

**Comparison of Elementary Teachers' Teaching Attitude towards
Subjects Assessed and Non-Assessed By Punjab Examination
Commission**

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Abstract

The objective of the study is to explore teachers' attitude towards teaching assessed and non-assessed subjects by the Punjab Examination Commission (PEC) in public elementary schools of Punjab (Pakistan). Teachers of 288 assessed and not assessed subjects were selected using a convenience sample. A questionnaire was distributed among participants to collect data. Descriptive and inferential statistical techniques were used to analyze the data. Mean and SD was used to analyze the respondents' perception about the variables of the study. Independent t-test used to find out the significance of difference between the assessed and non-assessed subjects' teachers' perception. The Significant difference was found between the attitude of teachers towards the assessed and not assessed subjects. Therefore, the null hypotheses were rejected. Elementary teachers stand on a higher level attitude towards assessed subject.

Keywords: assessed subjects, non-assessed subjects, teachers' attitude, teachers' perception, stakeholders' perception

Introduction

Attitude is a mental tendency to take action positively or negatively towards the object of thought, for example, persons, groups or abstract ideas (Wanke, 2016). According to Thomas, Znaniecki's and Thurstone, elementary school teachers' attitude and ability can create a friendly environment in the elementary classroom (as cited in Erwin, 2014). Students' success and failure both depend on the knowledge and attitude of the teachers in the classroom. Elementary school teachers' teaching attitude is a key factor in making the learning classroom environment interesting and challenging for the students (Lehmann, Lugossy, & Horváth, 2016). "The teachers' own dispositions, values, understanding, attitude, and practices using ethical socio cultural lenses and sensitivity" (Jones, Kathryn, Mixon, & R., 2016). An examination system should be based on the curriculum and not on the textbook (Kanwal, 2014). The Punjab Examination Commission (PEC) is an offshoot of the Department of Education with autonomy to introduce its own examination system in Punjab (Majhanovich & Geo-JaJa, 2013). The Government of Punjab has established an autonomous body to refurbish the assessment system in the province (Fund, 2010).

PEC conducts a standardized examination of class five and class eight in the province of Punjab (Dundar et al, 2014). PEC assesses only five subjects (Science, Urdu, English, Mathematics, Islamiyah). These subjects carry 500 marks in total in each of the Grade 5 and Grade 8 examination (www.pec.edu.pk, 2016). This research focuses on the elementary teachers' attitude towards teaching the assessed and non-assessed subjects by PEC.

Objectives of the study

The following objectives are expected to be met.

1. Compare elementary teachers' teaching attitude towards the subjects assessed and not assessed by PEC
2. Find out elementary teachers' perceptions about teaching attitude towards the subjects assessed by PEC.
3. Find out elementary teachers' perceptions about teaching attitude towards the subjects not assessed by PEC.

4. Compare elementary teachers' perceptions about their attitude towards the subjects assessed and not assessed by PEC.

Alternate hypothesis

The following hypothesis of the study has been formulated to drive the investigation. The significance level for the testing hypothesis is predetermined at alpha level = 0.05.

H₁: There is a significant difference between elementary teachers' teaching attitude towards the subjects not assessed and assessed by the PEC in public elementary schools.

Elementary education

Elementary education is a necessity for national development. Approximately 4.039 million students are in public elementary schools and 2.403 million are in private elementary schools 3.647 million boys students and 2.798 million girls students in Pakistan in 2017 (Rehman, 2017). In elementary-level, students learn letters, complete pronoun, and punctuation. Learning model and teacher attitude play an important role in the elementary education (Widosari, Suwandi, Slamet, & Winarni, 2017). Elementary education is increasing student confidence and for the ultimate entrance into responsible adulthood (Afzal, Malik, Begum, Sarwar, & Fatima, 2012).

Elementary teacher' attitude towards teaching

Teachers' attitude make classroom environment-friendly and effective, it' also makes a teacher skillful in curriculum improvement and implementation (Reddy & Sujathamalini, 2010). Teachers' attitude creates a better learning environment that in return, motivates and provides information and meaningful condition for each student (Khan, Mohammad, Shah, & Farid, 2016).

The beginning of elementary education system in Punjab Pakistan

After independence, there was no Board of intermediate and secondary education (Sifi, 2011). Elementary level of education consisted of eight classes, i.e. class one to class four was a primary and 5 to 8 was elementary at the time of independence. Assistant District Inspectors of

Schools (ADI's) used to were conduct class eight examinations and District Inspector of Schools (DI's) conducted a scholarship examination for students of grade 5 and grade 8 (UNESCO, 1972). Home examinations were conducted by the respective schools for each grade (I-8) in the elementary schools (UNESCO, 2007). A public examination was conducted by the Education Department for promotion to the next grade at the end of the eight years of the elementary education. However, private schools had their own examination systems and their teachers themselves would mark their papers (www.pec.edu.pk).

