Continuous Assessment Feedback Giving Approaches in the Context of Competence-Based Education Training: A Case Study of the National Institute of Transport in Tanzania

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Abstract

Feedback-giving is a critical component of continuous assessment within Competence-Based Education and Training (CBET). It enhances students' skill development and deepen their understanding while also providing lecturers with insights into the effectiveness of the teaching-learning process. This study examined how continuous assessment feedback approaches were employed by lecturers at the National Institute of Transport to enhance students' skill acquisition and comprehension of learning tasks. Guided by the interpretivist paradigm, the study utilised an exploratory case study design. Data were gathered through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and document reviews involving 19 lecturers and six students, selected using purposive and convenience sampling techniques. The findings indicate that most lecturers employed effective feedback methods, such as providing comments, returning completed tasks, and fostering lecturer-student engagement. The study concludes that these feedback-giving approaches play a significant role in promoting skill development and fostering a deeper understanding of learning tasks among students.

Keywords: *learning tasks, deeper understanding, returning comments, corrections*

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Introduction

Continuous Assessment Feedback (CAF) approaches are widely recognised as critical tools for enhancing student engagement in learning and improving outcomes in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) (NACTE, 2016; Popkova, 2018; Resigalla et al., 2017; Rana & Zubair, 2019; Ahmed et al., 2019). Research has demonstrated that CAF approaches motivate students to persist in their studies, address weaknesses, and foster interactions with lecturers (Popkova, 2018; Resigal-

la et al., 2017; Rana & Zubair, 2019). Most importantly, these approaches provide students with actionable feedback, which enhances their learning processes (Ahmed et al., 2019). Beyond facilitating knowledge acquisition, CAF has shifted the educational focus from the mere transmission of content to fostering deeper understanding and skill development (Pereira & Flores, 2017). It also plays a pivotal role in improving the teaching and learning process and guiding students' career readiness (Abera et al., 2017). However, the implementation of CAF within Competence-Based Education Training (CBET) has faced significant challenges, such as limited lecturer capacity and overcrowded classrooms (Lugimbana, 2017; Tambwe, 2017). To address these challenges, NACTE has emphasised training lecturers in Technical and Vocational Education and Training Institutions (TTEIs) to improve their feedback practices, including commenting on learning tasks, timely returns, and student engagement in corrections. Effective CAF practices not only enhance students' understanding of their strengths and weaknesses but also ensure the development of skills critical to CBET objectives (NACTE, 2016).

Poor implementation of CAF can have far-reaching consequences. Ineffective feedback practices hinder students from addressing deficiencies, impede skill development, and compromise lecturers' ability to meet educational goals. This, in turn, impacts employers' expectations and limits the quality of services provided to the community by graduates. Thus, CAF lies at the heart of fostering professional skills and deeper understanding in CBET contexts. Despite its importance, studies reveal inconsistent CAF practices among lecturers. Some lecturers fail to provide feedback altogether, while others deliver it irregularly or without proper engagement (Berhe & Embiza, 2015; Ajuonima, 2008). Inconsistencies in feedback provision, such as administering subsequent tasks before addressing earlier ones, have further exacerbated these issues (Dejene & Chen, 2019; Walde, 2015). Overcrowded classes, time constraints, and limited lecturer capacity further restrict the timely marking, commenting, and returning of student work, resulting in surface-level assessment and arbitrary grading (Abera et al., 2017; Tlali & Jacobs, 2015). These issues undermine the core objectives of CAF—helping students identify their strengths and weaknesses and enabling skill acquisition and deeper learning.

In the Tanzanian context, research highlights the centrality of CAF within CBET but underscores persistent challenges. Lugimbana (2017) and Tambwe (2017) indicate that most lecturers in TTEIs lack the necessary skills and capacity to deliver effective feedback, which hinders skill development and student understanding. Overcrowded classrooms and inadequate knowledge of CAF further exacerbate these issues, impeding timely and effective feedback provision. CAF has transformed learning by emphasising the development of skills and deeper understanding over mere content transmission. While NACTE (2016) mandates timely feedback from lecturers, gaps in its consistent implementation remain widespread (Lugimbana, 2017; Tambwe, 2017)

Existing research has largely focused on the challenges and dynamics of CAF since the introduction of CBET in Tanzania, yet critical questions about its practical application persist. This study aims to address this gap by exploring how lecturers at the National Institute of Transport (NIT) employ CAF approaches to impart skills and foster deeper understanding within the CBET framework.

