



Relationship of Assessment Competencies and Attitudes of Professionally and Non-Professionally Qualified University Teachers in the Universities of Punjab Province

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Abstract

The objective of the present study was to investigate the assessment competencies and attitudes towards educational assessment of professionally and non-professionally qualified university teachers in Punjab and to identify the correlation between the two variables. The quantitative comparative research design was used, and 120 university teachers (60 professionally qualified and 60 non-professionally qualified) were studied with the help of the Assessment Competencies Questionnaire (ACQ) and the Questionnaire about Attitude toward Educational Assessment (QAAEA). The comparison between the two groups and the evaluation of the relationship between the assessment competencies and attitudes were performed using descriptive statistics, t-tests, and Pearson correlation. The results showed that professionally qualified instructors had high assessment competencies and positive attitudes regarding all factors in comparison to those with non-professionally qualified instructors. Also, correlation tests showed that there was a strong positive correlation between assessment competencies and attitudes towards assessment with stronger correlation being detected among the professionally qualified teachers. According to the study, the professional training and development is also valuable in increasing the skills of teachers, as well as their positive perceptions of assessment, which has implications of the quality of teaching and student learning outcomes in colleges and universities.

Keywords: Assessment Competencies, Attitudes toward Assessment, Correlation, Professionally Qualified Teachers, University Teachers, Educational Assessment, Punjab



Background of the Study

Assessment has been a core element of teaching and learning process since it is an important tool that is used to gauge student learning, make decisions regarding instruction, and improve student outcomes. Successful assessment practices enable teachers to assess the level of knowledge, skills, and attitudes of students, give constructive feedback and direct learning in an effective manner. Assessment in higher education is not a student-grading mechanism; it is a component of the curriculum, which also leads to the overall quality of education. The competencies and attitudes of teachers towards the assessment, therefore, are important in maintaining the quality of the assessment process (Nitko & Brookhart, 2006).

The competencies of assessment include various skills, and some of these competencies are planning and designing assessment tasks, administering assessments in a good way, interpreting and analyzing assessment data, providing feedback, and making instructional decisions based on assessment results. Professionally trained teachers are supposed to be more competent in these areas than non-professionally trained teachers since through the formal training, they are imparted with the theoretical knowledge as well as the practical strategies of applying the effective assessment practices (Volante and Fazio, 2007). Other learning that is instilled in professional training is the knowledge of ethical, valid, and reliable assessment techniques and how the learning of the student is reflected in the assessment results.

Through competencies, the attitudes of teachers towards assessment also play a great role in determining the quality and frequency of assessment practices in classrooms. Positive views about assessment go hand in hand with increased readiness to work with a variety of assessment methods, frequent application of assessment to learning, and the feeling of being at ease with the idea of interpreting and utilizing assessment information to guide instructional activities. On the other hand, indifferent or negative attitudes may result in a little or inefficient use of assessment that restricts the ability of assessment to improve learning among the students (Stiggins, 1995; Harlen, 2007). It has been shown that the educational background of teachers is involved in shaping the attitudes towards assessment: professional training, teaching experience, institutional support, and access to resources influence the multifaceted nature of assessment practices in higher education settings (McMillan, Myran, and Workman, 2002; DeLuco, LaPointe-McEwan, and Luhanga, 2016).

Higher education in the context of Pakistan has been experiencing a very swift growth in the last decades and the number of universities and students enrolling in the universities has increased tremendously. There have been however apprehensions about the quality of teaching and assessment practice especially in the Punjab university of the public sector where most of the teachers might not be professionally trained in education. Although there are teachers who have advanced degrees in their respective teaching fields, they might not have been given the specialized training on pedagogical approaches and assessment techniques. This gap may lead to the differences in the competencies and attitudes in assessments, which influence the overall educational quality and leave an impact on student learning outcomes (Aziz et al., 2014).

A number of studies had stressed on the relevance of professional qualification in determination of teacher competencies and attitudes towards assessment. Teachers who are well trained to meet the requirements of professionalism tend to be more capable of



utilizing different types of assessment, interpret student performance effectively, and use the assessment outcomes to plan its instruction. Conversely, the non-professionally qualified teachers tend to use traditional or limited assessment practices and lack confidence or desire to go into innovative assessment practices (Postareff et al., 2008; Boud and Falchikov, 2007). These differences are vital to the policy makers, university administrators, and teacher training programs so as to improve the quality of higher education.

