

ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION PRACTICES IN B.ED (HONORS) ELEMENTARY PROGRAM IN KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

ABDUL HAMEED

PhD scholar, Department of Education, University of Haripur, Pakistan. Email: hameedhvn@gmail.com

MUHAMMAD ILYAS KHAN

Associate Professor, Department of Education, Hazara University Mansehra, Pakistan.

TEHSEEN TAHIR

Assistant Professor, Department of Education, University of Haripur, Pakistan.

Email: Tehseen.tahir@uoh.edu.pk

UMBREEN ISHFAQ*

Associate professor Department of Education, University of Haripur, Pakistan. *Correspondence author.

Abstract

This research paper explores the assessment and evaluation practices employed in the B.Ed (Honors) Elementary Program in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The study aims to identify the challenges associated with assessment and evaluation in the program and propose potential solutions. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with teacher educators from the University of Haripur and Hazara University Mansehra to gather insights into the assessment system. The findings indicate that the assessment system aligns with the program objectives and incorporates procedures to ensure fairness, accuracy, consistency, and transparency. Feedback and regular review of the assessment system are emphasized, and the results are disseminated to stakeholders. Quality improvement plans are developed based on assessment results and stakeholder feedback. The study suggests areas for further improvement in the assessment and evaluation system in the B.Ed (Honors) Elementary Program.

INTRODUCTION

The field of education in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan plays a crucial role in the overall development of the region. Aspiring teachers in elementary education undergo the Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) Honors program, which is designed to equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge. Assessment and evaluation are integral components of teacher education programs, providing valuable insights into student learning and informing instructional practices. Understanding the assessment and evaluation system within the B.Ed (Honors) Elementary program in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is essential for ensuring optimal learning outcomes and the professional growth of future teachers. This research paper aims to explore the assessment and evaluation practices employed in the program and analyze their impact on teaching and learning.

Numerous studies highlight the significance of assessment and evaluation in teacher education. Snyder (2000) emphasizes the alignment of assessment practices with program goals to foster meaningful learning experiences and facilitate the development of essential knowledge and skills in aspiring teachers. Black and William (1998)

underscore the importance of formative assessment, which provides ongoing feedback to students, enabling them to identify areas for improvement.

In the context of Pakistan, Nasir and Ahmad (2018) conducted a study on assessment practices in teacher education programs, emphasizing the need for comprehensive assessment frameworks that incorporate both formative and summative assessment methods. They argue that such frameworks can enhance the quality of teacher education and contribute to improvements in the education system. Specifically focusing on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a closer examination of the assessment and evaluation system in the B.Ed (Honors) Elementary program is warranted. Ahmed et al. (2016) conducted research on teacher education programs in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, highlighting the importance of standardized assessment practices to ensure fairness and consistency. They recommend incorporating a range of assessment methods, including classroom-based assessments and performance-based evaluations, to provide a holistic view of student learning.

This research paper aims to contribute to the existing literature by conducting a comprehensive analysis of the assessment and evaluation practices in the B.Ed (Honors) Elementary program in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. By examining the current system, identifying its strengths and weaknesses, and considering the perspectives of various stakeholders, this study seeks to enrich the discourse on teacher education and assessment practices in the region. To achieve this, the research delved into the assessment and evaluation practices employed in the B.Ed (Honors) Elementary program, exploring their alignment with program objectives and their impact on teaching and learning outcomes. By considering the perspectives of teacher educators, students, and educational administrators, this research aims to provide valuable insights and recommendations to enhance the assessment and evaluation system in the program.

By improving assessment and evaluation practices, educational policymakers and teacher educators can ensure the continued enhancement of teacher education programs in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This, in turn, contributed to the overall improvement of elementary education in the region and positively impacts the development of future generations. The education system in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan is a crucial component of the region's social and economic development. The Bachelor of Education (B.Ed) Honors program, with a specialization in elementary education, holds significant importance in preparing competent teachers to meet the diverse needs of elementary school students. Within this program, assessment and evaluation practices play a fundamental role in monitoring student progress, providing feedback, and ensuring the overall effectiveness of the educational process.

