high performance, and teacher accountability linked to student pass rates. These issues are particularly pronounced in privately owned schools, where competition is fierce. To address these challenges, the paper delineates a suite of targeted, implementable strategies: the deployment of digital surveillance systems to monitor examination rooms in real-time, the utilization of data analytics to identify suspicious performance patterns for early intervention, the introduction of continuous and formative assessments to diminish reliance on a singular high-stakes examination, mandatory training for educators and invigilators on ethical standards and malpractice prevention, reinforced policy enforcement and accountability frameworks at the school level, and community and parental engagement initiatives to cultivate a culture of academic integrity. By integrating technology, policy reforms, and stakeholder participation, this paper presents a practical roadmap for the development of an examination system that is secure, transparent, and resistant to malpractice. The proposed solutions aim to redirect focus from mere score attainment to meaningful learning and ethical conduct.

**Keywords:** Examination Malpractice, PLE, UNEB, High-stakes Assessments, Academic Integrity, Mixed-Research Methods, Digital Surveillance, Data Analytics, Continuous Assessment, and Formative Assessment

## 602 Innovations and Strategies to Combat Examination Malpractices

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The study explored the prospects of innovations and Strategies to Combat Examination malpractices in West Africa. The education assessment systems of Africa are heavily compromised by perennial examination malpractices with serious implications on their trust and fairness. This paper explores what can be done differently to address this, by looking at Computer-Based Examinations (CBE) as part of new directions for West Africa in combating examination malpractices with real-life examples in Ghana, Nigeria and The Gambia. Drawing from multiple literatures, empirical studies, policy analysis, and case examples particularly from The Gambia, it proposes an integrated framework for tackling the problem. The study underscores corruption, weak oversight, and use of digital tools as contributor to malpractice in examinations. It examines how current advancements in Artificial Intelligence (AI) verification such as fingerprint monitoring and secure digital certification can reduce these immoral activities and ensure absolute objectivity and fairness on examinations. The paper highlights a joint effort among governments, schools, examining boards, technology providers and other stakeholders. It argues for better teacher training, enhanced use of digital tools and public sensitisation on the menace of cheating. Technology can assist, but it requires integrity, real funding and a regulated structure. Successful technology accompanied by sound checks and balances in the system are necessary if there is to be a constructive solution against examination malpractice. Some suggestions mentioned in the study recommend the improvement of the administration side of examinations and innovations in technology that are valid internationally. In their quest to re-establish trust for examinations, policymakers and education leaders must have something fair for all students.

**Keywords:** Examination malpractice, biometric verification, CBE, academic integrity, educational reform, AI surveillance, ethical education.

**603 Combating Examinations Fraud with Innovative Digital Technologies and Ethical Practices in Nigeria Technical Colleges**

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Examination fraud also known as examination malpractice, is any dishonest or unethical behaviour by students, teachers or examination officials before, during or after examination with the intent to gain an undue advantage. It remains a significant challenge to the education sector globally, undermining the credibility of assessments. Traditional methods of preventing examination fraud, such as physical invigilation and paper-based monitoring, have proved inadequate in addressing the evolving nature of fraudulent activities. Numerous innovative approaches such as artificial intelligence (AI), block chain, biometric authentication, remote proctoring solutions have evolved to ensuring security, credentialing, integrity and maintain fair assessment processes. However, the extent to which these innovative digital technologies have effectively curbed examination fraud in technical colleges is uncertain. Thus, this study explores the extent to which innovative digital technological tools and ethical practices have been effectively used to combat examination fraud in technical colleges in Nigeria. Three research questions guided this study. The study adopted survey mixed method employing quantitative and qualitative approaches. The population comprised all teachers of technical colleges in Nigeria. Simple random sampling technique was used to select one thousand (1000) teachers in the six geo-political zones in Nigeria. One validated instrument was used: Questionnaire on Combating Examination Fraud with Digital Technologies and Ethical Practices (QCEFDTEP) with Cronbach Alpha of 0.89 reliability coefficient. The quantitative data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation while qualitative data were analyzed thematically. The findings of the study revealed that the integration of digital technological tools helped to reduce examination fraud to a great extent. The findings also showed the effectiveness of more advocacy on ethical practices. The result further revealed challenges in integrating digital technology in combating examination fraud to include: inadequate digital tools, paucity of fund, poor internet services and lack of digital literate personnel. The researchers recommended among others, computerization of examination centers, provision of uninterrupted internet services, more advocacies on ethical values, training and re-training of examination personnel, adequate funding and full implementation of examination fraud policy on defaulters.

**Keywords:** Assessment, Digital tools, Credibility, Integrity and Ethical values

**604 Impact of Multiple Choice Randomization on Examination Malpractice at the Basic Education Certificate Examination in Ghana**

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The West African Examinations Council (WAEC) like other examining bodies, has put in place various strategies to curb examination malpractice. This is due to the negative impact examination malpractice has on examination results and its threat to the integrity of examinations. This study examined trends in examination malpractice and the impact of Multiple Choice Randomisation in the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) in Ghana from 2020 to 2024. Using a descriptive research design, data were drawn from Ghana Examinations Committee reports and interviews with thirty purposively selected WAEC senior staff. Quantitative analysis revealed a decline in collusion in objective scripts, which contributed to the introduction of randomised test items—while malpractice in essay scripts surged, indicating a shift in cheating strategies. Other irregularities, including mobile phone use and bringing foreign materials into examination halls, persisted, highlighting gaps in invigilation and supervision. Thematic analysis of qualitative responses confirmed widespread understanding of the Multiple Choice Randomisation strategy and consensus on its positive effects, though participants identified new, more organised forms of malpractice. Logistical challenges were identified to impede the randomization strategy. The study concludes that while randomisation has reduced certain forms of malpractice, its effectiveness is undermined by systemic issues and evolving cheating tactics. Recommendations include transition to computer-based testing for objective papers and enhanced stakeholders education to address the cultural and administrative roots of examination malpractice.