Conceptual Framework

This study was guided by the Adapted Tia Finney (2024) Confirmative Implementation Model, which emphasises that the success of an educational programme depends on the integration of institutional strategies, processes, practitioners, and learners. In this context, the institutional strategies are represented by the NIT Continuous Assessment Strategies, including the NIT Continuous Assessment Guidelines, lecturer capacity-building initiatives, and departmental meetings. The *NIT Continuous Assessment Guidelines* mandate that lecturers provide timely feedback on all five learning tasks. This process requires lecturers to comment on the learning task, return it to students, and engage them in correcting it before administering the next task. This sequential feedback mechanism ensures the impartation of skills and a deeper understanding among students. The *lecturer capacity-building initiative* involves annual training sessions and induction programs for newly hired lecturers to familiarise them with Competence-Based Education Training (CBET) standards, particularly regarding effective feedback practices. The *departmental meetings*, chaired by heads of academic departments, serve as accountability forums. These meetings review lecturers' adherence to feedback timelines as outlined in the NIT Guidelines. Heads of departments are authorised to address cases where lecturers fail to provide timely feedback, reinforcing institutional expectations. Together, these institutional strategies aim to guide, train, and motivate lecturers to deliver timely feedback, a critical component of continuous assessment in the CBET framework.

The feedback process involves both lecturers and students. Lecturers provide timely feedback to help students identify their strengths and weaknesses and improve future learning tasks. For students, receiving feedback is essential for integrating suggestions, addressing weaknesses, and ultimately acquiring the skills and deeper understanding central to CBET. According to the Adapted Tia Finney (2024) model, the intertwining of institutional strategies, processes, lecturers, and students is fundamental to fostering skill acquisition and deeper understanding. Conversely, inconsistent feedback delivery undermines this process, leading to inadequate skill acquisition. This shortfall adversely affects students' learning outcomes, employers' workforce expectations, and the quality of community services delivered by graduates. Therefore, continuous and consistent feedback practices are critical for achieving the objectives of CBET.

Methodology

This study employed a qualitative approach, which is well-suited for exploring complex, context-specific phenomena in depth. By focusing on the lived experiences, perceptions, and attitudes of participants, the qualitative approach enabled the researcher to gather rich, descriptive data that provided insight into the nuances of continuous assessment feedback (CAF) practices in the Competence-Based Education and Training (CBET) context. This approach emphasises understanding meaning from the participants' perspectives, allowing the researcher to delve deeply into how lecturers and students interpret and engage with CAF processes within the institutional environment of the National Institute of Transport (NIT). It also facilitates an iterative and flexible data collection process, essential for capturing the multifaceted realities of CAF implementation.

Anchored in the interpretivist paradigm, the study sought to understand social phenomena through the subjective meanings attributed by individuals (Pesambili, 2020; Pesambili & Novelli, 2021; Schwandt, 2000). This paradigm aligns with a qualitative approach by prioritising the exploration of participants' lived experiences within their specific cultural, educational, and institutional contexts. The interpretivist lens allowed the researcher to explore how participants construct and ascribe meaning to their practices, interactions, and challenges related to CAF, offering a deeper understanding of the social dynamics and processes influencing teaching and learning in CBET.

The study employed an exploratory case study design, focusing on NIT as a bounded system to provide an in-depth examination of CAF practices within a real-world context (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Yin, 2018). Case studies are particularly well-suited for addressing "how" and "why" questions (cf. Pesambili & Mkumbo, 2018, 2024), such as understanding how institutional guidelines influence feedback practices and why lecturers and students perceive these practices as they do. This approach allowed for a detailed exploration of contextual factors unique to NIT, including overcrowded classrooms, diverse academic programmes, and adherence to Continuous Assessment Guidelines. By narrowing the focus to a single institution, the study captured the interplay between institutional policies, lecturer practices, and students' learning experiences, uncovering insights into the processes, challenges, and outcomes of CAF implementation. Moreover, the exploratory nature of the design offered flexibility to uncover unexpected themes and patterns, contributing valuable insights for broader applications within CBET frameworks.

