

ASSESSMENT COMPETENCIES AND ATTITUDE TOWARD EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT: COMPARISON BETWEEN PROFESSIONALLY QUALIFIED AND NON-QUALIFIED UNIVERSITY TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

This study was planned to find out level of assessment competency and professionally qualified and non-qualified university teachers' attitude toward assessment. Survey method was used to collect the data for this descriptive type study. Population of the study was all public sector general universities of Punjab. Two stage random sampling technique was used to select the sample for the study. Total sample size was consisted of 120 teachers. Two instruments were used to collect the data from the respondents. First instrument was Assessment Competencies Questionnaire (ACQ) consisted of 28 items and the other instrument was Questionnaire about Attitude toward Educational Assessment (QAAEA) consisted of 27 items. Both the instrument was developed on five points Likert scale. Validity and reliability of the instruments were ensured through expert opinion and pilot testing. Mean, standard deviation and independent sample t-test were used to analyze the data. It was concluded that professionally qualified teachers have high level of assessment competence as compared to non-qualified teachers. Moreover, there attitude toward assessment was same.

Key Words: Professionally qualified, professionally non-qualified, assessment, competence, university level.

INTRODUCTION

Educational assessment can be powerful tool in enhancing classroom instruction and student's performance. It bring about the benefits both for learner and teachers, while gathering accurate information from learner is difficult and potentially stressful for teachers. Yet its effectiveness relies on attitude and competency of teachers. Sound educational assessment requires positive attitude, clear conception and ability of teachers in assessment. Assessment process need from both type of teachers (professionally qualified and non qualified) constructive view and feeling towards assessment as it is closely related with the effectiveness of assessment. A number of changes in educational system have been taking place and demands of these changes are led to changes in quality of teaching, assessment methods and approaches being used to measure students'

performance .As an effective pedagogy and assessment are contingent upon teachers who can make much of difference through their professional qualification. It is widely believed that professionally qualified teachers are among the most important factors that are significantly relevant to the pedagogy and authentic assessment, that shape students' learning and their desirable growth. For this purpose university hires the kinds and numbers of teachers that deem best in their content knowledge and subject area qualification. Usually working force in university consist of both professionally qualified and non-qualified teachers. Both type of teachers assess the students according to their competency and attitude in assessment.

Assessing students' performance is one of the important aspects of the job of teachers so teachers need sufficient knowledge, professional qualification

and training about how student's performance is assessed and which technique is suitable for students. In addition it is important that teachers show positive attitude towards assessment and competent enough to use different assessment methods properly. So, professional qualification and training are essential for developing and recognizing assessment competency and favorable attitude of teachers because certain skills and competencies are usually taught in education courses. Beyond the basic levels of education required by all university system to enter in teaching. All educational system require professionally prepared teachers, as one of the indicator of quality teaching is official standards regarding their qualification fixed by university for entrance in teaching profession. This professional qualification is usually exhibited in teaching methods and assessment activities in classroom. Now the question raise, Do universities hire such professionally qualified teachers who meet the professional standards of university? If substantial teachers are professionally qualified in university to teach and assess the students then there is no need to review or change hiring policy of teachers on the part of Government but in other case, this concern need a new legislation and recruitment policy of Government to increase the entry standards and preparation requirement for teachers. In this way university can produce the adequate supply of professionally qualified teachers who are competent enough for measuring knowledge, understanding and application outcome for student's learning. A qualified teacher with positive attitude has certain attributes necessary for performing different assessment tasks skillfully. They embed assessment within teaching, not take it or see it as separate activity that demand extra time. Some teachers do not use alternative assessment due to their limited knowledge in assessment. While some teachers feel they have not professional qualification and guidance to use variety of assessment methods.

Research into teachers' attitude towards educational assessment has shown that they are very much influenced by variables such as qualification and competency of teachers. So, it is claimed on different research findings that if teachers hold a professional qualification, show favorable attitude and perceive themselves being competent in assessment they demonstrate their skills in using variety of assessment tasks to motivate students towards

learning. They do not only understand the purpose of assessment method but also able to use them effectively. They are skillful in analyzing assessment methods, providing meaningful feedback and interpreting their result for decision making. Educators have recognized that teacher's attitude and competencies along with professional qualification influence their assessment practices. Undesirable teacher's knowledge and attitude about assessment can cripple the quality of assessment. There is need to train and produce professionally qualified teachers who equip themselves with required and desired competencies and positive attitude towards assessment, who can cultivate their skills and favorable attitude by using multiple assessment techniques, creating conducive learning environment and making assessment reliable and valid. Thus there is need to fully understand these variables so, in present study emphasis is placed on comparison of professionally qualified and non-qualified teacher's attitude and competencies in assessment.