**Keywords:** Examination Malpractice, Randomisation, The West African Examinations Council (WAEC), Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE)

**605 Management System for Educational Assessment: A Case of Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR)**

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This study explores the application of blockchain technology in academic management systems, for educational assessment focusing on Lilongwe University of Agriculture and Natural Resources (LUANAR). The research addresses challenges in LUANAR's existing Student Academic Records Information System (SARIS), including inefficiencies, lack of integration, and data security vulnerabilities. The study was guided by four objectives: to assess the current academic management system at LUANAR, evaluate blockchain technologies and potential barriers to adoption, investigate the feasibility of blockchain integration, and propose an implementation plan for blockchain solutions. The research employed a mixed-methods approach, combining survey data, desk research, and stakeholder insights. Findings revealed that SARIS faces limitations in security, transparency, efficiency, and integration with other university systems. Blockchain technologies such as Hyperledger Fabric and Ethereum emerged as promising solutions to enhance transparency, data security, and operational efficiency. However, challenges such as high costs, limited technical expertise, and regulatory uncertainties were identified as key barriers to adoption. The feasibility analysis indicates cautious optimism for blockchain integration at LUANAR, provided that technical expertise is developed, and a phased implementation approach is adopted. The study proposes a detailed implementation plan, emphasizing capacity-building, regulatory alignment, and stakeholder collaboration. This research contributes to the growing body of literature on blockchain applications in Academia, highlighting its potential to transform academic management systems. It also provides practical recommendations for LUANAR and similar institutions seeking to adopt blockchain technology to enhance data security, transparency, and institutional efficiency.

**Keywords:** Blockchain technology, academic management systems, LUANAR, SARIS, higher education, data security, integration.



**606 Strategies and Types of Examination Malpractices in Public Examination in Nigeria**

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The growing trend of examination malpractices has assumed a threatening dimension to the sanctity of public examinations in Nigeria, involvement of parents, teachers, students, communities, school's authority even the examination body staff makes this monster more evil. Examination bodies efforts struggle in the face of well-coordinated syndicate of examination malpractices .The effect s are the quality of the products of these examinations, the cancerous effect on national development and the future of the public examinations.it is the light of this that, a Participatory Research approach was opted by the author which connected him to education stakeholders in eight locations in Minna metropolis of Niger State to elicit their positions on different types of examination malpractice. The outcome is mouth bugling and findings show that malpractices are categorised into three :malpractices before ,during and after the examination, it also reveals the individual involve, the economic gains and the risk of stopping this hydra headed monster ,the stakeholders also provide solutions to the identified methods of examination malpractices .based on the findings the following recommendations were advanced :stiffer punishment for the culprits ,robust legislation, preventive approaches were also muted ,training of examination body staff ,and public sensitisation .This paper basically looks at the different categories of examination malpractices and proffers remedies to them.

**Keywords:** Examination, Malpractices, Quality, Sanctity, Staff, Stakeholders

**607 Investigating stakeholders' perceptions on combating malpractice in Accounting at Lesotho General Certificate of Secondary Education**

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Accounting is a subject that records, reports, interprets, and communicates financial information to individuals, organisations, and businesses to make informed financial decisions. The subject is intended to prepare learners for the global business world that is faced with economic challenges and recurring economic recessions. Lesotho Basic Education Curriculum Policy (LBECP) categorises Accounting as an elective subject enrolled by learners at both the lower and upper secondary phases. At Lesotho General Certificate of Secondary Education (LGCSE) level, candidates take two compulsory components: Paper 1 and Paper 2. It is important to delve into the problems Lesotho could face if the subject is not assessed properly. Such complications include citizens with lack of career readiness in accounting related fields, financial illiteracy, weak business foundations, tax compliance issues, the country's economic instability and public sector mismanagement. This research paper, therefore, aims to investigate stakeholders' perceptions on the national examinations in Accounting education at LGCSE so as to ensure that the subject is well assessed at this level. The LGCSE level precedes the tertiary education that produces leaders in the global business world. To investigate this issue, a qualitative methodology was used, and data was gathered from nine schools in Maseru district. Three school principals, three informants who are team-leaders and three markers were physically interviewed, and data was analysed thematically. Analysis of data revealed that majority of centres examining Accounting do not leverage and incorporate strategies that could help to combat the scourge of examination malpractices at LGCSE Accounting examinations. They do not pay strict attention to the times given for the papers and fail to adhere to some invigilation rules. Based on these findings, it is recommended that comprehensive approaches and strategies are developed to address the root cause of examination malpractice, while also implementing effective deterrents, as they are essential for maintaining trust and reliability of the assessment processes by the examination body in Lesotho.

**Keywords:** Combating Examination Malpractice, Accounting, LBECP, LGCSE, Centres, Assessment processes, Qualitative methodology and Assessment reliability.

**608 Mitigating Examination Malpractice through Technology: Assessing WAEC Nigeria's Migration from Paper-Based to Computer-Based Examination**

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Examination malpractice is a persistent challenge of the validity, reliability, and fairness of highstakes assessments. Researchers suggest that computer-based examinations (CBE) can mitigate these issues. To uphold best practices and enhance examination integrity, the West African Examinations Council (WAEC), Nigeria transitioned from paper-based examinations (PBE) to computer-based examinations (CBE) in the West African Senior School Certificate Examination for Private Candidates, first series (WASSCE PC1) in 2024. This study examined the impact of these modes of assessments on examination malpractice. A descriptive comparative research design, adopted for the study, utilized a population of 52,479 candidates who registered for WASSCE PC1 from year 2020-2025. A census sampling technique was utilized to analyze examination trends over a six-year period. A pro-forma was used to extract examination malpractice cases from WASSCE PC1 archival and incidence records for the six years period. To compare the rate of malpractice, quantitative method of analysis was used to examine the data using descriptive statistics such as percentages. T-test of independence was used to establish significant difference in malpractice rates between the assessment methods. The result showed that the highest rate (7.5%) of examination malpractices was recorded for PBE when compared with the CBE (0.55%). Key contributing factors included reduction of access to question papers, question randomization and inclusion of security features. Based on these findings, the study recommended the continued use of CBE, continuous improvement of CBE mode and increased integration of advanced security features.

