

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS' ATTITUDES TOWARD EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT BASED ON PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION

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Abstract

The current research examined the attitudes of teachers in universities towards educational assessment in Punjab with the emphasis on the comparison of professionally and non-professionally qualified teachers. The study was a quantitative, comparative study design with 120 teachers being sampled through a structured questionnaire that covered various dimensions of attitudes such as willingness, confidence, value and comfort towards assessment. The findings showed that an overall positive attitude of university teachers towards educational assessment was identified, and professionally qualified teachers show considerably greater willingness, perceived value, and comfort of assessment practices than non-professionally qualified teachers. But there were no drastic differences in the degree of confidence in both groups. These results indicate that professional qualification and training play a crucial role in developing positive attitudes to assessment and require specific professional developmental programs that will improve the interaction of teachers with assessment, their competence, and confidence in applying it efficiently.

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Formative assessment is a basic part of teaching-learning process which has a critical influence in the instructional practice, student learning and overall quality of education in the university level. Assessment in higher education does not only play the role of measuring the achievement attained by students in the field but also influences the direction of the curriculum, instruction planning, feedback facilities and decision making as pertains to student advancement and certification (Brown and Knight, 2012). The role of effective and fair educational assessment has never been as important as it is nowadays as universities are

more focused on learning outcomes, accountability, and quality assurance.

The attitudes of teachers to the educational assessment play an essential role in the design, implementation, and interpretation of classroom assessment. Attitude involves beliefs, perceptions, values and emotional dispositions of the teachers in relation to assessment procedures, instruments and purpose (Brookhart, 2011). The positive attitudes towards assessment are related with use of various, student-centered, and formative assessment strategies, whereas negative attitudes tend to lead to use of traditional, summative, and exam-oriented approaches (Gulikers, Bastiaens,

and Kirschner, 2004). Consequently, the attitudes of university teachers to educational assessment are vital in order to raise the standards of assessment and achieve better results of student learning.

Over the past few decades, it has been seen that there has been a paradigm shift in the assessment of learning in favor of and as learning. Modern strategies of assessment focus on formative assessment, authentic tasks, ongoing feedback, and response to the learning objectives (Black and Wiliam, 2009). But the primary success of these strategies mostly lies in the assessment literacy and professional preparation of teachers. Professors with good understanding of principles of assessment in university have higher chances of implementing novel and acceptable assessment activities that will encourage profound learning as opposed to rote learning (DeLuca and Bellara, 2013).

The use of professional qualification is known to be one of the main criteria which affect the pedagogical competence, assessment literacy and instructional decision making of teachers. Education teachers who have been formally qualified, by holding degrees or certifications in education, are usually exposed to coursework in educational psychology, measurement and evaluation, curriculum development, and instructional strategies. This kind of training provides them with the theoretical knowledge and practical skills, which they will need to design valid, reliable, and fair assessments (Popham, 2017). However, in contrast, university professors lacking professional training to become teachers are frequently recruited on the basis of their knowledge in the disciplines they teach, and with insufficient training in the field of educational assessment (Postareff, Lindblom-Ylonen, and Nevgi, 2007).

This distinction is especially significant in the higher education of developing countries, and the context of higher education. A lot of teachers in universities have good academic backgrounds in the subjects they teach; however, they do not have the formal training in pedagogy and assessment. Consequently, the assessment practices can become more of a personal experience, the

institutional tradition, or the culture of examinations as opposed to the accepted standards of educational measurement (Sadler, 2009). This may cause such problems like the lack of correspondence between learning goals and evaluation activities, excessive focus on summative assessment, and poor student feedback.

Over the past few years, there has been tremendous growth and reformation of higher education system in Pakistan, especially under the rule of the Higher Education Commission (HEC). It has been identified that quality assurance, outcome-based education, and better assessment practices are among the priorities of increasing the quality of university education (Rasool et al., 2019). Nevertheless, there are still concerns over the effectiveness and uniformity of assessment practices in universities, especially in those in the public sector. A possible reason is the difference in the professional qualifications of the teachers and the respective attitudes to the educational assessment they harbor.