The need for establishing Punjab Examination Commission

According to the study of UNESCO (2007), the primary educational evaluation system in Pakistan failed due to its primary mandate of teaching children the basic skills. Of course, its main reason was poor teaching and assessment (Malik, 2014). This poor education was the outcome of poor education and training of the teachers, and poor management and supervision. Students in the primary grades in the primary grades were promoted on the basis of home examinations which were not reliable.

Establishment of PEC

A need for the establishment of an autonomous body was felt for the assessment of students' learning outcomes in the province. PEC was established on 16th January 2006 with a challenging task to establish new setup and to conduct Grade Five examination to be held the same year" (www.pec.edu.pk).

Dr. Ken Vine and Dr. Ted Redden, who came into Pakistan with under the sponsorship of UNICEF (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund) prepared instruction of paper setters. According to (Nisa, 2016) the senior research fellow Dr. Munawar Mirza worked as a National consult. The team of two members, Ken Vine and Munawar Mirza designed and structured the PEC. The team also worked to shift to the SOLO (structure of observed learning outcomes) taxonomy of educational objectives for measuring the learning outcomes (www.pec.edu.pk).

Research methodology

A descriptive survey design was used in this research. A list of elementary public schools of Tehsil Sialkot was obtained from the office of the Education Department of District Sialkot. There are 95 elementary public schools registered PEC. Among the 95 elementary public schools in Tehsil Sialkot, only 47 elementary public schools of tehsil Sialkot were selected as a sample using systematic sampling technique. From each school, six teachers teaching English, Math, Science, Arabic, Computer Science, and social Studies were selected.

Table 1

Demographic characteristics of elementary teachers who participated in the survey

Demographics		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	137	43.1
	Female	181	56.9
Academic Qualification	Matric	6	1.9
	F.A/FSC	4	1.3
	B.A/BSC	84	26.4
	M.A/MSc	210	66.0
	M.Phil	14	4.4
Professional Qualification	C.T	10	3.1
	B.Ed.	168	52.8
	M.Ed.	140	44.0
	Social Study	63	19.8
	Arabic	44	13.8
Subjects	Computer	45	14.2
	Science		
	Mathematic	51	16.0
	Science	58	18.2
	English	57	17.9
Designation	PST	61	19.2
	EST	221	69.5
	SST	36	11.3

Table 2
Teachers' Perceptions about their Motivation to teach the Assessed Subjects on a scale=5

Teaching activates	M	S.D.
Overall Motivation for teaching	4.22	1.00
Finding necessary material	4.19	0.94
Time for co-curricular activities	2.16	1.06
Hard work for result	3.90	0.82
Regularly in taking classes	4.28	0.95
Preparation for teaching	4.26	2.87
Lesson planning	3.93	1.03
Give extra time to students	3.98	2.84

The mean score ranged from 4.28 to 2.16. For the subjects assessed by the PEC the overall mean motivation score was quite high i.e. 4.22. In such courses teachers were highly motivated to ensure regularity, prepare for teaching and find instructional materials. They valued less the co-curricular activates.

Table 3
Teachers' Perceptions about their outside classroom Attention toward Assessed Subjects

Item	M	S.D.
Give extra attention to subject	4.02	0.76
Give extra attention to students	3.89	0.92
Give extra time to subject	4.06	0.95
Explanation of concepts	2.71	1.24

In table 3 respondent perceived their additional attention at a moderate level. The mean score for teachers' attention ranged from 4.06 to 2.71.

Table 4
Teachers' Feelings toward Assessed Subjects

Item	M	S.D.
Feel Pressure for result	1.92	0.96
Happy and comfortable in teaching	2.78	1.29
Value students' opinion	3.89	0.76

The maximum mean score was about appreciating students' opinion (M = 3.89) and the minimum mean score was about felt pressure for the result (M = 1.92). The respondents negated pressure feelings but agreed for appreciating students' opinions.

Table 5
Teachers' Perceptions about their Motivation towards non-Assessed Subjects

Teaching activates	M	S.D.
Motivation for teaching	2.75	1.27
Finding necessary material	2.88	1.20
Time for co-curricular activity	2.67	3.11
Work hard to produce result	2.59	1.21
Take classes regularly	3.00	1.24
Well preparation for teaching	2.83	1.20
Lesson planning	2.55	1.17
Give extra time to students	2.36	1.06

The above table reveals that according to teachers' perceptions towards teaching non-assessed subjects were at a moderate level. The mean score ranged from 3.00 "take classes regular" to 2.36 "extra time for student". The respondents disagreed that teachers give extra time to the student.

