How to Cite This Article: Javaid, M., Iqbal, M. J., Ishaq, M., & Haq, M. N. U. (2023). Effect of Assessment Practices on Teaching Contents at Secondary Level. *Journal of Social Sciences Review*, 3(1), 477–488. https://doi.org/10.54183/jssr.v3i1.173



Effect of Assessment Practices on Teaching Contents at Secondary Level

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Vol. 3, No. 1 (Winter 2023)

Pages: 477 – 488

ISSN (Print): 2789-441X ISSN (Online): 2789-4428

Key Words

Assessment, Question Papers, Oral Communications, Text Book Contents, Teaching Contents, Cramming

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Muhammad Nisar Ul Haq Email: <u>dr.nisar@kiu.edu.pk</u> Abstract: Assessment practices play a dynamic role in the educational development through teaching contents. These contents affects the academic performance of students. That is why external examinations are conducted at secondary level to assess the students' academic achievements in Pakistan. These external examinations in Pakistan have always been criticized due to pedagogical practices. These pedagogical practices affected by assessment practices. Hence, this research study was proposed to find the effects of assessment practices on teaching contents. Question papers at secondary level are major tools of assessment. This research finds that existing assessment practices encourages remembering and cramming. Text books are commonly focused by teachers for teaching purposes. Selective contents are encouraged and speaking skills are discouraged for preparation of examinations. This research study concluded that assessment practices at secondary level effects teaching contents.

Introduction

Assessment is involved in educational learning process. Assessment in education is comprehensive term. According to Lacy and Williams (2018) the term assessment in education is related to the diversity of tools and methods which are used by teachers and educationists to measure, evaluate and document the academic progress and acquisition of skills of learners. However, assessment is frequently related with the traditional tests examinations. In teaching learning process, it is intended to evaluate the student's level of knowledge, concepts and skills. Henderson and

Phillips (2015) stated that assessment is used to find the weakness and strengths of students in their learning process. It assists educators to provide special academic support to students. Xu and Brown (2016) views that assessment helps the teachers to make decisions regarding learning outcomes of the students. According to Fraser (2015) and Liljedahl (2010) assessment is an effective communication tool which is used between students and teachers. It helpful to keep the record of knowledge, skills, attitude and behavior of students.

Assessment is further considered as a supportive source for students in their learning activities. It empowers students to actually have knowledge regarding skills and competences. According to Suskie (2018) assessment is not only helpful for students in their educational improvement but it also observes and monitors the improvement in quality education. Vogt (2017) stated that assessment and learning integrated contents are mutually which contribute to students' cycle of learning process. The assessment process at secondary level is accomplished through question However, unfortunately the question papers are not prepared in light of Bloom's taxonomy. The current assessment process neglects cognitive domain of Bloom's taxonomy. The question papers assess students' competency for recalling the knowledge instead of critical thinking. According to Mahroof and Saeed (2021) the question papers of BISEs assess the student's skills of lower order. They further explained that question papers of BISEs pay less attention on the assessment of analysis, synthesis and evaluation.

According to Sadiku (2015) listening, speaking, reading and writing are four basic skills of English language. Listening and reading skills are receptive whereas writing and speaking are productive skills. Oral or speaking communication is very important skill which is necessary to express the thoughts effectively. The speaking communication skills are improved during classroom teaching. Classroom is a best platform to enhance the speaking skills of the students. Rahman et al. (2021) stated that teaching process is effected by the assessment practices. Teachers normally change their teaching methodologies and approaches which suit the needs of assessment. Teachers try to skip or ignore the speaking skills because speaking or oral communication skills are not normally the part of assessment at secondary level.

Bean and Melzer (2021) views that promotion of active thinking in classroom teaching is very important. Classroom is place where students have opportunity to think actively and learn about social values of the society. Justice, trust, honesty, loyalty, empathy respect. responsibility are the major social values which should be the part of teaching. Unfortunately these social values are not being focused overlooked during teaching practices because these are not the part of assessment practices. A positive change in behavior of the students is main objective of education. New ideas among students are created as a result of teaching learning process. Vieluf et al. (2012) view that creation of innovation in students is the major requirement of education system. Assessment process encourages students to create new ideas in their learning practices. According to Shelton (2011) new ideas create impressive effects on students and teachers. Improvement in any field of life is possible through creation of innovative Assessment is a major source which motivates students to create innovative ideas in their leaning practices.

According to Fareed et al. (2016) hand writing skills plays an important role to produce any language. They further argue that with the help of better writing skills students' performance in language is enhanced. Writing skills play a vital role in language through teaching learning process. Writing skills of students in Pakistan are very weak and substandard. According to Dar and Khan (2015) Pakistani students are facing problems in practically skills. Haider (2012) views that existing textbooks are outdated since long and these textbooks do not promote student's writing skills. Assessment plays a key role in developing and promoting writing skills among students. Writing skills of students can possibly be improved through effective teaching methods. In this regard, importance of trained and professionally sound teachers cannot be ignored. Teachers, unfortunately, give importance only on handwriting skills in order to pass the examinations. According to Ahmed (2010) repeated topics in exams encourage students to memorize the ready-made knowledge. Ullah et

al. (2020) view that students prefer cramming or rotting just to pass exam instead of creative writing skills. Mahmood et al. (2020) view that existing examination or assessment system is killing the creative skills of students. They further argued that topics in exams are normally repeated and can be predicted. In this way, cramming practices are encouraged rather than creative skills.

