

# **COMPARATIVE FEATURES OF PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS' ASSESSMENT SYSTEM IN TWO GEOGRAPHICALLY APART COUNTRIES: CANADA AND PAKISTAN**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The study was designed to highlight the comparative features of prospective teachers' assessment system in both countries and to recommend the improvement of prospective teachers' assessment system in Pakistan in light of the findings of the study. There were two types of population. One was the prospective teachers studying in GCETs and sub-campuses of the University of Education, Lahore, in Pakistan and prospective teachers admitted at Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto and its constituent institutions in Canada. The second population was the faculty of the above-mentioned institutions in Canada and Pakistan. Sample of the study was consisted of four hundred (400) prospective teachers studying in GCETs and sub-campuses of University of Education, Lahore in Pakistan and the same number (400) of prospective teachers admitted at Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto and its constituent institutions in Canada. Sample of fifty (50) faculty members from Pakistan and Canada of above-mentioned institutions was also included for intensive investigation of the assessment systems of both countries. The questionnaire and interview were the tools of the study. The t-test was applied to find the significance or insignificance of the relationship. For interview protocol, responses were translated, coded and analyzed accordingly. According to the analyses of the data, it was found that there was a significant difference between assessment systems for prospective teachers in Pakistan and Canada. It was concluded that the assessment system for prospective teachers was comparatively better in Canada than in Pakistan.

**KEYWORDS:** Assessment, Education, prospective teachers, assessment system, Canada

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Assessment is a very complex and technical process in a teaching-learning environment which cannot be left unaddressed. "Assessment is the process of defining, selecting, collecting, analyzing, interpreting and using the information to increase students' learning and development" (Earl,2003). "Assessment experts and suitable tools are required to assess the students' abilities in a particular and correct way so that valid and reliable results are reflected where ever required. This makes the assessment a process of gathering information about what students can

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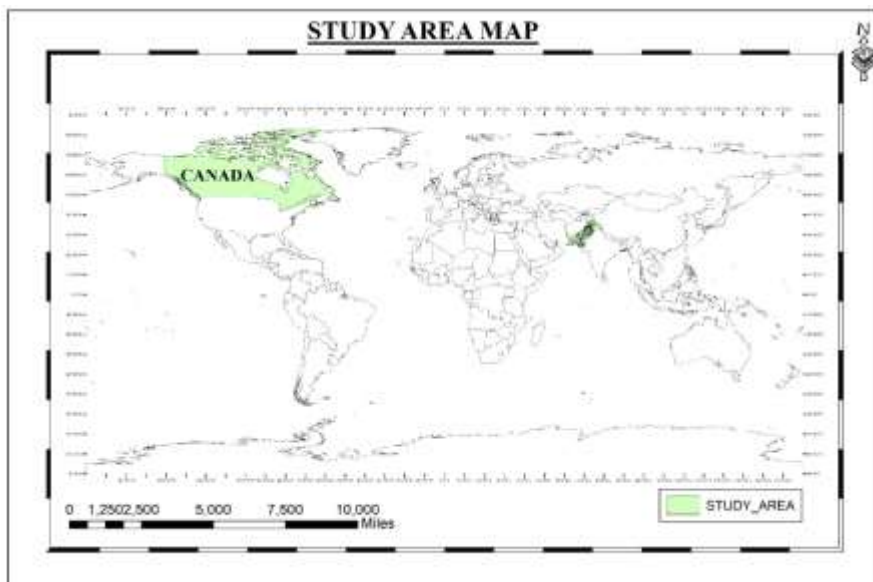
and cannot do" (Crocker & Dibbon, 2008). One must be prepared to take a cautious approach to using and interpreting of assessment instruments because some efficient consequences can result from the problem intrinsic to our measuring system (Walvoord, 2004). This advice may be kept in mind when implementing anyone of these assessments instruments in Pakistani educational measurement system to assess individual understanding of nonlinear casual structures (Plate, 2010).