According to the previous studies, professionally qualified teachers are more likely to express positive attitudes toward assessment, enjoy assessment literacy, and be more inclined towards using formative and learner-focused assessment (Khalid et al., 2021). On the other hand, those teachers who lack professional training might perceive assessment as more of a grading or accountability device as opposed to a learning facilitating tool. But there is little empirical evidence on the comparison of these two groups at the university level, and especially in the Pakistani setting.

The known research in Pakistan has been done on assessment practices at the school level or has identified the general teaching competency of teachers, but not the attitude towards educational assessment specifically. Moreover, little focus has been cast on comparative studies basing on professional qualification particularly among teachers of the university. This knowledge gap in the literature supports the importance of an organized study that examines whether professional qualification plays a major role in distinguishing the attitudes of university teachers to educational assessment.

Living in a densely populated province (Punjab), Pakistan, there are many public and private universities in this area, so the academic profile and faculty structure is varied. The teachers of the University in Punjab differ quite significantly in their professional qualification, teaching experience, and exposure to training of assessment. Some of the teachers are professionally qualified in the teaching field, whereas some are based on their academic qualification in the teaching fields. This heterogeneity gives one significant chance to study the role of professional qualification in teacher attitude towards educational assessment in higher education institutions.

Against these considerations, the given study plans to carry out a comparative study of the attitude of university teachers towards education assessment on the basis of professional qualification in Punjab. Through an exploration of the role of professional training on the perceptions and methods of teachers towards assessment, the study aims to make its contribution to the literature on assessment in higher education and offer evidence-based data on how best to enhance assessment quality and teaching effectiveness in the universities.

Rationale of the Study

Use of educational assessment is one of the pillars of good teaching and learning in higher learning institutions since it has direct implications to instructional methods, student interest, and academic achievements. The attitude of university teachers towards assessment is very significant in influencing the manner in which assessment strategies get shaped, adopted and employed to facilitate learning. Favorable attitudes tend to be linked with the application of valid, fair, and formative assessment practices, whereas favors are likely to cause undue dependence on the use of the traditional, summative, and examination-based assessment. Although this is an important aspect, the feelings of teachers towards educational assessment are a little-known field at college level, especially in a developing country like Pakistan.

The important factor that can influence the assessment-related beliefs and practices of the

university teachers is professional qualification. Formally professionally trained teachers are usually more knowledgeable about the principles of assessment, methods of measurement, and strategies of feedback. Contrary to this, lower-level teachers in universities enter the field founded on the subject-matter content rather than based on pedagogical and assessment training. The result of this difference might be a variation in the perception and practice of assessment that will eventually impact the quality of student learning and academic evaluation.

In Punjab where a big percentage of institutions of higher learning has mixed background of faculty, it is especially significant to comprehend the impact of professional qualification on the attitudes of teachers to educational assessment. Despite the national policies ensuring quality assurance and outcome-based education, the variations in assessment practices continue to be experienced in universities. The inconsistencies can be addressed with the help of empirical evidence that will help determine the impact of professional qualification in the formation of assessment attitudes.

Also, comparative studies at the university level have been a gap in the existing research in Pakistan where most studies have been conducted at the school level. Very little has been done in analyzing the attitudinal divergence between professionally qualified and non-professionally qualified university teachers. This gap needs to be addressed in order to inform faculty development activities, pre-service and in-service training programs, and institutional policies that would enhance assessment literacy.

As a result, the given research is valid since it aims to analyze the attitudes of university teachers towards educational assessment according to the concept of professional qualification in Punjab comparatively. It is anticipated that the study findings can be applicable to the current knowledge base, evidence-based policy development, and offer practical implications to improve assessment practices and teaching effectiveness in educational institutions at the higher learning level.

Statement of the Problem

Assessment in education plays a vital role in the teaching and learning of higher education because it directly affects the quality of instructions, student performance, and academic performance. There is a growing expectation of fair, valid and learning oriented assessment practices to be practiced in the universities, which are in tandem with clearly stated learning outcomes. Nevertheless, even in most institutions of higher education, the practice of assessment is still mostly conservative, test-focused, and not reliably in line with the current ideals of assessment. Attitudes of the university teachers towards educational assessment are one of the major causes of this problem.