**Keywords:** Assessment integrity, computer-based testing, digital transformation, examination malpractice, paper-based testing

**609 Strategies and Innovations to Curb Malpractices for Paper and Pen-Based Examinations in Africa: A Systematic Review**

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This review examined innovations and strategies used to curb examination malpractices in paper-and pen-based examinations in Africa. Examinations malpractices have become a threat to education systems potentially undermining validity and reliability of academic qualifications and integrity of academic and assessment institutions. We conducted systematic review synthesizing evidence from diverse academic and institutional sources of studies searched in Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), Google scholar, web of science, and other electronic databases including gray literature. Only studies from Africa were included. Data were extracted via a modified Covidence template using a risk of bias visualization tool (ROBVIS) assessment tool for generic reviews to assess the quality of papers was used. Using PRISMA, 524 papers were screened at the title and abstract levels, of which 28 were retrieved for full-text review. Of these, 23 articles met the inclusion criteria. The articles had a quality assessment score to low risk of bias averaging 88%, with a range of 68% to 89%. Most studies, 13, were from Nigeria (57%), followed by 4 from Ghana (17%) among others. The findings revealed diverse strategies and innovations ranging from preventive, technological to pedagogical reforms. Specifically, stringent candidates' identity verification, randomized and strict seating plan distances, a combination of candidates from different centres so that candidates from same centre do not seat next to each other, use of closed-circuit television (CCTV) in hotspot examination halls, restricting use of unauthorized electronic devices such as smart watches, phones and programmable calculators into examination halls, improving teacher remuneration to ensure syllabus completion and adequate preparation, and effort-based grading and welfare promoting conditions for examination administrators to promote intrinsic motivation over dishonest shortcuts were common as strategies and innovations for reducing examinations malpractices whose common forms included cheating by smuggling foreign materials into examination halls, question paper leakage, impersonation, collusion and bribery. The review has underscored the necessity of multifaceted interventions that integrate traditional integrity-building practices with cutting-edge innovations and strategies to address the evolving challenges of academic dishonesty in paper-and pen-based examinations. The study recommends intensifying and combining policy enforcement, community engagement, and ethical education which have been found to be critical for sustained impact in curbing examinations malpractices.

**Keywords:** Academic dishonesty, Examinations malpractice, Examinations Strategies

**610 Investigating High Stakes Examination Invigilators' Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices in Eswatini**

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This study investigates the compliance of high-stakes examination invigilators in Eswatini with established regulations and best practices during the Eswatini General Certificate of Secondary Education (EGCSE) examinations. Framed within the Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices (KAP) theoretical model, the research aims to address four key questions: the current state of invigilators' knowledge, their prevailing attitudes toward their roles and examination integrity, their observed practices during examinations, and the core challenges affecting performance and examination credibility. A mixed-methods approach was employed, integrating descriptive survey data with qualitative analysis of inspection reports. The study sample comprised 48 secondary schools, purposively selected from all four educational regions—Hhohho, Manzini, Shiselweni, and Lubombo—based on their involvement in ECESWA training and formal inspection during the 2023 and 2024 examination cycles. Data were collected using a structured compliance checklist and narrative reports from two ECESWA Inspectors. Quantitative data were analysed through regional cross-tabulations and descriptive statistics, while qualitative narratives were coded thematically and interpreted using the KAP framework. Findings reveal that invigilator knowledge of examination procedures remains partial and regionally uneven, with significant gaps noted in Lubombo and Shiselweni. While training is offered by ECESWA, knowledge retention and contextual application appear weak. Attitudinally, invigilators in better-supervised regions such as Manzini expressed greater commitment to integrity and professionalism, whereas counterparts in under-resourced areas often displayed apathy or compliance fatigue. In terms of practice, numerous deviations from official guidelines were observed, including poor handling of scripts, absence of key procedural announcements, and delegation of duties to untrained staff. These lapses were often linked to infrastructural challenges, limited leadership oversight, and the lack of continuous professional development. The study concludes that invigilation compliance is not merely a function of training, but an outcome of a dynamic interplay between knowledge reinforcement, positive attitudes, and enabling environments. It recommends a systemic shift from one-off training to continuous support strategies, enhanced school-level accountability, and the fostering of a culture of reflective practice. Such interventions are vital for strengthening examination integrity and ensuring equitable standards in high-stakes assessments across Eswatini.

**Keywords:** Invigilators, public examinations, KAP, EGCSE, Eswatini

**611 Assessing the Effectiveness of Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB)'s Strategies in Curbing Examination Malpractice at the Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) Level**

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This study assessed the effectiveness of the Uganda National Examinations Board's (UNEB) strategies for curbing examination malpractice at the Primary Leaving Examination (PLE) level. Employing a mixed-methods design, data were gathered from 720 respondents involved in various aspects of PLE administration and from 22 key informants through a researcher-designed semi-structured questionnaire and follow-up interviews. The questionnaire's reliability was confirmed by a Cronbach's alpha of 0.71, and the sample size was determined using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) Sample Determination Table. Findings indicate that UNEB has made notable progress with measures such as introducing random numbers for examination papers, prohibiting anyone other than candidates from reading the questions, restricting access to examination rooms, sealing scripts in candidates' presence, and conducting thorough candidate checks before entry—all of which were rated highly effective. However, persistent challenges remain, including corruption, technological innovations enabling new cheating methods, inadequate remuneration of officials, political interference, and slow judicial processes that undermine enforcement. Participants highlighted the need for greater transparency and accountability, particularly in naming offenders and managing logistics. The study concludes that examination malpractice is not solely a procedural issue but also a moral and cultural one, requiring both systemic reform and societal change. Recommendations include strengthening policy and legal frameworks, improving staffing and supervision, integrating technology, promoting ethical education in teacher training, reforming curriculum and assessment methods at the primary level, and enhancing collaboration with the judiciary. Further research should explore the feasibility, challenges, and projected outcomes of establishing specialized courts to enhance examination integrity, as well as the role of technology in managing malpractice. Addressing these issues holistically can significantly improve the integrity of Uganda's examination system.