Assessment has various purposes (Harlen, 2007; Wiggins, 1993; Newton, 2007; Duffield, & Spencer, 2002). Some purposes and objectives are determined by the teachers while others have their own purpose (Lambert, & Lines, 2013). Kubiszyn and Borich (2003) have enlisted ten purposes which they name as basis of decision making involving instructional decisions, grading decisions, diagnostic decisions, selection decisions, placement decisions, counselling and guidance decisions, programme or curriculum decisions, 3 and administrative policy decisions. These decisions may be made at the school, district state, or national level and may determine the needs to be done to improve a school, or the nation's achievement scores. It is generally assumed that the teacher assessment system in Pakistan is outdated and not compatible with modern standards of assessment techniques. "It fails to cultivate prospective teachers' potential and capacities" (NEAS, Background, Para 1, 2009). Hence one cannot judge prospective teachers' level of competence through this system. "There is a dire need to upgrade this system" (USAID Pakistan, 2006). Comparing Pakistani teacher assessment system with an advanced teacher assessment system may yield knowledge of some latest assessment techniques that may be incorporated in Pakistani teacher education programme. Canada has undergone major educational reform efforts since 2003-2004 with an emphasis on quality of teacher education. Teachers in Canada are showing improvement as a result of these efforts (Educational policy Leaders, International Conference, 2008). To highlight comparative features of prospective teachers' assessment system in Canada and Pakistan. To recommend innovative teacher assessment modes for assessment system for Pakistani prospective teachers.

## **2. MATERIALS AND METHODS**

### **2.1. STUDY AREA**

Pakistan and Canada have been selected as study areas and two countries are 10,381 km away from each other; having diverse economies, agriculture, educational facilities and systems. It's a contrasting study between these two regions which are highlighted in the study area map (Fig. 1).



**Fig. 1.** Study Area Map showing Pakistan and Canada

### **2.2. Population**

Teachers working in Government Colleges for Elementary Teachers and sub campuses of University of Education, Lahore and teachers working in the Ontario Institute for studies in Education, University of Toronto and its constituent institutions were the population of the study.

### **2.3. Instrument**

Two questionnaires for teachers and prospective teachers were developed after a pilot testing and analyses. A structured interview was also developed to look into the matter intensively.

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### 3. RESULTS

**Table 1: Qualification-Wise Composition of Teachers Sample (Interview)**

Age	Nationality	N	%age
MA/MSc	Pakistani	13	41
	Canadian	0	0
MPhil	Pakistani	10	31
	Canadian	0	0
PhD	Pakistani	9	28
	Canadian	18	100

**Table 2: Gender-Wise Sample Selected of Prospective Teachers**

Gender	Nationality	N	%age
Male	Pakistani	130	38
	Canadian	114	50
Female	Pakistani	215	62
	Canadian	114	50

**Table 3: Assessment Approaches Used by the Teachers (Interview)**

Assessment Approach	Nationality	N	%Age
<b>End of the Year/ Semester</b>	Pakistani	30	93.75
	Canadian	6	33.33
<b>Written Test</b>	Pakistani	7	21.88
	Canadian	6	33.33
<b>Assignments</b>	Pakistani	27	84.38
	Canadian	6	33.33
<b>Observation</b>	Pakistani	13	40.63
	Canadian	12	66.67
<b>Peer Assessment</b>	Pakistani	18	56.25
	Canadian	12	66.67
<b>Performance Assessment</b>	Pakistani	16	50.00
	Canadian	18	100.00
<b>Portfolio Assessment</b>	Pakistani	17	53.13
	Canadian	12	66.67
<b>Projects</b>	Pakistani	8	25.00
	Canadian	13	72.22

<b>Standardized Test</b>	Pakistani	19	59.38
	Canadian	13	72.22
<b>Demonstration</b>	Pakistani	20	62.50
	Canadian	18	100.00