Punjab has a variety of teachers in universities in terms of academic and professional background. Although there are teachers with formal professional qualifications in the education sector who train in assessment, measurement and evaluation, there is a large number of university teachers who join the profession with just subject-matter expertise and no or minimal formal pedagogical training. Such difference in professional qualification can result in diversification in the understanding of modern assessment practices by the teachers, their perception and acceptance.

Although the higher education authorities have continued to support quality assurance and outcome-based education, there is dearth of empirical information on the effect of professional qualification on the attitude of university teachers towards educational assessment in Punjab. In Pakistan, most of the available research has looked at the school level assessment or the overall teaching performance but there is no adequate research that has looked at comparative studies in the university level. As a result, policy makers and university administrators have no research-based data that their professionally qualified and non-professionally qualified university teachers are different in regard to their stance towards educational assessment.

The lack of this evidence is a problem in planning specific professional development, training, and assessment programs. Unless the role of

professional qualifications is clearly understood, efforts to enhance assessment practices can be ineffective and fragmented. As such, the gap in this paper is the lack of empirical studies investigating variations in university teachers' attitudes towards educational assessment for professional qualifications in Punjab. This research aims to fill this gap by conducting a systematic comparison of the attitudes of professionally qualified and non-professionally qualified university teachers, which will help improve assessment practices and enhance the quality of education offered in institutions of higher learning.

Research Objectives

1. To investigate the attitude of university teachers towards educational assessment in the universities of the Punjab province.
2. To compare the attitude of professionally qualified and non-professionally qualified teachers towards educational assessment in the universities of the Punjab province.

Research Questions

1. What is the attitude of teachers towards educational assessment in the universities of the Punjab province?
2. Do professionally and non-professionally qualified teachers differ significantly in their attitude towards educational assessment in the universities of the Punjab province?

Review of Literature

Educational assessment has been accepted as one of the key elements of the teaching learning process especially in tertiary education where it performs various functions including the certification of achievement, the directing of instruction and improvement of the quality of learning. Nitko and Brookhart (2006) say that effective assessment practice should be aligned with the learning objectives based on the principles of valid measurements and applied to guide the teaching and learning decisions. Assessment in universities is not only a grading system; it is an effective instrument that influences the provision of the curriculum and academic requirements.

Attitudes of teachers on educational assessment are a decisive factor in defining the conceptualizations and practice of assessment in classrooms. Attitude is a set of beliefs, perceptions, feelings, and predisposition of a teacher towards assessment process and results. Brown (2017) also pointed out that the teachers who consider assessment as a facilitator of learning are more inclined to use formative strategies, making those who view it as a control mechanism to use summative tests. Attitudes towards assessment hence play a major role in assessment behavior and effectiveness.

The transition of the old forms of assessments to the new ones has served to emphasize the role of teachers attitudes even more. Current evaluation models put the strong focus on formative assessment, feedback, authenticity, and learner engagement. Black (2003) presented an argument that assessment to learning improves student achievement when teachers have good beliefs on the value and purpose of assessment to learning. Nevertheless, the unwillingness of teachers to accept such measures is frequently caused by the lack of knowledge or the negative attitude.

The attitudes of teachers towards assessment are very closely associated with assessment literacy. Assessment literate teachers are equipped with knowledge and skills necessary to design, administer, interpret and apply assessment outcomes in the most appropriate manner. The concept of assessment literacy as introduced by Stiggins (1995) is that the misconception teachers have about assessment usually results in anxiety, abuse of tests, and negative attitudes. Inadequate assessment literacy in the university level may compromise the teaching and learning processes. Professional qualification is also generally found to have a far-reaching influence on teacher assessment literacy and attitudes. Educated teachers who have the formal training are usually exposed to assessment theories, measurement methods and ethical aspects in the course of their professional preparation. Darling-Hammond (2017) emphasized the fact that professionally trained teachers are less competent in the alignment of assessment to the instructional

objectives; it has a positive impact on their attitude towards assessment practices.

