

# **Implementation of Formative Assessment Results by Teachers at the Secondary Level**

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## **KEY WORDS**

Assessment, Formative, Implementation

## **ABSTRACT**

This study addresses the gap in the existing literature about what teachers at secondary level in Pakistan know about formative assessment and to what extent they are using formative assessment results to make instructional adjustments in their teaching to address gaps in students' learning. This is a qualitative study and the research in this study was done on a purposive sample of 21 teachers, using semi structured interviews in which open-ended questions were asked to answer the questions about use of formative assessment. The research results suggest that most teachers had a comprehensive understanding of formative assessment as continuous or ongoing assessment which is taken during studies, and which can be used to identify gaps in students' learning. This research also concluded that formative assessment guides teachers on how to modify their instruction to address these gaps in learning during instruction, rather than waiting till it is too late. This study elaborates on how formative assessment is implemented in the class, and on how effectively the results of assessment are used to address gaps in students' learning and what are the challenges in implementing and using formative assessment results.

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## Introduction

“Assessment is a measure of learning at a given point which demonstrates your learner’s progress and achievement” (Gravells, 2021, p.3). Without some form of assessment, it would be impossible to judge the effectiveness of teaching pedagogy used and teachers would not know whether their teaching has translated into learning for students. Assessment results are the criteria used to confirm the knowledge and understanding of a student (Gravells, 2021) and it is used by teachers to determine the effectiveness of students’ learning (Ishaq et al, 2020). Hence, the feedback on assessments is one of the most vital parts of the learning process (Henderson et al, 2019).

Assessments are categorized into two types: Summative Assessments and Formative Assessments. Ahmed and Shah (2019) were of the view that summative assessment is the process of recording students' achievement up to a certain point and while such assessment looks at past performance of a student, it does not give direction to improve learners' performance in the future. In contrast, formative assessments are those which are carried out during the teaching and learning process, (Tien et al, 2020) and it is when teachers and students get assessment results also during this learning process (Ahmedi, 2019). Formative assessment is also called ‘Assessment for Learning’ as its purpose is to improve learning, and it is used as a tool to guide instruction and to gauge learning, while learning is occurring (Moss & Brookhart, 2019).

Formative evidence can help teachers to make instructional adjustments in their teaching. Such assessment is used to identify and monitor learners' needs, and to shape students' learning by informing teachers about how to adjust their teachings (Ahmed et al, 2019). As formative feedback is provided during teaching and learning, Prashanti and Ramnarayan (2019) argue that such feedback should be provided timely and early enough that it can help teachers and students to make corrections in teaching if any gap is identified between current and desired performance of students. They also talk about the concept of such assessment being ‘feedforward’ as it allows students and teachers to think about actions to take in the future to improve learning. In contrast to summative assessments, formative feedback enables teachers to do something about their teaching before it is too late (Yan & Brown, 2021). Thus, such assessment provides information that teachers can use to direct teaching or to redirect instructions when needed (Cizek et al, 2019).

Formative assessment may not always be as effective as most research claims. For it to be truly effective, such assessment and feedback must be integrated into teachers’ teaching pedagogy (Morris, 2021). Any assessment is contingent upon the teachers’ skills in implementing it (Ahmed et al, 2019). If teachers do not constantly gauge the level of student comprehension, then students may not be able to achieve the intended learning outcomes (Kenyon, 2019). There are many variables which will affect the implementation and effectiveness of formative assessments, and these will be discussed in this research.

Even though the idea of formative assessment leading to better learning has been accepted and discussed widely in recent years and a lot of research has been done on it (Yan & Brown, 2021; Kenyon, 2019), Ahmed et al (2020) observed gaps in implementation of formative assessment in Pakistan. They found in their research that in most schools, the focus of the teachers and in board exams was on summative assessments. They even went on to affirm that even though formative assessment is essential to improve performance in summative assessments, it is not used by most schools or teachers. Khan and Siddiqui, (2022) supported the idea that in spite of the advantages of formative assessment, it is not usually an essential component of curricula, especially in developing countries like Pakistan.