**Keywords:** examination malpractice; Primary Leaving Examination (PLE); UNEB strategies; continuous assessment; stakeholder accountability; technological innovations



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## **EduChain: Leveraging Blockchain, Federated Learning, and AI Fraud Detection for Secure Competency-Based Assessment**

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In 2021, the Ugandan government introduced the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) in its Lower Secondary Level, following a global trend where CBC is quickly gaining traction. CBC is centred on what a learner can do; facilitating learners to discover new things, focusing on critical thinking, creativity, innovation, problem solving, cooperation and collaboration. Due to the nature of CBC, it would be impractical and nearly impossible for centralised assessment by national examinations bodies. This means assessment of the CBC; termed as Competency Based Assessment (CBA), is entrusted to schools and learning institutions. Despite the compelling benefits of this decentralisation, significant challenges that threaten the integrity and trustworthiness of the assessment results have been identified and these include but are not limited to; data falsification, assessment fraud, data manipulation and privacy concerns. Other significant operational challenges include resource limitations (computers, mobile devices, internet), and technological aptitude in the context of developing countries. This paper proposes EduChain, a secure, decentralised, and intelligent assessment framework that integrates three cutting edge technologies i.e. Blockchain, federated learning, and privacy-preserving cryptography to enhance the reliability of CBA in African educational institutions. EduChain leverages blockchain to ensure immutable record-keeping of assessment activities, while federated learning enables collaborative AI model training across institutions without exposing raw student data. To address growing concerns around academic dishonesty, the system includes an AI-driven fraud and data falsification detection layer, capable of identifying anomalous score submissions, behavioural inconsistencies, and tampering attempts using machine learning techniques such as anomaly detection and pattern analysis. Privacy is preserved using differential privacy and secure multi-party computation. We have produced a prototype implementation that demonstrates the technical feasibility and effectiveness of the system in detecting suspicious activity, ensuring data integrity, and supporting secure, scalable assessment delivery. The findings of this paper highlight the potential of EduChain to strengthen academic accountability, enable cross-institutional trust, and inform policy development for secure digital education in Africa.

**Keywords:** Blockchain, Competency-Based Assessment, Federated Learning, Privacy, AI Fraud Detection, Education Technology

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## Surveillance for Integrity: Leveraging Real-Time Monitoring to Protect High-Stakes Assessments

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As educational systems worldwide face increasing threats to the integrity of high-stakes assessments, the Independent Examinations Board (IEB) in South Africa has embraced a proactive, technology-driven approach to safeguard its examination processes. An integrated audio-visual surveillance system has been deployed across all examination venues, allowing for real-time and recorded monitoring from a centralised control hub. This innovation is more than a security measure, it is a strategic mechanism that reinforces public trust, protects candidates from false allegations, and enables the IEB to act swiftly and decisively when irregularities are detected. From early detection of procedural breaches, such as unauthorised early opening of exam papers, to ensuring invigilator vigilance and candidate safety, the system provides irrefutable evidence that supports informed, fair, and accountable decision-making. The presentation will showcase how this monitoring system has evolved from a compliance tool into a cornerstone of assessment credibility, and how issues of consent, data privacy, and institutional transparency are rigorously addressed. It will further explore how such innovations can serve as a blueprint for examination bodies across the continent, highlighting lessons learned, challenges faced, and the transformative potential of ethical surveillance in assessment administration.

**Keywords:** Assessment integrity, real-time monitoring, examination malpractice, surveillance technology, ethical assessment, data protection, IEB

## 700 Aligning Technical and Vocational Educational Training (TVET) Assessment with Industry Standards

### 701 Championing recognition and certification for inclusive qualification pathways towards labour mobility and promotion in the informal sector-perspectives from the National Industrial Training Authority, Kenya

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Africa boasts of the largest youth population globally, projected to reach over 830 million by 2050, with the working-age demographic (ages 15-64) expected to grow to 1.56 billion, representing 85% of the worldwide workforce increase. Approximately 80% of African youth participate in the informal sector, which serves as a crucial employment source and a launching pad for entrepreneurship. However, while this sector is vital for skill development, it grapples with challenges in nurturing a more inclusive, skilled, and competitive workforce. This study investigates the role of Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) and competency-based assessment in bridging this skills recognition gap, with a focus on enhancing employability, labour mobility, and economic inclusion. Adopting a mixed-methods approach, the research combines a qualitative review of policy and international best practices with a quantitative sector-specific case study from Kenya's Affordable Housing Project (AHP). Data was collected from 567 construction workers across 20 sites to evaluate their demographic profiles, trade experience, skill acquisition pathways, and readiness for certification under the National Industrial Training Authority (NITA). Findings reveal that 72% of workers lacked formal qualifications, with most gaining skills through on-the-job experience (52%) or non-formal mentorship (22%). Despite limited formal training, 96% of respondents considered themselves experienced, and 99% reported readiness for assessment. However, the high cost of RPL assessments of up to \$154.74 USD remains a critical barrier, especially for low-income earners. The study highlights a 31.64% increase in RPL uptake, though still 20.98% below national targets. Majority of candidates at 96% were young men and women aged between 18–35, underscoring the need for inclusive approaches to skills development and certification. Gender disparities were notable, with only 6% of participants being female which was attributed to roll out of RPL in existing skills areas. In the Construction sector Demand for skills recognition was especially high in masonry, carpentry, and steel fixing, indicating strategic trades for policy focus. The paper recommends scaling up subsidized RPL programs, expanding mobile and on-site assessment centers, and enhancing industry alignment through partnerships with TVETs and employers. Ultimately, RPL offers a transformative pathway to formalize skills, increase productivity, and promote equity in the labor market. Institutionalizing affordable and accessible assessment frameworks will be crucial in unlocking the potential of Kenya's informal workforce and achieving sustainable, inclusive development aligned with Vision 2030 and the Bottom-Up Economic Transformation Agenda (BETA). This study underscores the critical role of effective assessment strategies in promoting workforce mobility, lifelong learning, and aligning skill development with labour market needs, emphasizing a sector-based approach to recognizing and certifying non-formal and informal learning for job-specific skills to ensure inclusivity and foster career advancement.