Contrarily, teachers who lack any professional qualification in the university tend to measure students using personal experience and existing norms. The researchers of Postareff et al. (2008) concluded that the academically competent yet pedagogically incompetent university teachers are also inclined to focus on content delivery and summative assessment, disregarding the formative feedback. This dependence on traditional practice can be a result of being not fully exposed to new ideas of assessment in the context of academic training.

Empirical research has always demonstrated that assessment-related professional development results in more favorable instructor attitudes. According to DeLuco, LaPointe-McEwan, and Luhanga (2016), teachers who underwent structured assessment training expressed more confidence and less anxiety about assessment as well as willingness to use innovative assessment strategies. This data indicates that professional qualification may have a great influence on the way teachers may perceive and accept assessment reforms.

Contextual and institutional factors that define the attitudes of teachers towards assessment, such as work load, class size and institutional policies about assessment are also important factors. Among teachers who have positive attitudes towards formative assessment, Harlen (2007) observed that there is a tendency of reverting to traditional practice with institutional pressure on the examination results. This brings out the interplay between professional training and systemic restraints in the manner of forming attitudes towards assessments.

At higher education, assessment practice tends to be influenced by discipline. Boud and Falchikov (2007) noted that members of the faculty in various academic fields have different belief systems regarding the validity of assessment. Nonetheless, it is the professional training of teachers that were more likely to critically assess disciplinary norms and use the learner-centered assessment methods, which may explain the moderating effect of professional education.

The issues of assessment practices are acuter in developing countries such as Pakistan because of inadequate training in professions. According to Aziz et al. (2014), a significant number of university educators in Pakistan are not trained as assessors and are heavily relying on the rote-based examination. Such dependence is a manifestation of structural restraints along with profound attitudes of assessment as a method of control and not as an improvement of learning.

Surveys on teachers' attitude towards assessment in South Asian context have shown the same trends. Khan (2012) discovered that higher education instructors tend to view assessment as an administrative necessity and not as an instrument of teaching. These attitudes were more common among teachers who lacked professional qualifications and this implies that there is a correlation between training background and assessment attitudes.

The difference is further demonstrated by the research studies involving professionally qualified and non-professionally qualified teachers. Volante and Fazio (2007) proved that the teachers who received professional education depicted stronger beliefs in the formative assessment and the involvement of their students compared to the teachers who did not receive such training. Their results highlight the significance of professional qualification in determining assessment-related beliefs and practices.

The variables that have also been investigated as having effects on assessment attitudes are gender, teaching experience, and academic rank. According to the report by McMillan, Myran, and Workman (2002), experience still plays a significant role in confidence in assessment, but professional training plays a more significant part in influencing a positive attitude. This implies that experience in itself might not be able to cover the lack of education in formal assessment.

Assessment has come into the limelight of quality assurance processes in the context of reform of higher education. Ewell (2009) noted that the reform of meaningful assessment should not be confined to changes in policy alone but also changes in attitudes by the faculty. Unless the attitudes are positive and sufficient preparation is

made, there is no likelihood that the reforms on assessment can be implemented successfully at the institutional level.

The latest studies have pointed out the importance of continuous professional development in enhancing attitude towards assessment. Carless (2015) discovered that instead of the positive effects of the use of feedback and formative assessment to university teachers, tailored assessment workshops had a beneficial impact. The effects of these improvements were stronger in case of teachers with no prior professional qualifications, which demonstrates that the training has a chance to narrow down the attitudinal gap.

Although there is increasing international literature, little study has been done to investigate the attitudes of university teachers towards educational assessment in Pakistan, especially when compared. According to Aziz et al. (2024), the majority of local researches concentrate on curriculum or teaching techniques; thus, the attitudes related to assessment were under-investigated. This is a loophole that limits evidence-based policy and professional development planning.

In addition, there is a paucity of provincial level analysis although some provinces such as Punjab have a high number of higher education's set ups. As Joe (2024) claimed, the regional differences in professional background and attitudes of teachers are critical aspects that should be considered when developing effective programs of faculty development. In the absence of such localized evidence, the reforms of the assessment might not meet the needs of the context.