Although teacher assessment competency and attitude are recognized to be important, fewer studies have been conducted in the Pakistani higher education system and especially in the Punjab state. Not many studies have studied the professionally qualified and non-professionally qualified university teachers in a systematic way in regard to their competencies and their attitude towards assessment. The filler of this gap is necessary to define the areas that need to be developed professionally, as well as design the strategies to advance assessment practice in universities. Investigating the assessment competencies and views on assessment, the present study seeks to have a full picture of the impact of professional qualification on teaching practices and learning outcomes of assessment in the higher education institutions of Punjab.

Conclusively, it is important to evaluate the variations in competencies and attitudes between professionally and non-professionally qualified university teachers, in a bid to make sure that assessment practices play significant roles in teaching and learning. This type of inquiry can be used to inform the professional development program design, foster assessment literacy, and improve the quality of instruction at universities in Punjab. Through this comparative analysis, the current study aims at bridging a major gap in the literature and therefore offer empirical evidence to inform policy and practice in higher education assessment.

Rationale of the Study

Evaluation is a foundation of good teaching and learning and it is a requirement to give necessary feedback on how students are progressing and to make decisions regarding instructions. Evaluation practices in institutions of higher learning directly affect the learning outcomes and the general educational standards of the institutions. Nevertheless, the competencies and attitudes of teachers towards assessment play a profound role in designing, implementation, and use of assessment. Generally, professionally qualified teachers are supposed to be more assessment literate, more confident on how to administer assessments, and have a more positive attitude towards assessment in comparison with non-professionally qualified teachers.

In this regard, in the context of Punjab, there is an increasing number of universities having difficulties of differences in qualifications of teachers, pedagogical preparation, and assessment practices. It is possible that many educators have higher degrees in their respective subjects, but are not trained in pedagogical practices and assessment procedures. This loophole may cause discrepancies in the quality of assessment, a smaller application of various assessment strategies, and possible bias in measuring student learning. Thus, it is important to know the disparity in assessment competencies and attitudes among professionally qualified and non-professionally qualified teachers in order to enhance the quality of teaching and the learning outcomes in universities.

The justification of the given research is the necessity to obtain empirical evidence of the impact of professional qualification on assessment practices and attitudes of teachers.



Using areas of strengths and weakness, the study can help to make policy decisions, develop curricula, and develop and enhance professional development programs to improve assessment literacy and develop positive attitudes to assessment. The study also fills a gap in the literature since there is scant studies in the Pakistani higher education setting that has critically evaluated the comparative assessment competencies and attitudes of teachers on professional qualification.

Finally, this study would be used to advance the quality of education, effective assessment methods, and also give advice to universities in Punjab to come up with measures on how to train and develop their teachers so that the entire teaching fraternity would be in a position to make meaningful and effective assessments.

Statement of the Problem

Assessment is a very important part of teaching and learning process because it does not only help to evaluate the learning of the students but also helps to determine the instructions and enhances learning outcomes. Nonetheless, the quality of assessment mostly relies on the competencies and attitude of teachers to it. The distribution of teachers in terms of professional qualification in the universities of Punjab also shows a significant difference where some teachers are professionally trained in pedagogy and others do not have any qualification in professional training. Such disparity can affect the way teachers design, administer and interpret the assessment and this may impact on the quality of the evaluation process, its fairness and usefulness.

Although professionally qualified teachers are supposed to exhibit a greater competency and positive dispositions towards assessment, the non-professionally qualified teachers might depend on conventional or restricted assessment practices, which might compromise the teaching and learning process. Although qualifications of teachers will influence assessment practices, the Pakistani higher education environment especially in Punjab lacks empirical studies that will compare the assessment competencies and attitudes of both professionally and non-professionally qualified university teachers.

Thus, the issue that is discussed in this paper is the absence of systematic knowledge concerning the variability in the assessment competencies and attitudes of the university teachers in relation to the professional qualification. This issue is critical to investigate the gaps and inform the professional development programs and improve the overall quality of assessment practice at higher education institutions.