Table above shows the assessment approaches used by the teachers for the training of the prospective teachers. There are 30 (93.75%) teachers who used end of the year/semester written Test in Pakistan and 6 (33.33%) teachers used this in Canada. 7 (21.88%) of the teachers used assignments in Pakistan and 6 (33.33%) use this mode in Canada. 27 (84.38%) of the Pakistan teachers use observation assessment approach while 6 (33.33%) of the Canadian teachers use this approach. 13 (40.63%) of the teachers use peer assessment in Pakistan and 12 (66.67%) used in Canada. 18 (56.25%) used performance assessment in Pakistan and 12 (66.67%) Canadian teachers used this approach. 16 (50.00%) of the teachers use portfolio assessment in Pakistan and 18 (100.00%) teachers used the same in Canada. 17 (53.13%) Pakistani teachers used projects assessment approach and 12 (66.67%) Canadian teachers used projects. 8 (25.00%) of the teachers used rubrics in Pakistan and 13 (72.22%) teachers use Rubrics in Canada. 19 (59.38%) of the teachers use Standardized Test in Pakistan and 13 (72.22%) use this in Canada. 20 (62.50%) of the Pakistan teachers used demonstration assessment approach in Pakistan and 18 (100.00%) of the Canadian teachers use this assessment approach.

**Table 4: Assessment Approaches Used by the Teachers (Interview)**

<b>Assessment Approach</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%Age</b>
<b>End of the Year/ Semester Written Test</b>	Pakistani	203	58.84
	Canadian	102	44.74
<b>Assignments</b>	Pakistani	94	27.25
	Canadian	42	18.42
<b>Observation</b>	Pakistani	229	66.38
	Canadian	120	52.63
<b>Peer Assessment</b>	Pakistani	167	48.41
	Canadian	96	42.11
<b>Performance Assessment</b>	Pakistani	216	62.61
	Canadian	156	68.42
<b>Portfolio Assessment</b>	Pakistani	159	46.09
	Canadian	108	47.37

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<b>Projects</b>	Pakistani	177	51.30
	Canadian	180	78.95
<b>Rubrics</b>	Pakistani	91	26.38
	Canadian	207	90.79
<b>Standardized Test</b>	Pakistani	170	49.28
	Canadian	194	85.09
<b>Demonstration</b>	Pakistani	215	62.32
	Canadian	48	21.05

Table above shows the assessment approaches used by the prospective teachers (students' views). There are 230 (58.84%) teachers used end of the year/semester written Test in Pakistan and 102 (44.74%) teachers used in Canada. 94 (27.25%) of the teachers use assignments in Pakistan and 42 (18.42%) use in Canada. 229 (66.38%) of the Pakistan teachers use Observation assessment approach while 120 (52.63%) of the Canadian teachers use this approach. 167 (48.41%) of the teachers use peer assessment in Pakistan and 96 (42.11%) use in Canada. 216 (62.61%) use Performance Assessment in Pakistan and 156 (68.42%) prospective teachers in Canada use this approach. 159 (46.09%) of the teachers use portfolio assessment in Pakistan and 108 (47.37%) teachers use portfolio assessment in Canada. 177 (51.30%) Pakistani teachers use projects assessment approach and 180 (78.95%) Canadian teachers use projects. 91 (26.38%) of the teachers use rubrics in Pakistan and 207 (90.79%) teachers use rubrics in Canada. 170 (49.28%) of the teachers use standardized test in Pakistan and 194 (85.09%) use this in Canada. 215 (62.32%) of the Pakistan teachers use demonstration assessment approach in Pakistan and 48 (21.05%) of the Canadian teachers use this assessment approach.

**Table 5: Assessment Approaches Used by the Teachers (Interview)**

<b>Assessment Approach</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>%Age</b>
<b>End of the Year/ Semester Written Test</b>	Pakistani	30	60
	Canadian	06	12
<b>Assignments</b>	Pakistani	07	14
	Canadian	06	12
<b>Observation</b>	Pakistani	27	54

	Canadian	06	12
<b>Peer Assessment</b>	Pakistani	13	26
	Canadian	12	24
<b>Performance Assessment</b>	Pakistani	18	36
	Canadian	12	24
<b>Portfolio Assessment</b>	Pakistani	16	32
	Canadian	18	36
<b>Projects</b>	Pakistani	17	34
	Canadian	12	24
<b>Rubrics</b>	Pakistani	08	16
	Canadian	13	26
<b>Standardized Test</b>	Pakistani	19	38
	Canadian	13	26
<b>Demonstration</b>	Pakistani	20	40
	Canadian	18	36