Objectives of the Study

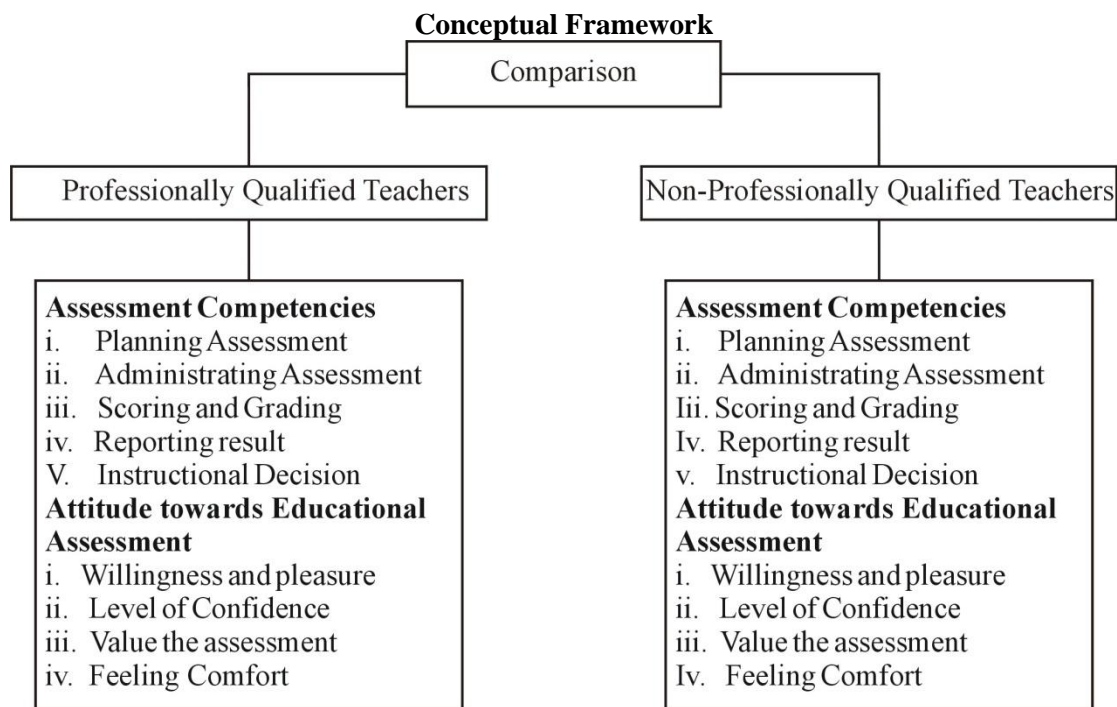
Objectives of the study were as follow

1. To examine teachers' competencies in educational assessment at university level.
2. To explore university teachers' attitude toward educational assessment at university level.
3. To compare assessment competencies and attitude of professionally qualified teachers with non-professionally qualified teachers.

Research Questions

Research Questions of the study were as following:

1. What is the level of assessment competencies among university teachers?
2. What is the dimension of teachers' attitude toward educational assessment at university level?
3. Is there significant difference between assessment competencies of professionally qualified and non-qualified teachers?
4. Is there significant difference between professionally qualified and non-qualified teachers' attitude toward educational assessment.



Review of Related Literature

Gronlund (2006) Educational assessment is fundamental aspect of teaching profession as teacher obtain information about students’ performance through assessment tasks in order to determine whether there are probability that students are achieving desired objectives or no? Morrison (2005) Classroom assessment which is the chief responsibility of teachers, require that teachers must have knowledge, skill or competency in that area because valid assessment is impossible without these elements. Brown (2004) stated that competency of teachers in assessment refer to their potential to perform a role as assessor in classroom, capability to perform the task and carry out every action in assessment process effectively and accordingly. Different researchers revealed that the ultimate rational and function of assessment depend on the skills and competency of assessor and on their conception about assessment .It is the skill of teacher that how she /he focus on individual learner or organized group of learner and stimulate them towards learning task (Black et al., 2003)