Overall, the literature reviewed shows that the attitude of teachers to the educational assessment depends on the professional qualification, the level of assessment literate, institutional conditions, and the training opportunities. Both international and local studies also show that professionally qualified teachers are more likely to have a positive and learning orientation towards assessment. Nevertheless, the number of empirical studies on the topic of attitudes of professionally and non-professionally qualified university teachers toward educational assessment is limited,

which is why a comparative study should be conducted in the sphere of Punjab.

Research Methodology

This research design was a quantitative research design with a comparative method, which was used to investigate attitudes of university teachers towards educational assessment in a more empirical manner. This is mainly a descriptive and comparative design because it aims at establishing the general degree of attitudes of teachers towards educational assessment and establishing the difference between professionally qualified and non-professionally qualified university teachers. It aims at attitudinal aspects associated with educational assessment including perceptions of the purpose of assessment, fairness, usefulness in learning, feedback, and decision-making. The method is suitable in pinpointing trends, differences, and patterns in the attitude of the teachers towards assessment practices (Creswell and Creswell, 2014). All teachers in the universities of the public sector in Pakistan in the Punjab province were the target population of the study. To start with, ten Universities were taken into consideration to be included in the study: 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), Government College University Lahore (GCUL), Government College Women University Faisalabad and Women University Multan.

The available population was limited to six public sector universities because of the feasibility factors: 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). In these universities, the population frame of the study was comprised of six departments of Social Sciences, viz., Education, History, English, and Islamic Studies, Psychology, and Political Science since the

members of these disciplines are directly engaged in the processes of student assessment in these universities. Two-stage random sampling was applied. The study sampled two universities out of the six available universities, University of Gujrat (UOG) and University of the Punjab Lahore (PU) which was randomly chosen. In stage two, the sample size consisted of all the teachers of the six chosen departments of the two universities in the Social Sciences. The final sample was used, comprising 120 teachers in the university, and there were 60 professionally qualified teachers and 60 non-professionally qualified teachers. This sampling method guaranteed good representation of the two groups and therefore a significant comparison could be made on their attitude towards assessment in education.

Instrumentation

The researchers used the Questionnaire about Attitude toward Educational Assessment (QAAEA) to determine the attitude of university teachers towards educational assessment. The questionnaire was 27-item based and divided into four factors, which included Willingness and Pleasure (items 1-7), assessing the interest and enjoyment of teachers in the execution of the assessment tasks and involvement in the assessment training; Level of Confidence (items 8-14), measuring the level of teachers satisfaction with the assessment practice and their proficiency to administer, interpret, and develop assessment tasks; Value of Assessment (items 15-21), the level of belief of the teachers on the importance and usefulness of various assessment practices and assessment training; and Feeling of The answers were given based on a five-point Likert scale with Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree, with a score of greater scores representing more positive attitudes. The questionnaire was tested by seven education and assessment experts and later piloted to 40 university teachers to refine the clarity of the items and make sure that it was reliable, which was later evidenced by a statistical analysis.

Data Collection

This study was based on the Questionnaire about Attitude toward Educational Assessment

(QAAEA) which has been used to gather the data related to this study on the teachers of the university. The administrations of the chosen universities were previously asked to formally give consent to the collection of the necessary data, and the participants were aware of the study aim, which guaranteed voluntary collaboration and anonymity of the provided answers. All 120 teachers in the six selected University of Gujrat (UOG) and the University of the Punjab Lahore (PU) of the Social Science departments were

actually presented with the questionnaire. The questionnaire was given in a clear manner and enough time was given to teachers to fill in the questionnaire. The responses were deducted after collection, coded and set up to undergo statistical analysis. The data collection was done in three weeks and sufficient follow up and support was applied to maximize the response rate and accuracy.