**Keywords:** Prior Learning, Lifelong learning, Assessment

**702 Aligning TVET Assessment with Industry Standards: Insights from a Graduate Tracer Study in Zambia**

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The Technical Education, Vocational, and Entrepreneurship Training (TEVET) sector in Zambia is crucial for developing a skilled workforce. However, misalignment between assessment practices and industry standards limits graduates' ability to meet evolving labour market demands. This paper presents findings from a Pilot Graduate Tracer Study (GTS) on General Agriculture graduates (2021–2023), examining employability, training relevance, and the role of assessments in skills development. An embedded design of mixed-methods approach was used, combining quantitative data with qualitative insights from structured surveys. To ensure statistical significance, the online Cochran's formula was used to calculate the sample using the population of 582 graduates, a margin error of 5%, confidence level of 95% and assuming a proportion of 0.5 giving a sample size of 232. To cater for potential non respondents being a pilot study, the sample size was increased to 300. Stratified random sampling was employed to enhance representativeness and accommodate potential non-responses, achieving coverage of 52% of the target population. Quantitative data were analysed through descriptive statistics – frequency of occurrence, while qualitative responses were grouped together to identify key trends leading to emergence of themes. Findings reveal that only 45% of graduates secured employment, with 35% in self-employment. While 62% found employment that relevant to their training, gaps were identified in integrating modern agricultural technologies, soft skills, and entrepreneurship into curricula and assessments. A recurring concern was the disconnect between theoretical training and industry requirements, with graduates advocating for more hands-on learning and assessments aligned with real-world demands. To address these gaps, this paper recommends adopting competency-based assessments emphasizing technical skills, problem-solving, and entrepreneurship. Strengthening TEVET-industry partnerships is essential for co-developing assessments that reflect market needs. Additionally, incorporating industry-led certifications and extending industrial attachments can enhance practical exposure. Longitudinal and comparative studies are recommended to further deepen the understanding of graduate outcomes.

**Keywords:** TEVET, graduate tracer study, competency-based assessment, industry alignment, employability, technical skills, entrepreneurial skills, curriculum relevance.

**703 Assessing Teachers' Implementation of Formative Assessment in Enhancing Students' Achievement of Vocational Education Competencies in Tanzania Secondary Schools.**

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For decades the discourse on the secondary education system in Tanzania to produce school leavers who cannot deliver in real life job has been in focal point of the debate. Currently, Tanzania has come with the new curriculum with vocational education component integrated in secondary education system intending to solve the problem. The main objective of this study was to evaluate the extent teachers are implementing the principles of assessment for learning in enhancing students to achieve avocational education competences and practically assessed learners' performance in photosynthesis investigation as an outcome of achieved competence. To accomplish the purpose of the study, Fullan's Educational Change model was used to guide the study. Exploratory research design was employed and the research approach was mainly qualitative but some quantitative elements of research supplemented the study. A sample of 108 respondents involving 12 teachers, 84 Form Two students, 6 School Heads and 06 Head of departments was obtained through purposive and simple random sampling techniques. Data were collected through interview, documentary review and observation. Content analysis technique was used to analyze qualitative data obtained from interview and documentary review while descriptive used to analyze qualitative data obtained from observation checklist in photosynthesis investigation. However, it was observed generally that, on average 61 per cent of the teachers lacked skills of integrating the principles of assessment for learning in their classroom activities. Also, 40 per cent of the students were not able to demonstrate the competence they were assumed to achieved. Moreover, some competence has technical issues and some are requiring integration of discipline. The paper recommends that; further effort should be done to ensure that teachers of vocational education streams receive in-service training about assessment for learning. Also, ensure that policies are in place for assessment of the competences requiring integration of disciplines.

**Keywords:** Assessment, Formative assessment, assessment for learning, performance assessment.



**704 An Assessment on the Perceptions of TEVET College Managers and Trainers Towards External Quality Assurance Systems in Malawi: A Case Study of Technical Colleges in Lilongwe, Malawi.**

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The TEVET sector in Malawi is central to skills development and economic growth. While the TEVET Authority (TEVETA) has implemented external quality assurance (QA) systems to standardize vocational training and ensure institutional accountability, the success of these systems hinges on the perceptions and engagement of college managers and trainers. This study assesses the perceptions of TEVET college managers and trainers towards external quality assurance systems in Malawi. The research focuses on various TEVET institutions in Lilongwe, exploring their views on the effectiveness, challenges, and impact of quality assurance processes implemented by the TEVET Authority (TEVETA). The findings are expected to contribute to the improvement of quality assurance systems and support policy development aimed at enhancing vocational education and training in Malawi.

This study employed a mixed-methods approach to critically assess these perceptions. Using stratified random and purposive sampling techniques, a total of 60 participants were selected—20 managers, 20 trainers, and 20 apprentices—from Lilongwe Technical College, SOS Vocational Training College, and Don Bosco Technical College. Data were collected through structured questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and focus group discussions. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics (including t-tests and chi-square tests), while qualitative data were thematically analyzed to uncover patterns and insights.