Teacher’s ability and wisdom in teaching activities have a direct impact on student’s active involvement in any assessment task. According to Lyon (2011) teacher’s competency in assessment refers to set of skills and proficiency in creating

conducive learning environment to conduct any assessment activity in an organize way. Koh (2011) stated that effective teaching at all levels of education require that teachers among others necessities of teaching like planning about what to teach, and how to teach, they also need to plan and develop valid and applicable assessment method. McMillian (2011) stated that assessing students is very important for teachers at any level. Naturally every teacher want to make good teaching decision and these decisions require more things than experience and judgment by teachers. If assessment task is too easy or too difficult then it become bore for learner and learner become de motivated. McMillan (2011) affirmed that teacher’s competency in assessment makes a teacher successful in every step of assessment process, they do well integration of assessment with instruction and utilize appropriate form of teaching including assessment strategies.

Teacher competencies in this area include, choosing suitable, meaningful, practical to the real situation and easy to administer assessment method so that teachers can easily make instructional decisions .Teachers must be familiar with various assessment methods beside their positive and negative points. Most important factor in assessment is that teachers must be able in developing and using valid assessment method.

Matovu & Madziab (2014) stated that as a result of number of researches conducted on assessment in the world, new methods and approaches have been developed and these new developed methods emphasize on the understanding of teachers' role as assessor that demand new set of skills and feelings from teachers. Teachers are expected to assess higher thinking order, reasoning and problem solving skills of the learner by applying alternative form of assessment which is more reliable and valid than traditional form of assessment.

Potential and competency of teachers in classroom has increasingly been addressed in number of researches over the past decade. Hammond (2010) claimed that constructive assessment is always supported and applied willingly by competent teacher and such teacher demonstrate number of qualities in assessment process.

Researchers have substantiated that teachers possess variety of beliefs, perception, feeling and attitude about assessment which affect their assessment practices and performance in classroom. There are number of the factors which affect on assessment practices of teacher among them teachers' attitude is necessary factor that contribute in improvement of instruction. Positive attitude refers to affirmative, constructive, encouraging and pleasing feeling and approach of teachers towards assessment while negative attitude refers to unenthusiastic and uninterested approach of teachers towards every step of assessment.

Kitiashvili (2014) declared that desired changes in any educational system are possible only through the positive attitude of teachers who accept the changes by applying them properly. Teacher with pleasing attitude use different assessment strategies for different instructional objectives happily because they take assessment as influential tool that can bring desired improvement in their teaching. Metin (2009) established the fact that though assessment is the fundamental element of the instructional process. For many assessor and teachers, preparing assessment is difficult task, even they feel that their role as assessor is not as much important, while in reality, teaching can be effective only when assessment provide valuable data about learner's learning progress and help the teachers to determine the usefulness of their teaching strategies. Brown & Harris (2008)

reported that teachers' attitude toward assessment activities directly influence participation and performance of learner in assessment task and particularly help the teachers in their instructional planning, future decisions regarding assessment practices, and in using available instructional materials for improvement their teaching and learning process. Ngale (2015) revealed that some teachers show positive while others show negative attitude towards alternative assessment. Teachers who show their negative attitude towards assessment they think, that use of portfolio, self-assessment, peer assessment and performance based assessment are boring and unrewarding moreover they have not sufficient time to develop and conduct such assessment strategies in classroom. On the other hand teachers with favorable attitude willingly use alternative assessment. Metin (2009) argued that some teachers are uncertain and show their negative attitude to implement the alternative assessment methods in classroom because of lack of their knowledge and enthusiasm in assessing students performance, moreover they feel if they use variety of assessment techniques they will be failed or result will be uncertain and doubtful. Some teachers are reluctant and unwilling to perform any assessment task because they think their previous experience is not sufficient to execute any assessment method successfully. So, he clearly claimed that teachers, attitude towards any assessment method differ due to their previous experience, knowledge and their training in assessment area. More knowledgeable, confident, experienced and trained teacher in assessment area show their willingness and more interest to perform their role as assessor in professional way.

Research Design

The aim of present study was to compare professionally qualified and non qualified university teachers across their assessment competencies and attitude toward educational assessment. This study was descriptive in nature and survey method was used for data collection process.

Population

The target population of the study was comprised of all the teachers working in public sector general universities in Punjab, Pakistan. The accessible population of the study was six public sector

universities.