Therefore, the purpose of this research will be to find out what teachers at secondary level in Pakistan know about formative assessment and how they use formative assessment results to make instructional adjustments in their teaching. This will be done by answering the following two research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of teachers about Formative Assessment?
2. How do teachers at the secondary level implement results of formative assessment?

## **Literature Review**

### **Assessment for Learning Theory**

The theoretical assumption for this research is the theory of Assessment for Learning. The roots of this theory are Benjamin Bloom's work in 1969 where he acknowledged that 'formative evaluation' is used to provide feedback and to correct or modify teaching during the teaching process. He claims, "Formative evaluation should be regarded as part of the learning process and should in no way be confused with the judgment of the capabilities of the students or used as a part of the grading process" (Bloom: 48 as cited in Muntean, 2020). The term 'Assessment for learning' is also commonly called formative assessment (Bennett, 2011; Andriamiseza, 2022).

This is assessment which is implemented during the teaching process to improve students' learning outcomes (William, 2011). It is a planned, continuous process used during teaching and learning to show the level of student learning and use it to improve achievement of learning outcomes, while also supporting students to take responsibility for their own learning and be self-driven (Muntean, 2020).

An assessment activity can help learning if it provides information that teachers and their students can use as feedback in assessing themselves and one another and in modifying the teaching and learning activities in which they are engaged (Black et al, 2004). This theory of assessment has become an invaluable part of teaching and learning. It provides teachers with feedback designed to help them respond to emerging patterns in students' learning and enables them to make relevant adjustments needed in their teaching, based on students' feedback (Andriamiseza, 2022).

### **Implementation of Formative Assessment**

All research on formative assessment agrees that it involves collecting evidence about student learning and making use of it to direct such learning (Schildkam et al., 2020). One form of formative assessment is that it is 'Assessment for Learning' and it involves continuous interaction between learners and teachers in order to cater better to student needs (Schildkam et al., 2020).

Formative assessment is considered to have a significant use for the teaching and learning process as it leads to more effective teaching and serves for teachers to make modifications in their teaching strategies to adapt the needs of learners (Widiastuti et al., 2020). An interesting observation was made by Prashanti and Ramnarayan (2019) that formative assessment is powerful because it causes learning, rather than only measuring the worth of a student's learning.

Prashanti and Ramnarayan (2019) also presented some tenets of formative assessment. According to them, such assessment should incorporate 'Active Learning' that can help teachers to gauge the extent of students' learning especially if students are involved in their own learning. They further elaborated that formative assessment is beneficial when it

includes constructive feedback, and it should provide clarity about the gap between current and desired performance, so that teachers can tailor their instruction to achieve desired student learning outcomes. According to them, such assessments are best when not graded and should just be used as a yardstick to gauge students' learning. Thus, formative assessment should be used by the teacher to decide what areas to focus teaching on, whether it is to help students better understand a particular topic or to reinforce learning.

The importance of formative assessment is also recognized by educators in Pakistan. Mehmood et al. (2012) conducted a study on secondary schools in Pakistan where they found that students with whom formative assessment was conducted scored much higher in other assessments. Shahzad and Habib (2022) also found, based on a study of two Pakistani universities, that formative assessment is especially of significant importance in assessing reading and writing skills related to learning a second language.

### **Factors affecting implementation of Formative Assessment by teachers.**

Some factors affecting implementation of formative assessment are class-size and the nature of the curriculum (Tien et al., 2020). The success of formative assessment depends on teachers' implementation of formative assessment. Lan et al. (2021) found that some personal factors and some contextual factors influence teachers' implementations of formative assessment.