Findings reveal that while TEVETA's QA framework offers a structured mechanism for monitoring and evaluation, several challenges persist. These include bureaucratic inefficiencies, institutional capacity constraints, misalignment with labor market needs, and perceived rigidity in compliance processes. Trainers often cited increased administrative burdens, limited support, and insufficient contextual relevance, which in turn affected their receptiveness to QA measures. The study underscores the importance of a participatory and flexible QA approach that encourages continuous stakeholder engagement, aligns with dynamic industry standards, and builds institutional capacity. These findings contribute directly to the AEAA 2025 theme, Transforming Educational Assessment: Towards Quality Learning and Informed Decision-Making, by offering evidence-based strategies for reforming vocational education assessment systems across Africa.

In light of the AEAA 2025 conference theme: Transforming Educational Assessment: Towards Quality Learning and Informed Decision-Making, this study contributes to the ongoing discourse on vocational training quality assurance in Africa. By bridging the gap between policy formulation and practical implementation, the research offers evidence-based recommendations for enhancing TEVETA's regulatory framework, promoting adaptive quality assurance strategies, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement within Malawi's TEVET sector. These insights hold significant implications for policymakers, educators, and industry stakeholders striving to elevate vocational training standards across Africa.



**705 Evaluating Alignment of TVET Assessments with Industry Standards: A Case Study of Food and Beverage Management Assessments by the Kenya National Examinations Council**

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A dynamic education system is essential for a country's economic growth, technological advancement, and global competitiveness. The Kenyan education system provides basic and tertiary education to achieve its educational goals. Tertiary education includes courses offered mainly through Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) which is structured by the Ministry of Education and adopts Competency-Based Education and Training (CBET). In Food and beverage management assessments, TVET aims to equip graduates with skills to meet industry demands. The Kenya National Examinations council (KNEC) offers TVET assessments in Food and Beverage management which are anchored on a curriculum developed by the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development (KICD). The food and beverage production industry has experienced rapid technological advancement and globalization which assessments should align with for relevance, quality, and employability of graduates. There is concern that graduates from TVET institutions are not consistently meeting dynamic industry expectations which may affect the sector's growth and competitiveness. This study assessed the extent to which KNEC-TVET assessments align with the food and beverage industry, based on content and assessment methods, and recommended measures to address any identified gaps. Case study research was adopted, and surveys and document scrutiny were used in data collection. Surveys involved industry professionals including trainers, hotel professionals among others. Curriculum and assessment analysis against industry standards was done. Data was qualitative and quantitative and involved use of descriptive analysis, use of crosstabulations for relationships between variables and Nvivo for thematic comparison of curriculum, assessments and industry standards. Findings show that the curriculum is aligned with the industry standards in management of food production and service, practical assessments, work-based assessments and industry involvement in assessment. However, gaps were identified in the adoption of emerging industry trends in digital and modern food production techniques, automation and soft skills. This study recommends the involvement of food industry professionals in updating the curriculum to integrate digital technologies and training in soft skills, a shift towards more performance-based evaluations, feedback loops from the industry and graduates and further research in curriculum implementation and graduate performance to support continuous improvement and alignment of assessments with industry standards.

**706 The Role of TVET in Addressing Youth Unemployment and Promoting Economic Development: A Case Study of South Africa**

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The purpose of this paper is to analyse the effect of aligning Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) assessment processes with an industry's assessment criteria on youth unemployment and economic growth in South Africa. A literature review research approach was used based on critical analysis of relevant contemporary scholarly work, policies, articles and other published works. Conclusions drawn from the findings indicate a disparity between industry expectation and prevailing TVET assessment practices, which ideally should address the skills gap and the escalating unemployment challenges among the youth. Some of the recommendations is the active participation of industries in curriculum design, Strengthening of Industry-TVET collaboration, and the use of performance indicators to measure TVET outcomes.

**Keywords:** TVET, Industry standards, economic growth, youth unemployment, skills

707	<p><b>Challenges and Opportunities in the Implementation of Prior Learning Assessments at the Technical Education Vocational Entrepreneurship Authority in Zambia.</b></p> <p><b>Dr. Chilwalo Malupande</b> <b>Mr. Ocean Matimba</b> <b>Zambia</b></p> <p>Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) at the Technical, Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurship (TEVETA) in Zambia has been applied at trade test level despite having a framework even at higher levels. The aim for prior learning assessments in Zambia was to allow learners who have not been able to attend formal education but have managed to gain significant experience in a particular field to be given an opportunity to earn a qualification or to upgrade an existing qualification, which could be used at any level of education and training. RPL has been recognized as playing an important role in addressing issues relating to lifelong learning, employment, and social inclusion. The implementation of RPL has been a challenge even when a policy of easy access to education has been passed. Lack of proper understanding of RPL has the potential to halt the efforts of enhancing RPL implementation. RPL assessments are being offered at lower levels as placed on the Zambia Qualifications Framework. Most of these are skills award level and at Trade Test levels. The purpose of this paper was to present potential challenges and opportunities that could influence the implementation of RPL assessments at TEVETA. The qualitative approach and the phenomenological design were used to seek participants' views, perceptions and experiences concerning RPL in Zambia. Purposive sampling was also used. The semi-structured interview schedules were engaged to collect data from 15 respondents. 2 Staff from TEVETA, 2 from assessment centres, 3 from assessors and 8 RPL graduates were purposively selected based on their positions that are key to providing information to the research questions. The data was analysed using NVIVO software with the use of Thematic analyses methods. The findings reveal opportunities such as the practicality of RPL policy, the practicality of political good will to implement RPL at the institution, the practicality of expertise, capability in terms of technology and infrastructure, quality assurance and the assessment policy of the institution. Despite putting a lot of efforts into the policy initiatives on RPL in the TEVET institutions in Zambia, there seems to be lack of commitment in its implementation. Challenges identified were lack of understanding of RPL, lack of understanding of the assessment criteria. The data reveal high demands regarding training on issues of assessment and raising awareness of RPL at the institutions. The paper recommends that TEVETA, Ministry of Technology and Science to spearhead the orientation and sensitization of its citizenry. It also recommends that RPL be perceived as an assessment strategy of which the outcomes are relevant.to the nation.</p> <p>Keywords: Policy, phenomenological design, Purposive sampling, Recognition of Prior Learning, assessment, validity, reliability, and integrity.</p>
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800	Collaboration for Harmonization of Educational Assessment Standards
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## 801 Teacher Collaboration in Teaching and Assessment of Secondary School Learners in Tanzania

