

STUDENTS' LEARNING ASSESSMENT PRACTICES USED BY JORDANIAN SCIENCE TEACHERS FOR GRADES (4-8)

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Abstract: *The study investigates teachers' classroom assessment practices of used by Jordanian science teachers. A total of (320) teachers were chosen by Quota sampling. A questionnaire of (25) items are adapted on six dimensions, namely: Criterion Reference testing, Grading practices, Statistic applications, Assessment application, Essay items, and Objective items. Validity and reliability are established. Results of the study show that the mean of the scores for the six domains and the entire items are medium, the highest was on the Assessment application and the lowest on Statistical applications. Implications of these findings for policy makers and school managers are discussed.*

Keywords: *classroom assessment practices; assessment practices; teachers self-perceived skills.*

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Introduction

Classroom assessment considered to be A continuous assessment used by teachers in teaching and learning. Classroom assessment enables teachers to gather, understand, and utilize assessment data to make decisions about their students' understanding of various subjects (Ghazali et al., 2018; McMillan, 2018; Omar, 2019). Classroom assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process (Ashraf & Zolfaghari, 2015). As a part of teaching learning, assessment becomes a procedure used by teachers to find out their students' level of knowledge and skills, learning outcomes, the strengths weaknesses, so that “they” can motivate them to improve their abilities. Additionally, the assessment makes teachers provide corrective feedback on what students are learning and how much learning material well students learned (Box et al.,2015). The aims of

classroom assessment are not only explicitly intended to determine the weaknesses and success of the students, but also to figure out the ways of improving the quality of students learning (Ashraf & Zolfaghari, 2018).

Jordan has made tremendous efforts to make educational reforms, in 2003 the MoE launched a large education reform program, Education Reform for Knowledge Economy (ERfKE), aiming to enhance the education system quality and producing graduates with knowledge economy skills. These include problem-solving skills, analytical thinking skills, computer technology skills, communication skills, etc. (NAfKE report 2007). With this vision, the MoE soon launched the new curriculum reform and development for all grades (in multiple phases) to prepare students for life-long learning and mastery of the new skills. In 2006 it implemented the first phase of the new textbooks and teaching methods (e.g. promoting student centered teaching methodology, multi-facet ways of learning, collaborative learning, etc.) and new assessment tools for Grades 1, 4, 8, and 10. The curricula change for other grades were followed in a systematic process (Ababneh et al., 2014).

Teachers are the primary assessors inside the classroom who usually use the tools of assessment to get information about teaching and learning, in addition to monitoring students' progress in achieving learning objectives. Their role in this side exceeds just assisting students to develop self-monitoring and self-assessment skills and strategies, teachers work on driving their students to be involved in setting learning outcomes, developing plans, and using alternative strategies in monitoring their own achievement. Furthermore, teachers watch students' learning and progress by observing them regularly and systematically in classrooms by interacting with them while teaching. Teachers collect data by observing and assessing students' interaction, performance, and projects or work samples, and making judgments based on these observations demonstrating that assessment is an essential part of the learning process. The effective alternative strategies "they" model in the classroom lead to involve the students in the procedures of developing assessment such as preparing rubrics and checklists (Abed & Abu Awwad, 2016) .

Teachers' assessment knowledge and the teachers' assessment competence have a direct effect on teaching and learning process in the classroom. This is because teachers need to use assessment information to make informed decisions about students' learning and communicate assessment results effectively. Therefore, teacher competency and knowledge of classroom assessment is directly related to effective student learning (Widiastuti et al., 2021). Zhang and Burry-Stock (2003) argued that teachers' perceived skill in classroom assessment practices reflects their perceptions on their skill in conducting classroom assessment practices. Zhang and Burry-Stock explain why teachers may rate their assessment skills as good even if they are found to be incompetent to conduct some assessment practices. When asked about assessment training they received and if such training benefited their classroom practices, teachers generally indicate that assessment training they receive did not adequately prepare them for their classroom assessment practices (Koloi-Keaikitse, 2012; Mertler, 2009).

Darling Hammond et al. (2012) as cited in Koloi-Keaikitse (2016) supports the need for teacher competencies in assessment because if teachers feel prepared when they enter teaching, they are most likely to have better sense of teaching efficacy which can ultimately improve their motivation to teach. Unfortunately, teachers lack adequate knowledge and competence regarding classroom

assessment. Mostly, teachers were found not to be good judges of the quality of their own assessment activities as well as their students' abilities (Mellati & Khademi, 2018; Clark-Gareca, 2016). This study was therefore meant to assess Jordanian science teachers' response pattern on classroom assessment practices. Teachers' assessment practices are an essential element for addressing students' learning needs, and they can ultimately improve the education system and accountability. McMillan (2001) stated that "Understanding teachers' assessment practices serve as a way of finding out if teachers adopt or use quality assessment methods that can address the learning needs of students".

Purpose of The Study

The study identified items that provide the most information about science teachers' classroom assessment practices. In turn, by identifying which skills teachers are most and least often they used, it is hoped to provide educational administrators, policymakers, and teacher educators with useful information for the planning and conducting of assessment training for teachers. The main research question is what are the assessment practices used most frequently by Jordanian science teachers?

Method

Study population and Sampling

Population and Sample The present study were carried out in middle schools in Jordan, specifically in six directorates located at the north of Jordan. The research population sample selected for the present study included (1700) science teachers in the 2022–2023 academic year. According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970), it is appropriate to select a minimum sample of 313 teachers from the entire research population. The sample comprised of 320 science teachers (142) male and (178) female. This ensured that the numbers represented the whole population and schools.

Instrument

A questionnaire adapted by Koloj (2017) from Zhang and Burry (2003) was used as the data collection instrument to assess teachers' classroom assessment practices. Teachers were asked to indicate how often they used the assessment practices skills they perceive to have on a scale from 1 (not at all used) to 5 (used very often) . for the total Questionnaire was ($\alpha = .95$) and its domains were as follows: Criterion Referenced Testing ($\alpha = .88$), Grading Practices ($\alpha = .82$), Statistical Applications ($\alpha = .84$), Assessment Applications ($\alpha = .88$), Essay Items ($\alpha = .75$), and Objective Items ($\alpha = .86$).

Validity

To ensure that items were content and context relevant for teachers in Jordan based on the language and curriculum, Questionnaire validity was verified by (6) arbitrators from supervisors and faculty members. appropriate. Based on that revision process all items were found to be relevant and the number of the items remained (29).

Reliability

To investigate reliability, the questionnaire was applied to a sample of (50) teachers out of the participants. Six dimensions (Criterion Reference testing, Grading practices, Statistic applications, Assessment application, Essay items, and Objective items measured the internal consistency of the

Cronbach's alpha for the teacher assessment practices. the total items of the questionnaire are (25). Internal Consistency was calculated through Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient, it was 0.86 for the whole questionnaire. The reliability of the sub dimensions ranged between .760 and .905.

Recommendations

The study makes the following recommendations considering the findings: - more classroom assessment practices programs to in-service teachers to raise the teachers' level of skills in assessment:

Further research to establish why teachers felt least competent in Essay Items construction. More in-surveyed assessment training for teachers in Essay Items by the Ministry of Education to become more confident in type of items construction and use in the classroom.

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