Sampling

Two stage random sampling technique was used to select the sample for the study. At first stage, among six accessible universities, two universities were randomly selected. Randomly selected universities were university of the Gujrat and Government College Women University Faisalabad. Moreover, all teaching faculty members of social sciences were taken as sample of the Study. Total numbers of teachers working in these departments 187 but the response rate on the questionnaire was 64%. Response rate approximating 60% for survey study is sufficient sample of the study (Fincham, 2008).

Instruments of Study

Following instruments were used in this study

1. Assessment Competencies Questionnaire (ACQ)
2. Questionnaire about Attitude toward Educational Assessment (QAAEA)

ACQ was consisted of 28 items while QAAEA was consisted of 27 items. Both the instruments was developed on five points Likert scale. Expert opinion was taken from the experts on both the instruments. Content Validity Index (CVI) of both the instruments was calculated. Moreover, pilot testing was conducted to ensure the reliability of both the instruments. CVI and reliability coefficient of both the instruments were calculated and presented in the following table.

Table 2
Content Validity Index and Reliability of the Instruments

Sr. No.	Instrument	No. of Sub-factors	CVI	Cronbach Alpha
1	Assessment Competencies Questionnaire	05	.85	.82
2	Questionnaire about Attitude toward Educational Assessment	04	.71	.81

Data Analysis

Data were collected from the sample following research ethics through personal visits to the selected teachers. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data.

Results Analysis and Discussion

Descriptive statistics regarding research question no. 1 which was about the level of assessment competencies among university teachers?

Table 3
Assessment Competencies of professionally qualified and non-qualified university teachers

Assessment Competencies	Professionally qualified Teachers		Non -Professionally qualified Teachers	
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D
Planning Assessment	4.11	0.34	4.09	0.27
Administrating Assessment	4.44	0.31	4.07	0.21
Scoring and Grading	3.96	0.21	3.84	0.33
Reporting Result	4.04	0.34	3.60	0.32
Instructional Decision	3.72	0.22	3.72	0.22
Total Scale	4.05	0.28	3.86	0.27

Table 3 shows that professionally qualified teachers possess higher level in planning assessment competency (M = 4.11, S.D. = 0.34), administrating assessment (M = 4.44, S.D. = 0.31), and reporting result (M = 4.04, S.D = 0.34) while at above average level in scoring and grading (M = 3.96, S.D. = 0.21). Whereas non-professionally qualified teachers are also at better position in planning assessment competency (M = 4.09, S.D. = 0.27) and administrating assessment (M = 4.07, S.D. = 0.21) but fall at above average level in scoring and grading (M =

3.84, S.D. = 0.33) and reporting result competency (M = 3.60, S.D. = 0.32). Both professionally qualified (M = 3.72, S.D = 0.22) and non-qualified teachers (M = 3.72, S.D. = 0.22) are equally competent in instructional decision. Moreover, results showed that both type of teachers have high level of assessment competencies but qualified teachers are better.

Table 4
Professionally Qualified and Non-Qualified teachers’ Attitude toward Assessment

Assessment Attitude	Professionally qualified Teachers		Non -Professionally qualified Teachers	
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D
Willingness and Pleasure	4.37	0.28	4.12	0.30
Level of Confidence	3.59	0.21	3.55	0.23
Value Assessment	4.69	0.21	4.55	0.20
Feeling of Comfort	4.39	0.25	4.24	0.36
Total Scale	3.40	0.19	3.29	0.22

Table 4 shows that professionally qualified teachers have positive attitude toward assessment across their willingness and pleasure (M = 4.37, S.D. = 0.28), value assessment (M = 4.69, S.D. = 0.21) and in feeling of comfort (M = 4.39, S.D. = 0.25) but teachers’ showed neutral attitude toward assessment across their level confidence (M = 3.59, S.D. = 0.21). On the other hand, non-professionally qualified teachers also have positive attitude toward assessment across willingness and pleasure (M = 4.12, S.D. = 0.30), value assessment (M = 4.55, S.D. = 0.20) and feeling of comfort (M = 4.24, S.D. = 0.36). They also showed neutral attitude toward assessment regarding their level of confidence (M = 3.55, S.D. = 0.23). Moreover, both type of teachers have neutral attitude toward educational assessment.

To find out difference in competencies of professionally qualified and non-qualified teachers, independent sample t-test was used. The results are presented in the following table.