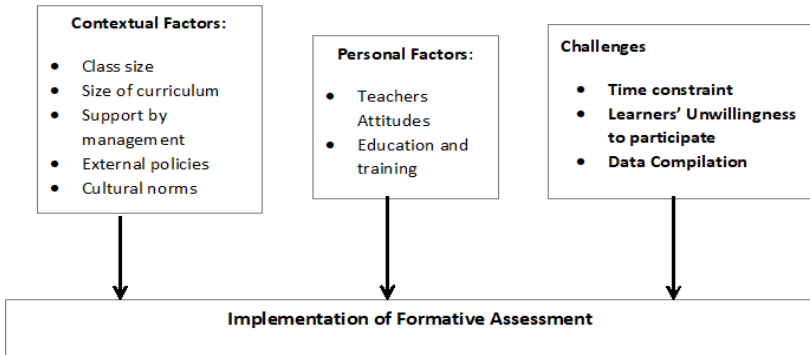
Personal factors, according to them, are the individual characteristics of teachers which affect their willingness to implement formative assessment. They have described the first of these as the teacher's attitude. If teachers perceive that formative assessment has a positive impact on students, it will increase their willingness to implement it (Lan et al., 2021; Yan & Cheng, 2015). If teachers believe in the usefulness of formative assessment, they will be willing to properly plan and administer it (Widiastuti et al., 2020). If teachers achieve self-efficacy and confidence in their ability to implement formative assessment, and if they have been given sufficient training in implementing formative assessment, they are more willing to do so (Lan et al., 2021; Yan & Cheng, 2015). Education and training is another personal factor which has the most significant impact on a teacher's intention to use formative assessments and so relevant training can have an infinitely positive impact on implementation (Lan et al., 2021).

However, the above premise is debatable because Widiastuti et al., (2020) have found that sometimes even teachers with a strong belief in the effectiveness of formative assessment and significant professional training in the same are not always able to effectively implement formative assessment in their classes. This may be because personal factors are not the only type of factors affecting implementation.

Lan et al. (2021) also found that some contextual factors have an impact on teachers' willingness to use formative assessment. The first of these is support by school management which includes policies and resources which would encourage teachers to implement formative assessment. External policies including supportive educational policies by the government would also encourage teachers to implement formative assessment by giving them legitimacy and would further encourage schools to provide training on such assessments (Lan et al., 2021). They described the third contextual factor as cultural norms which also had significant impact on teachers' intentions to use formative assessment. Lan et al. went on to describe the fourth factor which was a positive school environment. This, according to them, creates conditions where teachers are happy to try and implement formative assessment.

Shahzad and Habib (2022) found in their study of Pakistani universities that some other factors may also be helpful in implementation of formative assessment, such as record-keeping through diaries or portfolios and a standard rubric or criteria adopted for formative assessment.

### Conceptual Framework



The Conceptual Framework shows that there are two kinds of factors which affect Assessment for Learning which were evident from the literature review, personal factors, and contextual factors. These factors affect the implementation of Assessment for Learning, how far teachers are using this assessment, and how they are using the results from such assessment to modify their teaching. Then, there are certain challenges which are also faced in implementing such an assessment.

## Methodology

### Research Design

This qualitative study was conducted to understand the perceptions of teachers about formative assessment, and how or if they use the results of such assessment to modify their teaching. Qualitative semi-structured interviews were held, and such qualitative research interviews are a viable and frequently utilized data-collection instrument (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree 2006; Jamshed 2014 as cited in McGrath et al., 2019). Face-to-face interviews were used to collect data. Out of 21 interviews, 5 were held physically and the rest were held on video call. These were conducted using a semi structured interview guide consisting of 8 open ended interview questions.

Qualitative interviews are beneficial as they give researchers the chance to explore and do an in-depth analysis of issues that are specifically related to that phenomenon and are unique to the experiences of the interviewees, enabling them to derive insights into how that phenomenon is experienced and understood (McGrath et al., 2019).