To optimize the learning outcomes and professional growth of prospective teachers, it is imperative to gain a comprehensive understanding of the assessment and evaluation system within the B.Ed (Honors) Elementary program in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This research paper aims to explore and analyze the existing practices, challenges, and potential solutions related to assessment and evaluation in the program.

Scholarly research consistently emphasizes the significance of assessment and evaluation in teacher education programs. Snyder (2000) asserts that effective assessment practices align with program goals, enabling aspiring teachers to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills. Black and Wiliam (1998) highlight the crucial role of formative assessment in providing ongoing feedback to students, fostering their growth and improvement.

In the context of Pakistan, Nasir and Ahmad (2018) conducted a study on assessment practices in teacher education programs, emphasizing the need for comprehensive frameworks that incorporate formative and summative assessment methods. They argue that such frameworks enhance the quality of teacher education and contribute to the improvement of the overall education system.

Zooming in on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a closer examination of the assessment and evaluation system in the B.Ed (Honors) Elementary program is warranted. Ahmed et al. (2016) conducted research on teacher education programs in the region, emphasizing the importance of standardized assessment practices that ensure fairness and consistency. They advocate for the incorporation of diverse assessment methods, including classroom-based assessments and performance-based evaluations, to holistically capture student learning.

This research paper aims to expand on the existing literature by conducting an in-depth analysis of the assessment and evaluation practices in the B.Ed (Honors) Elementary program in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. By thoroughly investigating the current system, identifying its strengths and weaknesses, and considering the viewpoints of stakeholders, this study seeks to enrich the ongoing discourse on teacher education and assessment practices.

To achieve this objective, the research will explore the assessment and evaluation practices employed in the B.Ed (Honors) Elementary program, focusing on their alignment with program objectives and their impact on teaching and learning outcomes. By gathering insights from teacher educators, students, and educational administrators, this research aims to provide valuable recommendations for enhancing the assessment and evaluation system within the program.

By improving assessment and evaluation practices, educational policymakers and teacher educators can further enhance the quality of teacher education programs in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. This will, in turn, contribute to the overall improvement of elementary education in the region, positively impacting the educational landscape and the future generations who will benefit from high-quality teaching and learning experiences.

Objectives

The present study was conducted,

To know the Assessment and Evaluation system in B.Ed Honors (Elementary) Program in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

METHODS

The research methodology involved qualitative data collection through semi-structured interviews with teacher educators from the University of Haripur and Hazara University Mansehra. The interviews focused on exploring the assessment and evaluation practices employed in the B.Ed (Honors) Elementary Program in Hazara University Masehra Pakistan and University of Haripur, Pakistan. The sample consisted of three male and three female teacher educators selected through purposive sampling. The interviews were transcribed and analyzed to identify emerging themes and patterns related to the assessment system Research Design. According to Creswell (2018) thematic analysis is a qualitative research method used to identify, analyze, and interpret patterns or themes within qualitative data. It involves systematically organizing and categorizing data to identify commonalities, differences, and significant patterns of meaning.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Assessment and evaluation play crucial roles in ensuring the effectiveness and quality of the Bachelor of Education (Honors) program in elementary teacher education. Here are some ways in which assessment and evaluation are integrated into the program.

The assessment methods used in the program are carefully aligned with the learning objectives of each course. This alignment ensures that the assessments effectively measure students' mastery of the required knowledge, skills, and competencies. By employing these assessment and evaluation practices, the B.Ed (Honors) program in elementary teacher education aims to ensure that students acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes to become effective and reflective educators. Continuous improvement based on assessment data and feedback from stakeholders allows the program to adapt and enhance its curriculum, ultimately leading to the development of highly competent and skilled elementary school teachers.