Objectives of the Study

1. To identify the status of assessment competencies between professionally qualified and non-professionally qualified university teachers in Punjab.
2. To investigate the attitudes of university teachers towards educational assessment amongst professionally qualified and non-professionally qualified university teachers in Punjab.
3. To understand the correlation between assessment skills and attitude towards educational evaluation among professionally qualified as well as non-professionally qualified university teachers in Punjab.

Research Questions

1. What are the assessment competency level of the professionally qualified and non-professionally qualified university teachers in Punjab?
2. To what extent do professionally qualified and non-professionally qualified teachers at the university in Punjab have attitude towards educational assessment?



3. How does assessment competencies and attitude towards educational assessment relate among professionally qualified and non-professionally qualified university teachers in Punjab?

Review of Literature

It has commonly been accepted that assessment is a crucial component of the educational process, as it is not only a gauge of the level of student learning, but also as a means of making instructional decisions. Nitko and Brookhart (2006) explain that efficient assessment enables teachers to recognize learning gaps, give timely feedback and improve the performance of students. On the same note, Black (2003) has also stressed that high quality assessment practices are critical in enhancing the quality of teaching as well as promoting meaningful learning outcomes. The competencies and attitudes of teachers towards assessment, consequently, are of critical importance in defining the way assessment is applied and used in the classroom.

Assessment competencies are those skills and knowledge that educators must possess in order to plan and administer assessments and interpret and use them effectively. As Volante and Fazio (2007) pointed out, professionally trained teachers are more assessment literate such as the capacity to construct valid and reliable assessment instruments, interpret findings correctly and draw sound instructional conclusions. It is through professional training that teachers are offered with theoretical knowledge and practical learning strategies which will make them do assessments which are fair, comprehensive and relevant to the learning objectives. Failure to do so can mean that the teachers are left to use only a few ways or the conventional way of assessment, which can make their assessment practices less effective (Postareff et al., 2008).

The attitudes towards assessment are also very crucial since it determines the extent in which the teacher will participate in assessment and incorporating assessment results into the teaching process. Stiggins (1999) suggested that the positive attitudes to assessment were related to the increased readiness to use various assessment tools, regular feedback giving, and thoughtful instructional activities. On the other hand, negative or apathetic attitudes may lead to low usage of assessments and failure in assessment strategies. Harlen (2007) also observed that uncomfortable teachers will not engage in new practices and will not give students a chance to show their learning in various forms.

A number of studies have tested the association between professional qualification and assessment practice of the teachers. According to McMillan, Myran and Workman (2002) teachers who hold formal training in education not only have better assessment skills but have more positive attitudes toward assessment than the teachers who do not have the professional qualification. DeLuco, LaPointe-McEwan and Luhanga (2002) underscored the fact that professional development in assessment plays a pivotal role in enhancing the confidence, competence, as well as the interest of teachers in assessment activities. These results indicate that professional qualification plays a major role in affecting the assessment competencies and attitudes.

Teacher assessment literacy has gained more prominence in the context of higher education as the curricula has become more complicated and the focus has shifted toward student-centered learning. As Boud and Falchikov (2007) reasoned, the assessment practices need to be effective, and therefore, teachers must constantly improve their knowledge and skills to abreast themselves with the innovations in the field of education. According to Carless (2015), the attitude of teachers towards assessment could directly



influence the motivation of students and their learning outcomes, and suggested that professional development initiatives must be able to focus on both the knowledge and attitudinal aspects.

In Pakistan, studies have defined issues associated with teacher competencies and attitudes in higher education. Akhtar and Saeed (2022) found that a significant number of university teachers, particularly those who never underwent formal pedagogical training, extensively depend on conventional assessment techniques and are not very confident in applying various assessment strategies. The same was also noted by Khan (2012) who found that non-professionally trained teachers tend to underestimate assessment as a learning tool and rather consider summative evaluation as a grading tool. These studies demonstrate the importance of investigating the differences in competencies and attitudes of the professionally and non-professionally qualified teachers in the Pakistani setting.