### Data Collection Instruments

Open-ended questions were used in these interviews. Open-ended questions not only help researchers get an in depth analysis about an issue but also generate a significant amount of text which can be analyzed in detail for a variety of viewpoints as the text varies from a few sentences to long explanations on the part of the interviewees (Jackson & Trochim,

2002 as cited in Nauman & Hussain, 2017). All the interviews were conducted in English except one, but even in English ones, a few sentences were used in Urdu. However, the transcripts of all interviews have been translated into English. Participants' interviews were recorded in this study and pseudonyms were used.

The funneling technique of questioning was adopted in this study. This technique involves using an approach where we first ask more generalized questions regarding a phenomenon in the start of the interview and then move on to more detailed and specific issues about a phenomenon (Smith & Osborn, 2015 as cited in Nauman & Hussain, 2017).

The advantage of qualitative interviews is that they are an accessible, often affordable, and effective method to understand the perspective and viewpoints of the research participants. The data from qualitative interviews is not generalized and there is no 'one-size fits all' approach, but rather, the exploratory nature of such research allows compilation of 'rich data' which is detailed data regarding a phenomenon. (Nathan et al, 2019). As proposed by McGrath et al. (2019), care was taken throughout the interview to be sensitive to the interviewees' reactions and emotions when discussing their experiences or the challenges they faced.

### **Sample**

The sampling method was purposive in nature because a purposive sample is one which has firsthand information about the phenomenon under study (Tracy, 2013 as cited in Nauman, 2023). This kind of non-probability sampling is used in qualitative research and relies on the decision of the researcher in purposely selecting the units or people to be studied (Sharma, 2017). The researcher focuses on collecting data from people who are able and willing to provide information about that particular phenomenon because they have knowledge about it or have experienced it themselves, and so will be able to provide relevant information to that situation (Etikan et al., 2016).

Thus, purposive sampling involves identifying and selecting a sample of people that are not only well informed about the phenomenon but are also able to express their opinions and communicate their knowledge and opinions in an articulate manner (Etikan et al., 2016).

The sample of teachers for this research was extracted keeping in mind the following characteristics:

1. They were teachers in elite private schools of Karachi
2. They were teachers at the secondary level/ O level teachers
3. They all had more than 2 years of teaching experience

### **Data Analysis**

Thematic analysis was used to analyze data. Aronson, 1994 as cited in Nauman & Hussain, 2017 explained that thematic analysis derives themes and patterns of behavior which can be done by first collecting the data, and then transcribing the data. After the data was transcribed, it is used to find the codes. Coding is a process through which a researcher organizes the unstructured data that is collected from the interviews conducted (Nauman & Hussain, 2017). Tracy (2013 as cited in Nauman 2023) defines coding as an "active process of identifying data as belonging to, or representing, some type of phenomenon" (p. 189). Coding was done by identifying the codes and highlighting the most often repeated codes. This coding is then used to find categories which are merged into themes, and then the main point of views of respondents in each theme are identified and written as the

results of the study and are further analyzed in order to reach conclusions about the research questions.

### **Results**

The data from the short interviews from secondary school teachers was recorded and transcribed. After studying the data thoroughly, it was coded during initial readings, and later combined similar codes to develop four main themes: 'Understanding and Importance of FA', 'Implementation of FA and using results from FA', 'Factors which helped in implementation and use of FA' and 'Challenges and Suggestions for better implementation and use of FA'

#### **Understanding and Importance of FA**

The understanding of most teachers about formative assessment can be judged from these phases: "It is assessment used to gauge a child's understanding", "It is ongoing or continuous assessment taken during the course of a program or during the teaching term", "it helps students identify their strengths and weakness and target areas that need improvement", "feedback from formative assessment is used to alter the teacher's instruction". This shows that the teachers had a comprehensive understanding of Formative Assessment.