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This study investigated collaborative teaching and assessment practices among Tanzanian secondary school teachers. It employed pragmatism research philosophy where both quantitative and qualitative data were collected. A mixed-methods approach was used to gain a comprehensive understanding of the practices, incorporating structured questionnaires for quantitative data and open ended question for qualitative insights. The population of the study consisted of 196 teachers, 50 females and 156 males, selected from 29 regions of Tanzania. Sampling was done randomly to ensure representation across different regions and school types. Responses from teachers were coded and numbers entered into M-Excel for processing. Data analysis included descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages. Results show that 83% of teachers collaborate in teaching and assessment with more of them (87%) collaborating in assessment than in teaching (78%). Additionally, more females (82%) collaborate in teaching and assessment than males (81%). Specifically, more females (90%) collaborate in assessment than males (74%) while more males collaborate in teaching (75%) compared to females (74%). Contrarily, 9% of the teachers do not collaborate in teaching and assessment. Specifically, most of them (11%) do not collaborate in teaching while 7% do not collaborate in assessment. Themes such as time constraints, lack of resources, insufficient knowledge about collaboration, and motivation emerged from the open-ended survey responses. Therefore, the study recommends that educational administrators implement targeted professional development programs to equip teachers with collaborative skills. Additionally, policy interventions should focus on reducing workload, providing adequate teaching resources, and fostering a collaborative culture within schools.

**Keywords:** Teacher collaboration, professional learning communities, teaching and assessment

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## Assessing the Consistency of Examiners' Scoring in English Language and Mathematics of NABTEB Certificate Examination

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The consistency of examiners in marking candidates' scripts in any examination is fundamental to maintaining the validity and reliability of assessment outcomes. Marking is a crucial component of quality assurance in assessment processes, particularly in public examinations. To maintain fairness, examination bodies such as NABTEB strive to ensure that candidates receive accurate scores that reflect their true performance. The quality assurance measures put in place include vetting of examiners' scoring to correct for deviations from the accepted scores in the marking scheme and checking scores summation. However, despite these measures, it has been observed that scoring of candidates' scripts remains a potential source of error that can compromise the accuracy and reliability of test scores. This threat has remained a barrier to educational assessment systems in Nigeria. This study therefore, sought to assess the consistency of English Language and Mathematics Team Leaders and Assistant Examiners in National Business Certificate/National Technical Certificate examinations using inter-rater reliability. Three research questions were answered. Ex-post facto and survey research designs were employed. The population comprised 480 examiners involved in the marking of English Language and Mathematics for the 2024 In-School examination marking exercise at the 16 marking zones. Purposive sampling technique was used to select 232 and 216 English Language and Mathematics examiners respectively making a total of 448 examiners. Two instruments were used: English Language and Mathematics vetting sheets for the year under study and semi-structured Questionnaire on Marking and Scoring of Scripts (QMSS). The inter-rater reliability was established using Cohen's Kappa statistics while the semi-structured questionnaire was analysed thematically. The results revealed a substantial ( $\kappa = 0.639$ ) and almost perfect ( $\kappa = 0.856$ ) agreement between the Team Leaders and Assistant Examiners in English Language and Mathematics respectively. However, the study also identified incompetence, fatigue, non-adherence to marking scheme and lack of commitment on the part of examiners as contributing factors to variations in scores. It was recommended that in order to obtain reliable scores in the assessment of candidates, NABTEB should recruit competent and well-trained examiners to participate in the making exercises.

**Keywords:** Inter-rater Reliability, Marking, Vetting Sheets, Team Leaders, Assistant Examiners.

**803 Assessing High-Stake Indigenous Languages Examination Standards in Selected Examination Boards in Southern Africa**

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The Association for Educational Assessment in Africa (AEAA) has a vision of harmonising educational assessments on the African continent to promote cooperation amongst examining and assessment bodies in the region. Every examination body has its own indigenous languages assessment standards, and they have been successfully used. Having the same examination standards for high-stake examination for indigenous languages subjects would be a step towards attaining the goal of collaborating for harmonisation of education assessment standards. The lack of harmonised assessment standards among African countries has caused the qualifications produced by the different examination boards not be in the same level. The study sought to assess the high-stake indigenous languages examination standards in selected countries in Southern Africa which could be the first brick laid in a drive to harmonise educational assessment standards. The study addressed the following questions: 1. What are the main areas (language skills) of assessment that are currently used among Southern Africa examination boards? 2. What are the benefits of having the same standards in examinations across Southern Africa? 3. What are the ideal standards for examination in Southern Africa? The study adopted a qualitative approach which employed document analysis to establish the standards used in the different examination standards in indigenous languages through analysing the different syllabuses and question papers. Eight examination boards were randomly selected across the Southern Africa region. The key findings of the study revealed that the indigenous languages standards are not similar among the different examination boards, the culture aspect of the indigenous languages is not found in other examination boards, yet it is considered to be vital for the identity of any society. Another key finding noted was that the harmonisation of the high-stake examinations among the examination boards will help improve assessments standards. The study recommends that all examination boards collaborate and harmonise their standards in indigenous languages examinations to bridge the gap that currently exist.