Table above indicates the situation of assessment approaches used by the teachers. Here is also shown the comparative analysis of the approaches used in both the countries Canada and Pakistan. A large majority of the Pakistani respondents agree to the point that they use end the year test/semester test approach. Observation, performance assessment, projects and standardized test were also found prevalent in Pakistan more than Canada as assessment approaches. Portfolio and rubrics were used as assessment approaches in Canada considerably more than Pakistan.

#### **4. DISCUSSION**

A large majority of the Pakistani respondents agree to the point that they use end the year test/semester test approach (Rehmani, 2003; Naqvi, & Ahmed, 2000). Observation, performance assessment, projects and standardized test were also found prevalent in Pakistan (Haider, 2012) that is more than Canada as an assessment approach. Portfolio and rubrics were used as assessment approaches in Canada considerably more than Pakistan. In response to the question of some particular and appropriate assessment technique adopted by teachers to check the behavior of students in the classroom, most of the interviewees told that they put students into discussion. Some of the interviewees were of the view that they used project technique to control students' behavior while some others agreed to apply the technique of assigning assignments to students.

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Few of the respondents were using demonstration approach for the purpose. The 98 respondents were using these kinds of approaches to develop new ideas and specially to engage students in some activity.

## **5. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The recommendations emerged from the study were:

- It was found that most of the prospective teachers prefer end of the year assessment. There might be a remarkable contribution of continuous assessment throughout the academic year.
- The use of assignments for assessment of the academic performance of prospective teachers might be enhanced.
- Observation assessment approach might be encouraged to make the whole assessment system more and more effective.
- Peer assessment technique might also be adopted to reach the outcomes.
- Portfolio assessment is one of the most effective techniques in Canada. It should be incorporated also in Pakistan.
- Awareness about rubrics is needed thirst fully. Rubrics need to be considered in view while conducting assessment.
- There might be some pragmatic measures to take in vogue the standardized tests for assessment in Pakistan.

## **6. CONCLUSION**

Conclusions of present research were drawn on the basis of the findings of the study after data analysis. According to the data analysis, it was concluded that in Pakistan, teachers use end of the year/semester written test more than teachers used these in Canada. The Canadian teachers use the technique of assignments more than Pakistani teachers. As for as observation assessment approach is concerned, majority of Pakistani teachers use this technique in contrast very few of the Canadians. Peer assessment is found to be more prevalent in Canada as compared to Pakistan. Performance assessment is used in Canada slightly better than its usage in Pakistan. The usage of portfolio assessment is considerably dominant in Canada as 97 compared to Pakistan. Canadian teachers are also better than their Pakistani counterparts in using project assessment approach. Similarly, use of rubrics is more prevalent in Canada as compared to Pakistan. Majority of the teachers in Canada use standardized tests for assessment while few of the Pakistani teachers do the same.



Demonstration assessment approach is remarkably more prevalent in Canada than in Pakistan. The thirst for change in end of the year/semester written test in Pakistan is less than like to change the same in Canada. More Pakistanis want to change oral questioning technique for assessment than Canadians. As for as the change in rubrics is concerned, most of the Canadian teachers intend to have a change in it as compared to Pakistani teachers. Pakistani students want to change portfolio assessment more than that of the Canadian students want to change. Likewise, Pakistani students want to change project methods more than that of the students want to change it in Canada. Pakistani and Canadian students' perceptions about the over-all semantic scale/attribute of the students for prospective teachers, it is concluded that Canadians are dominating in this respect. On the basis of data from the interviewees/teachers of prospective teachers, it was concluded that in Pakistan relatively less valid and reliable tools are used to assess the performance of prospective teachers. These do not properly reflect the abilities of pupil teachers and sometimes, tools are also hired on one or another ground. The situation is relatively better in Canada, where more efforts are made to refine and enrich assessment of prospective teachers from the part of their trainers.

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