On the whole, the available literature is consistent in proving that professional qualification improves the assessment attitudes as well as competencies. Formally trained teachers are better placed to use differentiated assessment approaches, have an accurate interpretation of results and use the results of assessment as part of instructional planning. Conversely, the teachers who lack professional qualification might have issues with the ability to effectively conduct the assessment and might have less positive attitude to the assessment practices. Nevertheless, certain gaps exist in the systematic comparative studies in Punjab, not only on the evaluation competencies but also on the attitude of the university teachers, as per the professional qualification. This gap needs to be tackled when designing professional development programs, enhancing the quality of teaching, and implementing effective practices in assessment in the world of higher education.

Research Methodology

The present study used a quantitative research design with a comparative-cum-correlational research design, which presupposes the investigation of the assessment competencies and attitudes of the university teachers towards educational assessment in an empirical manner. Both the descriptive-comparative and correlational design are used because the research aims to find out the general level of assessment competencies and attitudes, compare teachers who have achieved professionally and those who have not, as well as investigate the correlation between the assessment competencies and attitudes. The research narrows down to certain areas of assessment competencies such as planning, administration, scoring and grading, reporting results and instructional decision-making and attitudinal areas such as perception of purpose of assessment, fair, useful in learning, feedback and instructional decision-making. The method is suitable in the determination of group differences, patterns, trends, and the degree of relationships among key variables (Creswell and Creswell, 2014).

All the teachers in the general universities of the Punjab province of Pakistan in the public sector became the target population of the study. The first ten universities were taken as University of Gujrat (UOG), University of Education Lahore, Fatima Jinnah Women University Rawalpindi (FJWU), Bahauddin Zakariya University Multan, University of Sargodha (UOS), University of the Punjab Lahore (PU), Lahore College Women University Lahore (LCWU) and Government College University Lahore (GCUL), Government College Women University Faisalabad and Women University Multan. Accessible population was limited to six public sector universities, namely University of Gujrat (UOG), Fatima Jinnah Women University Rawalpindi (FJWU), Government College



University Lahore (GCUL), University of the Punjab Lahore (PU), Lahore College for Women University Lahore (LCWU) and University of Sargodha (UOS) due to the feasibility factors. In these universities, a population frame of six Social Science departments, namely, Education, History, English, Islamic Studies, Psychology and Political Science, was chosen since faculty members of the mentioned disciplines actively participate in the process of student assessment. Two stage random sampling method was used. In stage one, the random selection of two universities out of the six available universities University of Gujrat (UOG) and University of the Punjab Lahore (PU) was carried out. At the second stage, the six chosen Social Science departments in the two universities were used to consider all the teachers in the study. The ultimate sample was 120 teachers in the universities; half were professional qualified teachers ($n = 60$) and another half was non-professionally qualified teachers ($n = 60$). The sampling plan used provided sufficient representation of both groups to make meaningful comparisons among assessment competencies and attitudes of the groups and a correlational analysis to determine the relationship between the two variables.

Instrumentation

The Assessment Competencies Questionnaire (ACQ), created by the researcher and consisting of 28 items, five dimensions, Planning Assessment, Adminstrating Assessment, Scoring and Grading, Reporting Results, and Instructional Decision-Making with a five-point Likert scale ranging between Excellent and Poor was used to measure the assessment competencies of university teachers. Seven experts proved ACQ content validity and pilot-tested 40 teachers of universities, and the alpha values of Cronbach were found to be 0.75 to 0.83 in dimensions and 0.81 in aggregate, which is adequate reliability (DeVellis, 1991). The Questionnaire about Attitude toward Educational Assessment (QAAEA) was employed to measure the attitude of teachers towards educational assessment; it has 27 items divided into four factors, Willingness and Pleasure, Level of Confidence, Value of Assessment and Feeling of Comfort with the response being recorded on a five-point Likert scale, with high scores indicating the more positive attitude. The QAAEA was also tested with seven experts and was pilot-tested on 40 teachers and the statistical analysis of the results proved the reliability of the questionnaire. Collectively, these tools offered a holistic overview of the two assessment competencies as well as attitudes, which could be meaningfully compared and correlated between the professional and non-professional qualified teachers of universities.