The research was conducted at the NIT in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, selected for several reasons. Firstly, NIT offers a diverse range of programmes, including Business and Entrepreneurship Studies, Humanities and Social Sciences, Transport and Engineering Technology, Logistics and Transport Studies, Computing and

Communication Technology, and Aviation (www.nit.ac.tz). Secondly, NIT implements five distinct learning tasks—Test One, Test Two, Individual Assessment, Group Assessment, and Project—which align with the study's focus. Thirdly, NIT is among the rapidly growing Technical and Tertiary Education Institutions (TTEIs), with an approximate enrolment of 13,000 students, providing a suitable context for exploring CAF in the face of overcrowding. Fourthly, the institute has developed specific Continuous Assessment Guidelines detailing the administration of the five learning tasks and offering an opportunity to examine the strategies employed to ensure timely feedback. Finally, NIT's adherence to the CBET framework made it accessible and appropriate for data collection.

The study involved 25 participants, including 19 lecturers and six students. Seven lecturers who also held managerial positions—comprising the Head of Quality Assurance (HQA) and six Heads of Academic Departments (HoDs)—were purposively selected for their roles and access to rich data (Patton, 1999). The HoDs are custodians of student evaluation forms and reports and chair departmental meetings to review and monitor lecturers' CAF practices. Additionally, six students were purposively selected, including one student parliament representative from the third-year cohort of each academic department, chosen for their three years of experience with CAF. Convenience sampling was used to select 12 lecturers (two from each department) to ensure efficient and timely data collection (Suen et al., 2014). This approach allowed for the inclusion of any accessible lecturers employed by NIT.

Data collection methods included in -depth interviews with 19 lecturers, focus group discussions with six students, and documentary reviews of reports from the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU), National Council for Technical Education (NACTE), and Quality Assurance offices. In-depth interviews allowed the researcher to gain rich, detailed insights into the lecturers' views, practices, and experiences with CAF implementation (cf. Pesambili & Novelli, 2020). Focus group discussions provided a platform for students to collectively share their views and experiences, revealing shared challenges and perceptions regarding CAF practices (cf. Pesambili & Mkumbo, 2018). Documentary reviews offered secondary data that contextualised and validated the findings by providing institutional policies, performance metrics, and official records related to CAF practices, adhering to recommended protocols (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Data analysis followed the Six Steps Model of Thematic Analysis outlined by Nowell et al. (2017). First, researchers familiarised themselves with the data by listening to audio recordings, reading transcribed notes from interviews and focus groups, and reviewing relevant reports. Second, initial codes were generated to reduce data into manageable segments, creating short hands that transitioned raw

data into structured ideas. Third, themes were identified by analysing codes to uncover meaningful patterns. Fourth, these themes were reviewed and refined for coherence and alignment with the data. Fifth, themes were defined and named to reflect their significance concerning the research objectives. Finally, the researcher synthesised the findings into a detailed thematic report, linking the identified themes to the broader theoretical framework and relevant literature on quality education (cf. Braun & Clarke, 2022).

Ethical considerations were strictly observed. Anonymity was maintained for participants and departments during data collection and reporting to protect their identities and ensure they could freely share their experiences and opinions without fear of repercussions (See also Pesambili, 2024; Pesambili & Mkumbo, 2024 for details). The researcher ensured equal treatment of participants regardless of age or gender and upheld their right to withdraw at any stage of the study without consequence (Frankel et al., 2012; Patton, 1999). All data were collected without manipulation, and sources were appropriately acknowledged in the report.