Table 6
Teachers' Perceptions about their additional Attention toward Non-Assessed Subjects

Item	M	S.D.
Give extra attention to subject	2.45	1.13
Give extra attention to student	2.47	1.18
Explanation of concepts	2.72	3.09
Give extra time to subject	2.50	1.10

The above table discovers that respondents' level of agreement towards the first two elements, which were about giving extra attention to both the students ($M = 2.47$) and subject ($M = 2.45$), was at a low level. For the other two statements, the respondents remain undecided.

Table 7
Teachers' feelings toward Non-Assessed Subjects

Item	M	S.D.
Feel Pressure for result	2.39	1.13
Happy and comfortable in teaching	2.54	1.11
Appreciate the student opinion	2.71	3.02

This table illustrates that the respondents rated teachers' feeling towards non-assessed subjects at a moderate level for appreciation of students' opinion and being happy and comfortable in the teaching of non-assessed subjects. On the other hand, the respondents negated that they feel pressure for results.

Table 8
Difference between the Perception of Teachers of Assessed and Not Assessed Subjects

Teaching activates	Subjects	N	M	SD	<i>t</i> -value (df = 316)	<i>P</i> ($\alpha = 0.05$)
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Teachers feel	Not-Assessed	152	2.51	1.23		
happy to teach the	Assessed	166	3.02	1.30	3.55	0.00
subjects						
Teacher think	Not-Assessed	152	2.43	1.16		
necessary to	Assessed	166	2.97	1.25	3.94	0.00
explain subject						
content						
proper time for co-	Not-Assessed	152	1.95	0.90		
curricular activities	Assessed	166	2.36	1.16	3.47	0.00
Well prepared for	Not-Assessed	152	2.64	1.16		
lesson	Assessed	166	3.01	1.21	2.70	0.07
Feel pressure for	Not-Assessed	152	2.23	1.05		
results	Assessed	166	2.54	1.18	2.48	0.01
Give extra	Not-Assessed	152	2.37	1.01		
attention to subject	Assessed	166	2.62	1.16	2.05	0.04
Give more	Not-Assessed	152	3.81	0.76		
attention to	Assessed	166	3.96	0.75	1.81	0.07
students						
Give extra time to	Not-Assessed	152	2.26	1.00		
subject	Assessed	166	2.44	1.10	1.93	0.05
Work hard for	Not-Assessed	152	2.46	1.21		
good results	Assessed	166	2.70	1.19	1.81	0.07

The teachers' of the assessed subjects ($M = 3.02$, $SD = 1.30$) display a high level of satisfaction or happiness to teach those subjects than that of non-assessed subject teachers ($M = 2.51$, $SD = 1.23$). The difference was marginally significant, $t(316) = 3.55$; $P = 0.00$, at alpha level 0.05. The assessed subjects' teachers ($M = 2.97$, $SD = 1.25$) think necessary to explain the subject content, than the non-assessed subjects' teachers ($M = 2.43$, $SD = 1.16$). The difference between their perceptions was statistically significant, $t(316) = 3.94$; $P = 0.00$. The difference between the teachers of the two categories of subjects was also significant regarding their feelings of pressure for better student achievement. Surprisingly the teachers of non-assessed subjects had higher sense of accountability as compared with the assessed subjects.

Findings, conclusion, and recommendations

In this section, we discuss the results of the study, conclusions, and findings of the study and recommendations. Most of the teachers have taken classes of assessed subjects regularly. They worked hard to produce good results and gave extra attention to the assessed subjects. Actually, the teachers and administration at the elementary level give value to the subjects assessed by PEC. Teachers, students, heads, and parents just focus on the PEC assessed subjects. Teachers and heads give importance because they are assessed and punished and rewarded because of PEC results (Malik, 2013)

Most of the respondents displayed a more positive attitude towards the assessed subjects by PEC. The teacher's attitude towards assessed subjects is negative due to the pressure of the PEC administration and teacher's feelings, motivations and attitude are negative. On the other side non assessed subjects teachers' attitude is relax mode because they have no pressure of results. However, the null hypotheses are accepted, three in favor of assessed subjects and one in favor on no-assessed subject.

The recommendations are made based on finding and conclusion of the study. The major recommendations are;

1. The policy maker should give equal weightage to teacher's performance in terms of students' achievement in both types of subjects, assessed by the PEC and those not assessed.
2. School heads should also consider the importance of either types of subjects while preparing the teaching schedule and instructional mentoring.
3. School heads should also consider the importance of either types of subjects while preparing the teaching schedule and instructional mentoring.
4. Further research may be conducted to explore the opinion of teaching professionals, students and parents regarding their opinion and effort opinion and effort inputs in the two types of subjects.

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