Data Collection

The Assessment Competencies Questionnaire (ACQ) and the Questionnaire about Attitude toward Educational Assessment (QAAEA) were used to collect the data on this study. The researcher recorded the data by visiting the six Social Science departments in the two randomly selected universities, that is, University of Gujrat (UOG) and University of the Punjab (PU) and distributed the questionnaires to all 120 selected teachers in equal number professionally qualified ($n = 60$) and non-professionally qualified ($n = 60$). The clear instructions were given to the teachers, and the confidentiality and voluntary character of their answers were guaranteed. The filled questionnaires were returned the same day through face-to-face meetings to meet high response rate and data precision. The data gathered were followed by the organization and preparation to be analyzed statistically to analyze the levels of assessment competencies, attitudes towards educational assessment and the correlation of the two groups of teachers.



Data Analysis

Table 1: *Assessment Competencies of Professional Qualified and Non-Qualified University Teachers*

Assessment Competencies	Professional N=60	Qualified	Professional Qualified=60	Non-
	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

Table 1 displays the evaluation skills of professionally trained and non-professionally trained teachers in universities in five dimensions. Professionally qualified teachers scored 4.11 (SD = 0.34) in Planning Assessment, which is marginally higher than that of non-professionally qualified teachers who scored 4.09 (SD = 0.27). The score of professionally qualified teachers in Administrating Assessment was 4.44 (SD = 0.31), which is significantly greater than the score of non-professionally qualified teachers 4.07 (SD = 0.21), which indicates that professionally qualified teachers are more competent in the management of assessment activities. In the case of Scoring and Grading, the mean of professionally qualified teachers was 3.96 (SD = 0.21) versus 3.84 (SD = 0.33) of non-professionally qualified teachers and there was a moderate difference. In Reporting Results, the difference was higher with the professionally qualified teachers with a score of 4.04 (SD = 0.34) and the non-professionally qualified teachers with 3.60 (SD = 0.32). The two groups had the same Instructional Decision-Making (3.72, SD = 0.22) scores indicating that they have a similar competence to use the assessment results to make instructional decisions.

Table 2: *Attitude toward Assessment of Professionally Qualified and Non-Professionally Qualified University Teachers*

Assessment Attitude	Professionally Teachers (N=60)	Qualified	Professionally Teachers (N=60)	Non-Qualified
	Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D
Willingness and Pleasure	4.39	0.27	4.14	0.32
Level of Confidence	3.61	0.22	3.57	0.24
Value of Assessment	4.71	0.20	4.57	0.21
Feeling of Comfort	4.41	0.26	4.26	0.35
Overall	4.28	0.24	4.14	0.28

The results of Table 2 show the attitude of the professional qualified and non-professionally qualified teachers in the university towards educational assessment based on four factors and general attitude. Under Willingness and Pleasure, the mean score of 4.39 (SD = 0.27) was higher than 4.14 (SD = 0.32) in non-professionally qualified teachers as this factor corresponds to the fact that professionally qualified teachers are more interested and more pleasurable to complete assessment tasks. In the case of Level of Confidence, the mean scores were 3.61 (SD = 0.22) of professionally qualified and 3.57 (SD = 0.24) of non-



professionally qualified teachers indicating that both sets of teachers are equally moderately confident about administering and interpreting assessment with a slight difference of 0.04 in favor of professionally qualified teachers. In Value of Assessment, professionally qualified teachers had a higher score of 4.71 (SD=0.20) as compared to that of non-professionally qualified teachers of 4.57(SD=0.21) as they believed in the significance and utility of assessment. In the case of Feeling of Comfort, the mean of professionally qualified teachers received a mean of 4.41 (SD = 0.26) compared to non-professionally qualified teacher, which received 4.26 (SD = 0.35), meaning that professionally qualified teachers feel much easier and comfortable with the assessment activities and results usage on instructional decisions.