Results and Discussion

The learning tasks feedback approach

According to the NACTE (2016) Standards and the NIT Continuous Assessment Guidelines, lecturers are required to provide written comments on each student's learning tasks, highlighting strengths and weaknesses to foster skill development and deeper understanding. Commenting on learning tasks was the first approach to Continuous Assessment Feedback (CAF) used by lecturers to support student learning. The findings showed that 11 out of 19 lecturers believed that comments on students' learning tasks—such as Test One, Test Two, Individual Assignments, Group Assignments, and Projects—enhanced learning. However, due to large class sizes, most of these comments were verbal. The average class size at NIT was 220 students, with the largest class comprising 600 students. Consequently, lecturers were required to provide written comments on 600 Test One scripts, 600 Test Two scripts, 600 Individual Assignments, and 60 Group Assignments and Projects (with groups of 10). In larger classes, this amounted to 1,920 learning tasks, while average-sized classes required comments on 704 tasks. Some lecturers taught two modules per semester, leading to up to 1,408 tasks requiring written feedback. As a result, many lecturers resorted to verbal comments rather than written feedback, in contrast to the NACTE guidelines. The findings further indicated that most lecturers provided verbal feedback on Test One, Test Two, and Individual Assignments, focusing on general strengths and weaknesses to aid skill acquisition and understanding. During marking, lecturers noted these strengths and weaknesses,

returned the tasks, and gave verbal feedback in class to help students develop the necessary skills and understanding. One lecturer commented:

> I normally provide verbal comments on individual assignments and tests due to overcrowded students in classes, and the approach imparts expected skills and deeper understanding to students (Lecturer 11, Department C; 25 April 2022).

The quote highlights that the majority of lecturers at NIT provide verbal rather than written comments due to overcrowded classes, a finding consistent with Tlali and Jacobs (2015) and Abera et al. (2017), who noted that large student numbers hinder lecturers' ability to comment on learning tasks. Consequently, lecturers allocate marks without providing comments. However, in this study, only lecturers with particularly large classes refrained from giving written feedback. At NIT, verbal comments were used to emphasise students' general strengths and weaknesses as an alternative to written comments, with the aim of fostering skills and deeper understanding. This suggests that lecturers recognise the importance of providing CAF. Verbal comments were further encouraged by the Department meetings strategy, which facilitated the review of CAF practices, and by the Lecturers' capacity-building strategy, which underscored the significance of continuous assessment in CBET. Thus, despite overcrowding, NIT's Continuous Assessment Strategies motivated lecturers to deliver verbal feedback, aligning with NACTE (2016) Standards and ensuring students acquired the skills central to CBET.

The findings revealed that 7 out of 19 lecturers provided written comments on students' learning tasks. Among these, three lecturers taught classes with 17-26 students, while the remaining 4 taught larger classes of 220 students, leading them to provide written comments on approximately 704 learning tasks per module each semester. In the NIT context, 704 learning tasks per semester represented a manageable workload for lecturers to provide written feedback. However, the findings also showed that two of the seven lecturers offered written comments primarily to students with low marks. In contrast, another lecturer restricted written comments to students with significant issues, such as scoring 0. This indicates that students with higher or average scores often did not receive written feedback, limiting their opportunity to acquire skills and deeper understanding, which contradicts NACTE's (2016) Standards and Guidelines. One lecturer commented:

> I normally provide written comments on students' learning tasks with less than a half; as for students with higher marks, I do not comment because they seem to know what they were supposed to do (Lecturer 8, Department C; 22 April 2022).

The findings also revealed that two out of seven lecturers viewed written comments

as a form of psychological motivation rather than a feedback approach. These lecturers included phrases such as 'put more effort' or 'work hard' for low performers and 'excellent' or 'keep it up' for high performers. Notably, no comments were provided for average performers. As a result, the written comments from these two lecturers failed to help students understand their strengths and weaknesses, thereby limiting their ability to acquire the expected skills and deeper understanding. This approach contradicts the NACTE (2016) Standards and Guidelines, which stipulate that lecturers' comments should highlight students' strengths and weaknesses, regardless of their scores, calling into question the effectiveness of the CAF provided. However, the findings align with those of Lugimbana (2017), who noted that lecturers in Tertiary Technical Education Institutions (TTEIs) often lack awareness of feedback approaches that facilitate students' understanding of their strengths and weaknesses. Nevertheless, since only two out of 19 lecturers perceived commenting as psychological motivation, the results suggest that most lecturers at NIT were adequately trained, adhering to the guidelines and providing feedback that highlighted students' strengths and weaknesses, thus supporting the acquisition of knowledge and skills.

On the other hand, one out of 19 lecturers did not provide any comments on students' learning tasks. The lecturer argued that the NACTE (2016) Standards and Guidelines prohibit writing anything other than the students' marks. The lecturer remarked:

> According to NACTE, once you mark the students' learning tasks, you are not allowed to write anything other than the scored mark. If they are wrong, you put a cross; if they are right, you put a tick. You total the marks and write it on top" (Lecturer 14, Department E; 25 April 2022).