Data Analysis

Table 1: Overall Mean and Standard Deviation Scores of University Teachers on Their Attitude toward Assessment (N=120)

Assessment Attitude	Mean	S.D
Willingness and Pleasure	4.27	0.30
Level of Confidence	3.59	0.23
Value of Assessment	4.64	0.21
Feeling of Comfort	4.34	0.31
Overall Attitude	4.21	0.26



Table 1 shows that respondents who participated included university teachers (N = 120) who usually have positive attitudes towards education evaluation. Value of Assessment got the largest mean score (M = 4.64, SD = 0.21), and it shows that the teachers have a high rating of value and utility of assessment in teaching and learning processes. The Feeling of Comfort was also high (M = 4.34, SD = 0.31) which means that teachers are quite comfortable when carrying out assessment-related tasks and making instructional decisions on the basis of assessment information. Willingness and Pleasure scored an average of 4.27 (SD = 0.30), which indicates that teachers are willing and usually enjoy when it comes to

assessment activities. The lowest mean (M = 3.59, SD = 0.23) was observed in the factor Level of Confidence, which means that teachers are moderately confident in the use of assessment techniques and the interpretation of the results, there is, perhaps, some uncertainty in this aspect or it should be developed further. In general, the integrated mean score (M = 4.21, SD = 0.26) indicates a rather high attitude to the assessment as a whole, which implies that most of the teachers appreciate assessment and are predisposed to accept its application, but some aspects such as confidence require specific assistance or education.

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores of Professionally Qualified and Non-Professionally Qualified Teachers on Their Attitude toward Assessment

Assessment Attitude	Professionally Qualified Teachers (N=60)		Professionally Non-Qualified Teachers (N=60)	
	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

Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviation population means on the attitudes of professionally qualified and non-professionally qualified teachers in the universities towards educational assessment. The findings indicate that the professionally qualified teachers always scored better than its non-professionally qualified counterparts in all the four attitudinal factors. In the case of Willingness and Pleasure, the mean of the professionally qualified teachers was found to be 4.39 (SD = 0.27) as compared to 4.14 (SD = 0.32) in the case of non-qualified teachers, with more teachers showing a strong interest and desire to take part in assessment. On the same note, professionally qualified teachers (M = 3.61, SD = 0.22) expressed a little more confidence in administering and interpreting assessments compared to non-qualified teachers (M = 3.57, SD = 0.24) in the Level of Confidence factor. In the

case of Value of Assessment, the highest scores were given by professionally qualified teachers at (M = 4.71, SD = 0.20) which means that they believed more in the significance and utility of assessment in teaching and learning than non-qualified teachers (M = 4.57, SD = 0.21). Professionally qualified teachers also experienced more ease and comfort when carrying out assessment tasks (M = 4.41, SD = 0.26) in the Feeling of Comfort factor as compared to the non-qualified teachers (M = 4.26, SD = 0.35). Professionally qualified teachers had a better attitude towards educational assessment (M = 4.28, SD = 0.24) than non-professional qualified teachers (M = 4.14, SD = 0.28) which suggests that professional qualification does have a positive implication on the attitudes of teachers towards assessment.

Table 3: Comparison of Professionally Qualified and Non-Professionally Qualified Teachers on Attitude toward Assessment

Assessment Attitude	Professionally Qualified		Professionally non-qualified		t-value	p-value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Willingness and Pleasure	4.39	0.27	4.14	0.32	4.12	0.000**
Level of Confidence	3.61	0.22	3.57	0.24	0.87	0.386
Value of Assessment	4.71	0.20	4.57	0.21	3.12	0.002**
Feeling of Comfort	4.41	0.26	4.26	0.35	2.11	0.037*
Overall Attitude	4.28	0.24	4.14	0.28	3.45	0.001**

Table 3 shows the findings of independent-samples t-test of the attitudes towards educational assessment of professionally qualified and non-professionally qualified university teachers. The

results showed that more professional qualified teachers scored higher than the non-professional qualified teachers in all factors of attitude. The statistical difference was found in spite of

Willingness and Pleasure ($t = 4.12, p < 0.01$), Value of Assessment ($t = 3.12, p < 0.01$), Feeling of Comfort ($t = 2.11, p < 0.05$), and the Overall Attitude ($t = 3.45, p < 0.01$) which indicated that the professional qualification had a positive impact on teachers enjoyment, the importance of assessment, and the comfort associated with the assessment practice. But the difference in the Level of Confidence factor was not statistically significant ($t = 0.87, p = 0.386$), and hence it was observed that there was no significant difference in the level of confidence between the two groups of the teachers with regard to administering and interpreting assessments. All in all, these findings indicate that professional qualification is important in forming a positive attitude towards educational assessment especially in domains pertaining to willingness, perceived value, and comfort with assessment tasks.