Table 3: *Correlation Between Assessment Competencies and Attitude toward Assessment among University Teachers(N=120)*

Assessment Competencies	Willingness & Pleasure	Level of Confidence	Value of Assessment	Feeling of Comfort
Planning Assessment	0.58**	0.52**	0.60**	0.56**
Administrating Assessment	0.61**	0.55**	0.63**	0.59**
Scoring and Grading	0.50**	0.48**	0.52**	0.50**
Reporting Results	0.55**	0.51**	0.57**	0.54**
Instructional Decision	0.47**	0.44**	0.49**	0.46**
Overall Assessment Competencies	0.61**	0.56**	0.63**	0.60**

Table 3 indicates the relationship between assessment competencies and attitude towards the educational assessment of all the university teachers (N=120). All the aspects of assessment competencies included Planning Assessment, Administrating Assessment, Scoring and Grading, Reporting Results and Instructional Decision-Making showed significant positive correlations with all attitudinal factors: Willingness and Pleasure, Level of Confidence, Value of Assessment, and Feeling of Comfort. As an illustration, Planning Assessment indicated that there is a correlation between attitudinal factors and Planning Assessment ranged between $r = 0.52$ and 0.60 , implying that competent teachers in Planning Assessment have more positive attitudes towards assessment. The administration of Assessment had a bit of higher correlations, between $r = 0.55$ to 0.63 indicating that aptitude of administering assessments is closely linked with positive attitudes. It was also found that Scoring and Grading and Reporting Results have moderate to high correlations ($r = 0.48$ - 0.57), which emphasize the association between the positive attitude of teachers to assess students' performance and the capacity to evaluate it and report. Instructional Decision-Making $r = 0.44$ to 0.49 , meaning that those teachers who have high use of assessment results to guide instruction also have positive attitudes.

Table 4: *Correlation Between Assessment Competencies and Attitude toward Assessment among Professionally Qualified University Teachers (N=60)*

Variables	Willingness & Pleasure	Level of Confidence	Value of Assessment	Feeling of Comfort
Planning Assessment	0.61**	0.55**	0.63**	0.59**



Administrating Assessment	0.64**	0.58**	0.66**	0.62**
Scoring and Grading	0.52**	0.50**	0.55**	0.53**
Reporting Results	0.57**	0.54**	0.60**	0.56**
Instructional Decision	0.49**	0.47**	0.51**	0.50**

Correlation between assessment competencies and attitudes towards educational assessment in professionally qualified university teachers was demonstrated in Table 4 (N=60). All five assessment competencies dimensions Planning Assessment, Administrating Assessment, Scoring and Grading, Reporting Results and Instructional Decision-Making were all significantly correlated to all attitudinal factors: Willingness and Pleasure, Level of Confidence, Value of Assessment and Feeling of Comfort. Administration of Assessment showed the best relationship with correlations of $r = 0.58-0.66$, which means that the skills of managing and administration of assessments are the best predictors of those teachers who like assessment tasks, are confident, and highly appreciate assessment and comfortable with assessment outcomes. There were also high correlations in Planning Assessment ($r = 0.55-0.63$) indicating that the competency to design assessments is strongly associated with positive attitudes. Scoring and Grading and Reporting Results showed moderate to strong correlations ($r = 0.50-0.60$), which demonstrate the connection between effective evaluation and reporting skills and positive assessment attitudes. Instructional Decision-Making had positive relations with all attitude factors ($r = 0.47-0.51$), indicating that teachers who base their instruction on the results of an assessment are also more likely to be positive about assessment.

Table 5: Correlation Between Assessment Competencies and Attitude toward Assessment among Non-Professionally Qualified University Teachers (N=60)

Variables	Willingness & Pleasure	Level of Confidence	Value of Assessment	Feeling of Comfort
Planning Assessment	0.54**	0.48**	0.56**	0.52**
Administrating Assessment	0.57**	0.50**	0.59**	0.55**
Scoring and Grading	0.46**	0.42*	0.48**	0.44**
Reporting Results	0.50**	0.45**	0.53**	0.48**
Instructional Decision	0.42**	0.39*	0.44**	0.41**