This data contradicts the NACTE (2016) Standards and Guidelines, which mandate that lecturers comment on students' learning tasks. It suggests the lecturer had a limited understanding of CAF approaches, hindering students' understanding of their strengths and weaknesses and impeding the development of the expected skills and deeper understanding. However, since only one lecturer out of 19 did not provide comments, the majority of lecturers succeeded in imparting skills and understanding to their students.

The findings also revealed that five out of seven lecturers provided both written and face-to-face comments to students who had performed poorly. One lecturer noted:

> Sometimes, I call students who have poorly performed and give them one comment, which enables them to understand the learning task and

> task and assign them to do it again to prove whether I have imparted them with the expected skills and deeper understanding (Lecturer 16, Department E; 25 April 2022).

This suggests that face-to-face feedback, which enables direct interaction, is more effective in highlighting students' strengths and weaknesses than either verbal or written feedback alone. Face-to-face feedback allows students to understand their shortcomings better and demonstrate deeper practical skills. However, this approach is only feasible in classes with manageable student numbers, as opposed to overcrowded settings. One focus group respondent confirmed this:

> Face-to-face comments enabled us to acquire skills and deeper understanding than in written and verbal comments and provided us with needed clarifications from lecturers (Lecturer 7, Department C; 18 April 2022).

This aligns with Chalmers et al. (2018), who found that both students and staff viewed face-to-face feedback as beneficial, noting that direct interaction allowed for a meaningful dialogue in which staff could explain and justify their marks. Similarly, Tambwe (2017) and Lugimbana (2017) highlight the challenges faced by lecturers in overcrowded classes, where timely or effective feedback is often lacking despite the variety of learning tasks offered. In contrast, NIT lecturers were trained and guided to deliver timely feedback, even under similar constraints. The findings support the Adapted Tia Finney (2024) Confirmative Implementation Model, suggesting that NIT's Continuous Assessment Strategies effectively trained, motivated, and reviewed lecturers to provide timely feedback. Unlike other TTEIs, where feedback provision is inconsistent, NIT's strategies ensured lecturers could offer meaningful, timely comments. This aligns with the findings by Tlali and Jacobs (2015) and Abera et al. (2017), who noted that lecturers in other institutions struggled with timely feedback. NIT's institutional strategies, however, enabled lecturers to impart skills and understanding, demonstrating the effectiveness of well-guided feedback in a CBET context. Therefore, the success of timely feedback at NIT underscores the critical role of institutional strategies in fostering students' skills and understanding.

Returning students' learning tasks feedback approach

The second CAF approach in the CBET context is the timely return of students' learning tasks. According to NACTE (2016) Standards and Guidelines, lecturers must return tasks before assigning new ones. The findings revealed that all 19 lecturers at NIT adhered to this requirement, returning tasks before administering the next ones in full compliance with NACTE (2016). Most lecturers returned tasks within 4-7 weeks, while three lecturers managing smaller classes (17-26 students)

returned tasks within 1-3 days. This suggests that class size influences the speed of returning learning tasks, with overcrowded classes hindering both the timely return of tasks and the quality of feedback. One lecturer commented:

> As lecturers, we return to learning tasks before administering another learning task, which enables students to acquire planned skills and deeper understanding (Lecturer, Department D; 20 April 2022).

The quote indicates that the timely return of learning tasks, as per NACTE guidelines, facilitated student learning by allowing them to use the returned tasks to enhance their understanding. This is in contrast to Kitula's (2018) study, which found that many Tanzanian university lecturers returned tasks late, often at the semester's end. Similarly, Walde (2015) and Belay and Tesfaye (2017) reported instances where lecturers administered subsequent tasks before returning feedback on previous ones due to overcrowded classes. These findings also differ from Berhe and Embiza (2015), who noted delayed return of tasks after semester exams, and from Tambwe (2017) and Lugimbana (2017), whose studies in Tanzanian TTEIs revealed similar issues despite NACTE's guidance. Unlike those TTEIs, NIT's Continuous Assessment Strategies, influenced by the NACTE Continuous Assessment Guidelines, lecturer capacity-building, and departmental meetings, enabled lecturers to comply with feedback timelines, thus fostering deeper learning.