**Keywords:** High-Stake, Harmonise, Indigenous Languages, Language skills, Assessing.



**804 Public Relations of Examination Bodies in Coordinating Assessment Standards: Perception of Teachers**

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This study examines the perceptions of teachers regarding the public relations and communication strategies of the Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB). The primary objective was to identify strengths, gaps, and ways in which identified gaps can be improved within UNEB's communication practices across different examination levels. The research employed a descriptive survey methodology, utilizing semi-structured questionnaires distributed to 568 teachers, with data analyzed through descriptive statistics using SPSS. Key findings reveal that UNEB's strengths include timely communication (41%), staff professionalism (17%), and active digital presence (15%). Nevertheless, notable gaps were identified, with 44% of teachers citing delayed responses as a critical issue, and 12% pointing out insufficient outreach to rural and underserved communities. Additionally, 11% reported inadequate digital tools, and 13% experienced inconsistent messaging from different sources. Stakeholders suggested improvements such as leveraging social media (18%), developing mobile apps (24%), providing regular PR training (20%), and establishing response timelines to ensure quick handling of inquiries (53%). The study concluded that while UNEB demonstrates notable strengths in timely communication, staff professionalism, and active digital engagement, significant gaps remain that hinder effective stakeholder communication. Delayed responses, limited outreach to rural and underserved communities, inconsistent messaging, and insufficient digital tools were identified as primary areas needing improvement. The study recommended that the organization prioritize the development and integration of modern digital tools, such as a user-friendly mobile application and an upgraded website, to improve accessibility and responsiveness. Increasing the organization's social media presence and responsiveness is vital for timely communication and engagement, especially with rural and underprivileged communities. UNEB should also adopt best practices from other examination boards, such as leveraging diverse digital platforms, regular stakeholder engagement, standardized messaging, and timely communication protocols similar to approaches used by boards like Ofqual (UK), ACARA (Australia), and Singapore Examinations and Assessment Board to enhance stakeholder outreach, trust, and the overall effectiveness of its public relations and communication strategies.

**Key Words:** Assessment Standards



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MINISTRY OF HEALTH

The Ministry of Health (MoH) of Ethiopia is the federal government body responsible for overseeing the country's public health system. Established in 1948, the MoH plays a central role in shaping health policy, delivering essential services, and coordinating national health initiatives.

**Vision:** To see healthy, productive and prosperous Ethiopians.

**Mission:** “To promote the health and well-being of the society through providing and regulating a comprehensive package of health services of the highest possible quality in an equitable manner.”

#### Our Values

- Community first
- Integrity, loyalty, honesty
- Transparency, accountability, and confidentiality
- Impartiality
- Respect for law
- Being a role model
- Collaboration
- Professionalism
- Change/innovation
- Compassion

#### Powers and Duties of the Ministry according to proclamation no. 1097/2018:

- Formulate the country's health sector development program; follow up and evaluate the implementation of same;
- Prepare the country's health services coverage map; provide support for the expansion of health infrastructure;
- Support the expansion of health services coverage; follow up and coordinate the implementation of health programs;
- Provide appropriate support to promote research activities intended to provide solutions for the country's health problems and for improving health service delivery;
- Follow up and coordinate the implementation of national nutrition strategies;
- Devise and follow up the implementation of strategies for the prevention of epidemic and communicable diseases;
- Take preventive measures against events that threaten the public health; in the events of an emergency situation coordinate measures of other stakeholders to expeditiously and effectively tackle the problem;
- Expand health education through various appropriate means;
- Ensure adequate supply and proper utilization of essential drugs and medical equipment in the country;
- Supervise the administration of federal hospitals; collaborate on the capacity building activities of the federal university hospitals;
- Collaborate with the appropriate bodies in providing quality and relevant health professional trainings within the country;
- Ensure the proper execution of food, medicine and health care administration and regulatory functions;
- Lead the national social health insurance system and oversee its implementation;
- Direct, coordinate and follow up implementation of the country's health information system.

<https://www.moh.gov.et/>



## ABOUT SKYLIGHT HOTEL, VENUE

Ethiopian Skylight Hotel, owned by Ethiopian Airlines, is the most luxurious and the largest hotel in Ethiopia located at the heart of Africa's diplomatic hub Addis Ababa, just five minutes away from Bole International Airport. With outstanding international

standard service, the luxurious hotel awaits you for your leisure and business needs and it's ideal for international summits, corporate events, and high-level policy forums.

The Grand Ballroom which can accommodate 2000 for sitting setup and 4000 for cocktail setup at a time, it can also be divided into 5 individual halls along with spacious foyer area (can accommodate 500-800 guests) and 3 Day-light meeting rooms and 2 VIP private holding rooms are fit for your corporate meeting demands.

### Safety and Security:

The Ethiopian Skylight Hotel meets international safety standards with 24/7 security, CCTV coverage, and electronic room access. Fire safety systems, medical support, and frequent sensitization ensure guest wellbeing, while in-room safes and data privacy protocols protect valuables and information. Staff are trained to manage emergencies discreetly, making the hotel a secure choice for both major events and everyday stays.

### Closest hospital:

Conference delegates at the Ethiopian Skylight Hotel, benefit from close proximity to several well-regarded hospitals, including Hayat Hospital, which provides general medical care just a few minutes from the hotel.

### ATM's:

Delegates at Ethiopian Skylight Hotel benefit from on-site ATM and currency exchange, providing easy access to cash and international currencies—ideal for travelers near Bole International Airport.

### Shopping Mall

Ethiopian Skylight Hotel is surrounded by lively malls and cultural attractions. Nearby options include Morning Star Mall, Edina Mall and Friendship City Center for shopping.

### Cultural Centers

Delegates at Ethiopian Skylight Hotel can enjoy traditional cuisine and live cultural performances at the on-site Ta'em Cultural Restaurant. Nearby, Fendika Cultural Center celebrates Ethiopia's artistic legacy with music and dance, while Yod Abyssinia Restaurant—just minutes away—offers an iconic dining experience rich in authentic flavors and vibrant cultural showcases.

**Jogging Trail:** Guests can stay fit at the Green Apple Health Club or jog nearby along Airport Road and Cameroon Street—especially in the early morning when traffic is light.









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## PARTNERS



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MINISTRY OF HEALTH - ETHIOPIA



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