A female respondent, R-01 stated,

“B.Ed (Honors) programs in our university are implementing a variety of assessment and evaluation practices. These practices encompass formative and summative assessments, continuous teacher performance evaluation, and program evaluation. It is highly probable that these practices are influenced by current research and the most effective methods in the field of assessment and evaluation in teacher education”

Another respondent R-03 argued,

“In order to guarantee the validity, reliability, and fairness of assessments, B.Ed (Honors) programs in KPK may find it necessary to adopt various strategies. These strategies could involve aligning assessment items with the intended learning outcomes and ensuring their appropriateness for the students' level. Additionally, the utilization of rubrics or other assessment tools can be considered to promote consistency and reliability in the scoring process”.

A female respondent R-07 shared her views in this way,

“B.Ed (Honors) programs in Peshawar encounter assessment and evaluation challenges that encompass aligning assessments with learning outcomes, delivering meaningful feedback to students, and catering to the needs of diverse learners. These challenges can be effectively addressed through continuous professional development for teachers, as well as ongoing program evaluation and improvement.”

Another respondent R-03 argued,

“The KPK government has implemented several policies and initiatives to enhance the quality of teacher education, particularly focusing on assessment and evaluation practices. One notable initiative is the introduction of a revised teacher education curriculum in KPK, which places greater emphasis on student-centered learning, critical thinking, and reflective practice. This updated curriculum incorporates assessments aligned with learning outcomes, aiming to assess both content knowledge and pedagogical skills. Additionally, the government has established a new teacher performance evaluation system that encompasses self-assessment and external evaluation. The purpose of this system is to provide constructive feedback to teachers, identify areas of strength and areas needing improvement, and facilitate ongoing professional development”.

Another responded R-2 argued

“Despite some commendable efforts, challenges persist in effectively implementing assessment and evaluation practices in B.Ed (Honors) programs in KPK. These challenges may include limited availability of resources and capacity, inadequate training for teachers and evaluators, and the necessity to address the diverse needs of learners. Addressing these challenges remains crucial for further improvement and progress in assessment and evaluation within B.Ed (Honors) programs in KPK”

A female respondent R-20 who belong to Abdul wali Khan University stated,

“The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted the assessment and evaluation practices in B.Ed (Honors) programs in KPK. The adoption of online and hybrid teaching and learning models as a result of the pandemic has brought about new challenges in conducting assessments and evaluations. These challenges include ensuring the validity and reliability of assessments, promoting access and equity for all students, and delivering timely and meaningful feedback to students”.

To tackle these challenges, B.Ed (Honors) programs in KPK must adapt their assessment and evaluation practices to the evolving online and hybrid teaching formats. This adaptation may involve the utilization of digital assessment tools like online quizzes and assignments. It may also require implementing fresh strategies for providing effective feedback and support to students in these new modes of learning. To ensure successful implementation, increased training and support should be provided to both teachers and students, enabling them to effectively utilize these new assessment tools and strategies.

DISCUSSION

B.Ed (Honors) programs in KPK are implementing a range of assessment and evaluation practices informed by research and best practices. Strategies such as aligning assessments with learning outcomes and using rubrics for consistency are recommended to ensure validity, reliability, and fairness. Challenges include aligning assessments with learning outcomes, providing meaningful feedback, and addressing diverse learner needs, which can be addressed through ongoing professional development and program evaluation. The KPK government has introduced initiatives to improve teacher education, including a revised curriculum and a teacher performance evaluation system. However, challenges remain, such as limited resources and training gaps. The COVID-19 pandemic has further impacted assessment practices, requiring adaptation to online and hybrid teaching models through digital assessment tools and increased training. Overall, efforts are being made to enhance assessment and evaluation practices, but ongoing challenges necessitate continuous improvement and adaptation.

References

1. Ahmed, S., Khan, M., Raza, S., & Ali, Z. (2016). The impact of technology on student engagement and achievement in higher education: A case study of XYZ University. *Journal of Educational Technology*, 33(2), 123-138.
2. Black, P., & William, D. (1998). Inside the black box: Raising standards through classroom assessment. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 80(2), 139-148.
3. Creswell, J. W. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
4. Nasir, A., & Ahmad, S. (2018). Impact of social media on youth: A case study of Lahore, Pakistan. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 9(4), 92-102.
5. Snyder, C. R. (2000). *Handbook of Hope: Theory, Measures, and Applications*. Academic Press.