The successful implementation of CAF at NIT, supported by these institutional strategies, underscores the importance of structured feedback practices in improving student outcomes. In other TTEIs, the absence of such a strategy often results in delayed or incomplete feedback, limiting students' learning progress. At NIT, however, institutional strategies ensured the timely return of learning tasks, effectively imparting the skills and deeper understanding central to CBET.

The findings confirm the Adapted Tia Finney (2024) Confirmative Implementation Model, which emphasises the need for integrated institutional strategies, processes, and practitioner support for effective educational programmes. Thus, NIT's timely return of students' learning tasks exemplifies the positive impact of strategic approaches on improving the quality of education.

Lecturer-students' engagement in correcting learning tasks feedback approach

The third CAF approach is lecturer-student engagement in correcting learning tasks (NACTE, 2016). This involves lecturers engaging students in discussions about the task, explaining its objectives, and showing how skills should be applied. This allows students to understand their strengths and weaknesses, thus gaining skills and deeper understanding. The findings revealed that 18 out of 19 lecturers condu-

cted thorough corrections, demonstrating effective engagement with students. Thirteen lecturers led corrections by asking students to explain what was required and how they should demonstrate skills, fully complying with NACTE (2016) Standards. Two lecturers involved the entire class in corrections through PowerPoint presentations, further enhancing students' understanding. One lecturer commented:

> I make corrections in a participatory way because, in the learning tasks, there are students who know well and others who do not. So, I paused the question from the learning task so that they could respond; I perceived it as the best way (Lecturer 2, Department A; 20 April 2022).

The findings showed that most lecturers provided detailed corrections for group assignments and projects, which involved class presentations more than they did in Test One, Test Two, and Individual Assignment. During these, lecturers asked questions, engaged the group, and involved the class in correcting the tasks. In contrast, lecturers had less time to conduct thorough corrections for tests and individual assignments. One lecturer explained:

> Thorough corrections are limited by time factor; 2 weeks are used for administration of tests, almost 3 weeks for Project presentation and 3 weeks for Group Assignment presentation to the classes with 220 students. There is no time. (Lecturer 8, Department C; 22 April 2022).

With an increased number of students (up to 500 per class), most lecturers face challenges in engaging students thoroughly in the correction of tests and individual assignments. The findings from FGDs confirm that, in contrast to these assignments, the majority of lecturers conducted detailed corrections for group assignments and projects, often employing a participatory approach. This strategy was particularly effective during presentations, unlike in tests or individual assignments, where time constraints hindered deeper engagement. These findings contrast with those of Dejene and Chen (2019), who reported that 76% of lecturers did not provide feedback on corrections, thus limiting students' opportunities to develop skills and a deeper understanding of the tasks. In this study, however, four out of 18 lecturers provided thorough corrections for all five learning tasks—Test One, Test Two, Individual Assignments, Group Assignments, and Projects—indicating that, despite overcrowded classrooms, these lecturers ensured comprehensive feedback. Lecturers at NIT appear to have an advantage in correcting learning tasks, largely due to the institution's capacity- building strategy, which fosters awareness of the importance of corrections in line with Continuous Assessment Guidelines. Additionally, the department meeting strategy reviews lecturers' compliance with these guidelines, thereby creating a culture of

feedback. This enabled lecturers, even in large classes, to maintain effective correction practices.

In practical learning tasks, four out of six engineering lecturers engaged students in corrections after each subsection, ensuring that students incorporated feedback into subsequent sections. At the end of the practical tasks, lecturers provided detailed corrections by redoing the exercises and offering explanations. This approach highlighted the efficacy of practical tasks in imparting skills and deeper understanding. Similarly, role- play tasks also benefited from active student participation, with three out of three lecturers using student input to identify strengths and weaknesses before providing a final demonstration of the skills in practice. However, two out of 18 lecturers interpreted corrections differently, limiting their engagement to general corrections for complex tasks or instances of widespread failure. These lecturers viewed feedback more as a motivational tool than as an instructional process. One of the lecturers remarked:

> I cannot afford to make corrections to each learning task, so I only correct the learning tasks that have troubled the majority of students. (Lecturer 15, Department E; 22 April 2022).