Table 5
Comparison between Professionally Qualified and non-qualified University Teachers across their Assessment Competency

Variables	N	Mean	S.D	Mean Difference	t-value	df	Sig. (2tailed)
Professionally qualified teachers	62	4.05	0.28	0.19	0.23	118	.04
Non-qualified Teachers	58	3.86	0.27				

Table 5 describes that there is significant difference between professionally qualified (M = 4.05, S.D. = 0.28) and non-qualified teachers (M =3.86, S.D. = 0.27; $t(118) = 0.23, p = .04 < \alpha = .05$). It showed that both type of teachers have different assessment competencies. The next analysis was about the difference in attitudes of professionally qualified and no-qualified teachers toward educational assessment. Independent sample t-test was used to answer the research question and results are presented in the following table.

Table 6
Comparison between Teachers’ Attitudes toward Educational Assessment across their Professional Training

Variables	N	Mean	S.D	Mean Difference	t-value	df	Sig. (2tailed)
Professionally qualified teachers	62	3.40	0.19	0.11	0.13	118	.06
Non-qualified Teachers	58	3.29	0.22				

Table 6 describes that there is insignificant difference between the professionally qualified teachers' attitude toward educational assessment ($M = 3.40$, $S.D = 0.19$) and non-qualified teachers' attitude toward educational assessment ($M = 3.29$, $S.D = 0.22$; $t(118) = 0.13$, $p = .06 > \alpha = .05$). Analysis revealed that both type of teachers have almost similar attitude toward educational assessment.

Discussion on Result

Assessment competencies and attitude of both type of teachers seems to be gaining more grounds in educational setting (Deluca & Bellara, 2013). Results of study showed that professionally qualified teachers possess more positivity of attitude than nonqualified teachers towards assessment. These findings are supported by Carroll and Lrving (2008) who found that professionally qualified teachers are not only skillful and knowledgeable but also possess high level of favorable attitude towards assessment. Findings of the study revealed that significant difference is existed between professionally qualified and non qualified university teachers in their Assessment Competencies Professionally qualified teachers are relatively more competent than non-professional qualified teachers in their assessment competencies. These findings are in line with previous study conducted by Lewin and Dunne (2000) that reported that professionally qualified teachers use different assessment methods easily and they place meaningful assessment at the center of their teaching. He concluded that professionally qualified teachers are more competent in assessment due to their interest and relevant knowledge and training in concerned field that is educational assessment. The findings are also agreed with Hammond (2010) who found that professionally qualified teachers are more competent as they are expected to serve a lot of time and efforts in student's assessment. The findings of study are further supported by Karp and Wood (2008) who found that professional qualification of teachers greatly affect on their assessment competencies that's why professionally qualified teachers consider themselves more skillful in assessment. Numerous studies also concluded that qualified teachers are more efficient in assessment as they easily increase students' achievement towards desired objectives (Rivkin et al, 2005). The results of study revealed that professionally qualified teachers have more positive attitude than non-qualified teachers towards assessment. Deluca and Klinger (2010) found that there is no significance difference in attitude between professionally qualified and non-qualified teachers.

Conclusion of the Study

It was concluded that both professionally qualified and non qualified teachers perceive themselves competent in different areas of assessment and consider assessment as important tool for them while professionally qualified teachers held more favorable attitude toward assessment than non qualified teachers. Significant difference was found between the competencies of professionally qualified and non-qualified teachers which shows that they have different competencies. Professionally qualified teachers were found better in their level of competencies. On the other hand, insignificant difference was found between professionally qualified and non-qualified teachers in their attitude toward educational assessment. It clearly showed that both type of teachers have same attitude towards assessment. This study grew out of the recognition of the increasing importance of teachers' assessment competencies and attitude. So, that both qualified and non qualified teachers can understand their level of skills and abilities in educational assessment. However this study establish the fact that there may some other factors in addition to the professional qualification that are likely to influence assessment competencies and attitude and show difference in their performance.

Recommendations

Following recommendations are made in light of findings.

1. Continuous reflection sessions on university teachers' assessment competencies and attitude may be organized to discuss practical problems of both professionally qualified and non qualified teachers facing in educational assessment.
2. A system of continuous feedback training may be established in universities to make non-professionally qualified teachers competent in scoring and grading, reporting result and administrating areas of assessment.
3. In services courses in educational assessment may be arranged for both type of teachers to develop more favorable attitude toward assessment.

4. This study was conducted at higher level on university teachers and delimited to Punjab province. Other studies on same problem may be conducted on different level of Education across the country.

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