Table 5 shows the relationship between assessment competencies and attitudes to educational assessment in non-professionally qualified university teachers (N=60). All the assessment competency dimensions Planning Assessment, Administrating Assessment, Scoring and Grading, Reporting Results, and Instructional Decision-Making were significantly positively correlated with all attitudinal factors: Willingness and Pleasure, Level of Confidence, Value of Assessment, and Feeling of Comfort. Administrating Assessment portrayed the highest correlations of between $r = 0.50$ and 0.59 meaning that non-professionally qualified teachers who are more proficient in the management of assessments are more likely to enjoy the assessment activities, be well-confident,



appreciate assessment practices, and embrace the use of assessment results. There were positive correlations ($r = 0.48 - 0.56$) also in Planning Assessment, which revealed the relation between the skills of assessment design and positive attitude. There were moderate positive relationships between Scoring and Grading and Reporting Results ($r = 0.42 - 0.53$), meaning that competence in assessing and reporting student performance is related to positive perceptions of assessment. Instructional Decision-Making showed lower but significant correlations ($r = 0.39 - 0.44$), which means that the attitude of teachers to use assessment outcomes in instructional planning is connected to the competencies, but not as much as other areas of competencies.

Conclusions

The study found out that university teachers of Punjab possessing professional qualifications are better placed in terms of their assessment competencies and positive attitudes towards educational assessment than are their unprofessionally qualified colleagues. Teachers who were professionally qualified performed especially well in the administration of assessments, reporting, and appreciation of assessment practices, which means that professional training is effective in the development of skills and perceptions. The two groups were moderately competent in planning assessment and instructional decision making, but professionally qualified teachers again had a slight advantage.

Correlation tests indicated that there was a significant positive association between assessment competencies and assessment attitudes implications that educators with higher proficiency in planning, administration, scoring, reporting, and instructional decision-making have more positive attitudes with assessment practices. Although non-professionally qualified teachers were also found to have positive correlations, they were generally weaker showing the impact of professional qualification on the competency and the attitude. In general, the results show that professional development and formal training in assessment are the key aspects that increase the level of competency and positive attitudes in teachers that are essential in effective teaching, learning, and student assessment in higher learning institutions.

Discussion

The current research evaluated assessment skills and values about education assessment of professionally and non-professionally qualified teachers of universities in Punjab. The results show that professionally qualified teachers have greater competencies and more positive attitudes as opposed to those who are non-professionally qualified. This is congruent with the earlier studies that have indicated that professional training and qualification contribute to the ability of the teachers to design, administer, mark, report and make instructional decisions (Stiggins, 2005; Brookhart, 2011). The increased competencies in the administration of assessment and reporting results are notable and underscore the real benefits of professional training in the administration and management of assessment practices.

The comparison of the attitude of teachers to assessment has shown that the level of professional qualification of teachers gathered more points according to all the aspects, such as the Willingness and Pleasure, the Level of Confidence, the Value of Assessment, and the Feeling of Comfort. These results are not unique as the research shows that the more professionally trained teacher is the more he/she is willing to appreciate assessment, is confident in implementing a variety of assessment strategies and views assessment as the necessary part of the learning process (Popham, 2011; Andrade and Cizek, 2010). The



positive attitude is important, as it has a great impact on assessment practices, the provision of feedback, and the decisions made during instruction and, as a result, the learning performance of students (Black and Wiliam, 1998).

Correlation tests showed that the assessment competencies and attitudes had a significant positive correlation between the two groups with higher correlations among professionally qualified teachers. This endorses that competence and attitude are reciprocal constructs with greater skills in evaluation setting up positive perception and assurance in carrying out evaluation practices and the opposite (Cizek, 2012). The only difference in correlations of non-professionally qualified teachers is that it might be assumed that the absence of formal training can restrain the strength of the relationship between skills and attitudes, and specific professional development programs are necessary to improve the assessment competencies and perceptions of teachers.

Recommendations

According to the results of this study, the recommendation that can be made is that the universities of Punjab need to offer specialized professional development opportunities in order to improve assessment competencies of the non-professionally qualified teachers with special emphasis on planning, administering, scoring, reporting and utilizing assessment data in instructional decision making. The training provided by teacher education must include thorough training in educational assessment to make sure that future university teachers can acquire the skills as well as positive attitudes required to successfully apply educational assessment. The culture of lifelong learning and reflecting should also be promoted by the university administrators who should provide workshops, seminars, and mentoring to enable teachers to feel confident, competent and comfortable to carry out the various assessment activities. Also, professional qualification should be considered by policymakers as a major element of hiring and career advancement to enhance the overall level of instruction and evaluation in advanced educational establishments.

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