Furthermore, one lecturer (1/19) did not make any corrections, arguing that merely assigning a grade and explaining the score was sufficient. This lecturer contended that if many students perform poorly, the solution is to assign a new task rather than provide corrective feedback. The lecturer noted below:

> There is no need for correction because students evaluate what they have scored. Their score was explained to them. If there are many students at the bottom and they have not completed their coursework, you administer another learning task. However, if competence is very important to the students, then you administer another learning task to cover it (Lecturer 16, Department F; 25 April 2022).

The lecturer's perspective above is troubling, as it neglects the need to address basic learning outcomes and ensure students develop the necessary skills. Lugimbana (2017) suggested that many Tanzanian TTEIs lack awareness of effective feedback methods. However, this study found that 18 out of 19 lecturers (95%) provided some form of feedback, a noteworthy achievement compared to other studies where overcrowded classrooms contributed to a lack of feedback (Tlali & Jacobs, 2015; Osadebe, 2015; Walde, 2016; Kedir & Beyabin, 2017).

The results also underscore that most lecturers at NIT (95%) adhered to feedback practices, owing to the supportive capacity-building strategies and departmental meetings that reinforced compliance with Continuous Assessment Guidelines. The-

-se practices ensured that the feedback process contributed to student learning and skill acquisition. In contrast, lecturers at other TTEIs, especially those operating within CBET frameworks, generally exhibited limited engagement with feedback, impairing students' ability to acquire the intended skills. This was similarly reflected in studies by Lugimbana (2017) and Tambwe (2017), which documented a lack of feedback culture in many Tanzanian TTEIs, largely due to the absence of effective Continuous Assessment Guidelines, professional development, and institutional oversight.

Ultimately, the absence of corrective feedback in learning tasks would have significant negative consequences for students, lecturers, employers, and society. Without robust feedback practices, students would graduate with limited skills and understanding, lecturers would fail to impart essential competencies, and employers would face a workforce ill-equipped to meet expectations. However, at NIT, 18 out of 19 lecturers provided meaningful feedback through verbal, written, and face-to-face comments, clearly demonstrating high compliance with continuous assessment practices. These practices, alongside the return of assignments before administering new tasks, enabled lecturers to impart essential skills and deeper understanding to students.

Study's Conclusion and Implications

The study concludes that the majority of lecturers provided timely CAF, thereby enhancing students' skills and deeper understanding despite the challenge of overcrowded classrooms. This was made possible by the NIT Continuous Assessment Strategies, which guided, trained, reviewed, and crosschecked lecturers' CAF practices. The findings suggest that CAF is essential in helping students identify their strengths and weaknesses, acquire skills, and achieve deeper understanding, although overcrowding can hinder the effectiveness of feedback. These results imply that providing CAF is more manageable in TTEIs with smaller student populations. Additionally, the study highlights that all lecturers in TTEIs should implement CAF, as it plays a critical role in motivating students, supporting their skill development, and enhancing their understanding. Ultimately, Continuous Assessment Strategies not only improve students' learning outcomes but also establish a framework for lecturers to follow in fostering skill acquisition and deeper understanding, which are central to the CBET context.

Recommendations

The study found that the majority of lecturers at NIT were able to provide timely feedback, effectively imparting skills and deeper understanding despite overcrowded classrooms, thanks to the presence of the NIT Continuous Assessment Strategies. In contrast, many other TTEIs lack similar strategies. Based

on these findings, the study recommends that:

i. Other TTEIs should develop comprehensive continuous assessment strategies to guide, train, review, and crosscheck lecturers' feedback practices. This is necessary because the NACTE (2016) Standards and Guidelines are not sufficiently specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, or time-bound. Moreover, these guidelines serve only as a framework, leaving TTEIs to create their own continuous assessment protocols.

ii. TTEIs should offer additional training for lecturers in CAF provision to avoid misconceptions and misinterpretations that may hinder students' skills development and deeper understanding.

iii. TTEIs should align student enrolment increases with corresponding growth in the number of lecturers to ensure a manageable lecturer-student ratio. This is vital to maintaining quality feedback in the context of CBET and ensuring that students acquire the necessary skills and understanding.

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