Many teachers interviewed had a similar opinion and felt that formative assessment was very important as it helps them to identify needed improvement in instructions based on feedback from formative assessment and to accordingly modify or improve their instruction by trying something different, by using a different strategy. Most teachers interviewed felt that formative assessment helps them to gauge where the students stand in terms of their learning and that it gives them timely feedback about students' learning, thus showing them in a timely way what changes to make in the syllabus or how the curriculum needs to be molded to better address students' learning needs. One interviewee's comment on this was as follows:

*"It can also be used as a learning tool for the teacher so the curriculum can be molded according to student's learning needs."*

The teachers interviewed elaborated that timely means that formative assessment helps assess learning before it is too late and before summative assessments are given, as it is too late to address any gaps in learning once the course is reaching its end when summative assessments are being administered. The teachers also felt that formative assessment also helps students to understand gaps in their learning and as it is taken constantly throughout the teaching and learning process, it enables constant feedback to be given to students about their performance, hence enabling them to improve their performance as needed. Lastly, many teachers felt that formative assessment is significant because it helps the teacher to reflect on his or her teaching practice and pedagogical techniques used and to improve his or her teaching.

#### **Implementation of FA and using results from FA**

It was analyzed how formative assessment is implemented by most teachers, and how they use formative assessment results. Some teachers stated that to implement formative assessment, they start a lesson by assessing students' prior knowledge and this helps them assess where the student stands. The standpoint of most teachers was that the way they implement formative assessment is that if a student or a group of students is struggling, they will modify their teaching approach, some said they may reteach using a different strategy, some said they may use different content, and some said they may modify the

pace of teaching. They stated that if they find any gaps in student learning, they would adjust or tailor their instruction to better meet the needs of their students. One such response given by one of the interviewees is given below:

*“Once the results have been achieved and I have gotten feedback from my students, I have made adjustments in my lessons, in the course content as well as method of delivery and instructional techniques.”*

Another response with a similar viewpoint was as follows:

*“If we notice that there is something that everyone or most of the students are not doing correctly, that means they have misunderstood this concept and one must stop and restart and reteach that using a different strategy, perhaps by showing a video or perhaps by having a group work.”*

The teachers also felt that formative assessment should be implemented by giving assessments based on higher level skills of Bloom's taxonomy which will help build students' analytical or metacognition skills. Some teachers felt that they use formative assessment more with students who need more time to grasp concepts or with weak students. Some interviewees also felt that formative assessment should be incorporated as part of Learning Outcomes during planning.

Most teachers said they implemented formative assessment by using small activities in class to gauge students' understanding. Strategies used commonly included exit tickets, quizzes, thumbs up/ thumbs down, summary of concepts, verbal questions and answers and in-class exam type written assignments. Many teachers also said that as part of formative assessment, they sometimes seat a struggling student with a peer who can help them, and so peer feedback is also a part of formative assessment. This was expressed by one of the teachers as follows:

*“I will seat a student struggling to grasp something with a peer who has mastery of the concept.”*

Once formative assessment is implemented, teachers use the results from such assessments to identify students' strengths and weaknesses and to monitor their progress and provide regular feedback which can be used by students to improve their learning. Some teachers also said they would use formative assessment for achievement of student Learning Outcomes.

### **Factors which helped in implementation and use of FA**

The factors which helped teachers to use formative assessments effectively were formal training, ongoing support by management, use of technology in designing and administering assessments, their willingness to use formative assessments and students' willingness to try new activities. Some teachers expressed that formal training in formative assessment had helped them. Out of the teachers interviewed, 14 had received formal training in formative assessment, some of them in the form of Cambridge University professional development programs conducted in their schools. 7 had not received any formal training. Some teachers expressed that ongoing support by management and use of technology in designing or administering assessments had also helped them to implement formative assessments more effectively. Another factor which some teachers felt had helped them was their willingness to use formative assessment. The teachers who were able to use it more effectively believed the stronger their belief in the effectiveness of



formative assessment was, the more effectively they were able to implement it and use the results to modify their instruction. Another factor which helped some teachers implement formative assessments was students' willingness to try new activities and to be involved. The teachers found it much easier and more effective when students took ownership of their own learning, when they submitted assessments on time and when they attended classes regularly so that such assessment could be done. As one of the teachers mentioned:

*“Well mainly students’ regularity and punctuality and the follow-up by students themselves was a huge factor in helping in the success of the formative assessment. Regular attendance and follow-up by students can be extremely helpful for us as teachers in implementing formative assessment.”*

### **Challenges and Suggestions for better implementation and use of FA**

There were many challenges teachers faced in implementing formative assessment, which hindered the effective use of assessment results. Some of the challenges faced were time constraint, learners' unwillingness to participate and data compilation. The biggest challenge, faced by almost all of teachers interviewed, was a time constraint. They felt that given the amount of syllabus to be covered, teachers were always short of time to implement formative assessment, as most formative assessment activities took some time. So, they found it difficult to balance effective formative assessment with the limited time available to cover the syllabus. Some teachers also felt this time constraint was a reason they could not carry out formative assessments on a regular basis. This challenge was expressed by one of the teachers as:

*“The syllabus for O and A level Biology is so extensive that I'm usually short on time to complete the learning outcomes that I don't have the time to conduct a formative assessment.”*

Another challenge faced by some teachers was that learners are sometimes hesitant and not willing to participate in assessments or activities. Data compilation was another challenge faced, as some teachers found it difficult to do so. Some teachers also said that large class sizes were a challenge in implementing such activities, and one of them expressed this as: *“It becomes more burdensome on teachers when the number of students in the class is large...30 or more”*

We asked teachers what their suggestions were for improving formative assessments and how the challenges faced could be overcome. One of the most common views held was that to improve use of formative assessments, continuous professional development programs should be conducted where teachers should be given training on implementation and use of such assessments. The teachers also suggested that there should be a supportive school culture towards using such assessments, that management should allocate more resources for materials required for formative assessment activities and that management should monitor implementation and evaluate effectiveness of such assessments. They further suggested that schools should provide more opportunities for teachers to do formative assessment and make it a regular part of lessons. They felt that teachers should be given training on Data Analysis and there should be smaller class sizes. They also observed that if there was pressure on teachers to complete syllabus, then teachers could have more time to plan creative formative assessments and make better use of them, to improve student learning outcomes.

### Discussion

Most teachers had a good understanding of formative assessment. They understood it to be continuous and ongoing assessment which is used by teachers to modify their teaching strategies to improve instruction. The teachers in this study felt that formative assessment is important because it allows them to get a clear picture of any gaps in students' learning during teaching and address these gaps in a timely manner. They further emphasized that it also gives students themselves an idea of where they stand, so they can try to improve. Gravells (2021); Moss and Brookhart, 2019 and Ishaq et al. (2020) had also elaborated on this aspect of formative assessment in their studies and had stressed that it is assessment taken during studies which allows teachers to get a comprehensive idea of the level of students' learning. By assessing student progress and identify gaps, it serves the essential function of informing teachers about what kind of changes are needed in their teaching and shows them exactly in what manner they need to redirect instruction (Ahmed et al, 2019; Cizek et al.,2019).

The teachers interviewed felt that taking formative assessment is better than waiting till summative assessments which are taken at the end of the course, as that would be too late to address any gaps in student learning and it would be too late to change teaching strategies. Prashanti and Ramnarayan (2019) and Yan & Brown (2021) had supported this view and had further explored how feedback from formative assessments must be timely as such assessment allows teachers to address any gaps in students' learning and make corrections in a timely manner. They explained how such feedback enables teachers to identify and address learning gaps before it was too late.

This study revealed that most teachers said they implement formative assessments by using small strategies and activities in class. Then they use these results such a way that if they find a gap in student learning, they will modify their teaching approach, they may reteach using a different strategy, may seat them with a peer for help, may use different content or modify pace of teaching. Peer feedback from a fellow student is formative in that it can be used by the student to improve performance (Huisman et al., 2019). Almost all teachers agreed that formative assessment would involve them tailoring instruction to the needs of their students. Prashanti and Ramnarayan's (2019) elaborated on how teachers address the gap between current and desired performance and about such assessment being 'feedforward'. Widiastuti et al., (2020); Schildkam et al. (2020) and Moss and Brookhart (2019) also explained how teachers make modifications to their teaching to adapt to needs of learners.