Conclusions

According to the results of this paper, the attitude of university teachers in Punjab is moderately high too high in terms of their attitude towards educational assessment, as they have positive perceptions towards the importance of assessment, willingness to participate, and are not uncomfortable performing assessment-related activities. The attitudinal dimensions showed that teachers gave the assessment the highest value, then comfort in carrying out the assessment activities, and desire to participate in assessment processes, and confidence in implementing assessment techniques was relatively lower.

It was noted that there was a vast difference between professionally qualified and non-professionally qualified teachers. Teachers who were professional qualified were always rated higher in all the attitudinal factors and the difference in Willingness and Pleasure, Value of Assessment, Feeling of Comfort and the Overall Attitude were significant. These findings indicate that professional qualification has positive impacts on the attitudes of teachers towards assessment, and they enjoy assessment, feel its significance and comfort in using it as a means of learning and teaching improvement. The only difference that was not significant was Level of Confidence, which

means that both categories of teachers did not indicate difference in the extent of their confidence in applying assessment practices.

All in all, the paper demonstrates the significance of professional training and qualification in the process of developing positive attitudes towards educational assessment. These findings indicate that universities ought to think of offering ongoing professional growth, workshops and formal training in the field of assessment in order to enhance teacher confidence, engagement as well as effectiveness in assessment procedures. The promotion of professional competencies and positive attitude by higher education institutions can enhance the quality, equity, and efficacy of assessment and eventually lead to improved teaching and learning outcomes.

Discussion

In this research paper, the attitudes of university teachers towards educational assessment were studied, and professionally qualified and non-professionally qualified teachers were compared. In general, teachers expressed positive views about assessment and its role in improving teaching and learning, expressed willingness to take part in assessment, and expressed general comfort in undertaking assessment activities. Nevertheless, trust in the use of assessment practices were rated at relative mediocrity, which requires additional skills development (Darling-Hammond, 2017; Harlen, 2007).

Teachers who were professionally qualified reported more positive attitudes than those who were non-professionally qualified, especially in their willingness, perceived value of assessment, and comfort with assessment practices. The results of these studies support the assertion that professional training improves teacher knowledge, interest, and positive attitude towards assessment (Volante and Fazio, 2007; Postareff and Lindblom-Ylannen, 2008). A small difference between the two groups in terms of confidence suggests that other factors, including teaching experience, institutional support, and access to assessment resources, can also play a role in determining how well teachers can adopt effective assessment

practices (McMillan, Myran, and Workman, 2002; DeLuco, LaPointe-McEwan, and Luhanga, 2016). The findings are in line with other studies that have highlighted that professional preparation and assessment literacy profoundly influence teacher attitudes and practice in higher education (Boud and Falchikov, 2007; Carless, 2015). The findings demonstrate the relevance of ongoing professional growth and specific training to enhance teacher competence, interest, and confidence in assessment, which eventually leads to enhanced teaching quality and student achievement.

Recommendations

According to the results, it is suggested that universities should have special professional development activities and assessment workshops to improve the attitude, confidence and competence of teachers in education assessment. The institutions need to offer the constant training of both the conventional and novel methods of assessment in order to enhance the readiness of the teachers to the assessment practices as well as their comfort. Emphasis should be put on the level of professional qualification that has a positive impact on teachers attitude and it is possible to suggest that the policy issues related to teacher certification and pedagogical training can reinforce the assessment literacy and engagement. Also, universities must provide continuous mentorship, resources and institutional assistance to enable all teachers irrespective of their formal qualification, to develop confidence and properly utilize assessment data in making instructional decisions.

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