It was noted that most teachers did in fact feel that they were implementing formative assessment in their classes, albeit to varying degrees. Many felt that it should be part of their lesson plans. Koksalan and Ogan-Bekiroglu (2019) elaborated on this and actually gave a framework which showed how formative assessment would be incorporated in lesson planning. Wiliam (2011b) and Clarke (2008) as cited in Kanjee (2020) talked about key pedagogical steps through which formative assessment would be integrated into classroom practices, as a norm.

There were some factors which were highlighted by the teachers in the study, which supported and helped them in implementing formative assessment, such as formal training in using formative assessment, ongoing support by management, use of technology in

designing and administering assessments, teachers' willingness to use formative assessment and students' willingness to participate. Formal training in formative assessment and support by school management in the form of resources and policies, have been shown to help in its implementation, as explained by Lan et al. (2021). One of the most significant support factors expressed by most teachers in this study, was the strong belief of teachers in the effectiveness of formative assessment, leading to their willingness to use such assessment. Studies done by Lan et al. (2021); Yan & Cheng (2015) and Widiastuti et al. (2020) concluded that if teachers perceive that formative assessment has a positive effect on student learning, then it would increase their willingness to use such assessments to improve their teaching.

However, these views expressed by the teachers are in contradiction to the findings of Widiastuti et al., (2020) who found that sometimes even teachers with strong conviction in the effectiveness of formative assessment and formal training in formative assessments are not always able to effectively implement such assessment in their classes.

Though most teachers in the study expressed that they were implementing formative assessments, this was not consistent for everyone and the reason for this may be the variety of challenges that came up in the study which are faced by secondary school teachers in Pakistan. The most significant challenge faced by most teachers, was time constraint. Most teachers in the study found that given the amount of syllabus to be covered in secondary classes, they were always rushed to complete the syllabus, and so it was a challenge to find time to implement meaningful formative assessment. Some more challenges faced by the teachers were data compilation and students' unwillingness to engage in activities.

In order to overcome these challenges, the teachers felt that better training needs to be given by school management in implementation and use of formative assessment results. They were of the view that school management needs to be more supportive and should allocate more resources towards implementing formative assessment activities. It should be incorporated as a part of lesson planning rather than teachers facing pressure to complete the syllabus and hence having to find extra time in their lesson to implement such assessments.

### **Conclusion**

Most teachers understand formative assessment to be assessment administered during the teaching and learning process which is used by teachers to modify their teaching strategies to improve instructions. They felt this kind of assessment is important because it can be used to identify learning gaps while a topic is being taught, rather than waiting to get an assessment of learning from summative assessments which are taken at the end of the term, and by then it is too late to address any gaps in learning.

All the teachers in the study explained that they are using formative assessment in their classes, though some use it more than others. They were implementing this assessment using small activities in the class to gauge learning, and if any gaps were found, they would modify their teaching strategy, they would reteach a concept or explain it using different content or ask another student to help by giving peer feedback. They also talked about how there were certain factors which help-ed them to implement formative assessment, while there were some factors which presented challenges or constraints in implementation, one of the most significant being less time to implement formative assessment in the face of pressures to complete the syllabus on time.

Therefore, the following recommendations are made because of this study:

- School management should provide proper professional training in the use of formative assessment and provide resources for materials required.
- School management should provide support in terms of reducing the syllabus or providing more time to teachers to implement formative assessment, such that they do not feel that they cannot implement assessments due to the pressure put on them to complete the syllabus.
- Formative assessments should be made part of the lesson plan, should be embedded in planning, and not considered something which takes away from the lesson time.
- School management should monitor implementation and evaluate the effectiveness of such assessments.
- The education departments of the government should recognize the importance of formative assessment and promote proper training and implementation in all schools, especially those which are not elite schools.

### Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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