It is further explained that assessment is associated with contents of textbooks in teaching learning process. Knight (2015) stated that textbooks are a better and trustworthy source of content knowledge which offers a creditable fact for learning. The textbook is a dynamic part of classroom teaching practices. Textbooks are part of teaching in both traditional and modern classrooms. Normally textbooks are considered a necessary part of learning in schools for students and in teachers' perspective textbooks have also importance. Textbooks are considered a reliable source material of evidences and facts which are needed to present for assessment process. Helping book or key book is an additional source which students use for preparation of exams. Teachers normally prefer to use helping books. Khabbazbashi et al. (2017) view that use of textbooks during teaching practices is a traditional way of teaching. It is teacher centered approach and normally it is used for having low ability students. Naeem (2011) stated that both teachers and students use helping books at secondary level whereas students of O-level focus on activities instead of textbooks in Pakistan.

Selective study is another way of shortcut to pass exam at secondary level. Lussier (2017) explained that students normally keep away from thorough study and try to use short cuts for exam preparation. Students think that this short cut methods save time but it is impossible for them to understand the basics of the knowledge. Irfan (2018) views that assessments in examinations normally give importance to simple and traditional questions. Most of the assessment

questions in examinations overlook the higher levels of understandings. This higher levels are included in complicated items for example comprehension, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. According to the need of question papers students focus on remembering and rote memorization strategies to perform better in examination.

Apart from this, Retief et al. (2016) enunciate that the information and knowledge is rapidly changing in this global world. It is impossible to provide students the latest information and knowledge through already printed and prepared Gosiewska (2021) views that textbooks. traditional textbooks cannot provide complete required knowledge to the students in this situation. However, additional resource material can be helpful for them which provides the latest and updated knowledge. This additional or allied material provides not only inspiration but also becomes a source of motivation for learners. According to Lierman (2020) allied material minimizes difficulties, hurdles and shortcomings in learning creates positive impact in teaching. Allied resource material creates something new innovative ideas in educational process.

Objectives

- **1.** To probe the assessment practices at secondary level.
- **2.** To explore teaching contents at secondary level.
- **3.** To find the effect of assessment practices on teaching contents at secondary level.

Research Questions

- i. What are the assessment practices of BISE at secondary level?
- ii. What kind of teaching contents are being taught by teachers at secondary level?
- **iii.** Is assessment practices effecting the teaching contents at secondary level?

Delimitation

- Federal Board of Intermediate & Secondary Education (FBISE) Islamabad, BISE Lahore, BISE Peshawar, BISE Karachi and BISE Quetta.
- ii. Academic Session 2018-19.
- iii. Level SSC-II.
- iv. Secondary level teachers who taught the subject of English during session 2018–19.

Methodology

Descriptive research process was used in this research paper and data was collected through survey design.

Population

Population for a research study is a group of people that you draw results and conclusions about it. Rahi (2017) stated that population selected for a research is group of people who have the similar characteristics. Targeted population is a population which a researcher is used for the conduct of a research. Targeted population was used in this research. The detail of population for this research is as under.

Table 1

Category	FBISE Islamabad	BISE Lahore	BISE Peshawar	BISE Karachi	BISE Quetta	Total
Teachers	386	1949	582	2170	1325	6412

Sample

According to Etikan and Bala (2017) a group which is selected from whole population for a research purpose is called sample. Sample is a smaller set of whole population which used to collect data and conclusions are established on

the basis of data collected from sample. The sample for this research was selected as proposed by Gill et al. (2010). Proportionate method was used for selection of sample for this research. Stratified random sampling was used to collect data. The sample size for this research was as under.

Table 2

Category	FBISE Islamabad	BISE Lahore	BISE Peshawar	BISE Karachi	BISE Quetta	Total
Teachers	22	111	33	122	75	363

Development of Instrument

According to Dalati and Gómez (2018) questionnaire is used to conduct a survey research. Closed ended statements and rating scale questions were administered for the conduct of this research. The statements on the format of Likert type are considered easy to calculate statistically both in qualitative and quantitative research. Questionnaire was developed on five point rating Likert Scale for teachers who taught the subject of English to secondary classes. The questionnaire was consisted on twelve statements. Six out of twelve

statements were related with assessment and other six were related with teaching contents.

Validity and reliability

Validity of questionnaire for a research is used to check the accuracy of an instrument. According to Hawkins et al. (2018) an instrument will be valid when it exactly measures what it intend to measure. High validity of an instrument shows that it will produce more reliable results. Opinion from four experts of the field was taken to check the content validity of the questionnaire.

Weijer et al. (2019) views that reliability of a questionnaire is a level of consistency. It means that when a test provide same results in similar conditions then it will be reliable for a research. According to Ravinder and Saraswathi (2020) Cronbach Alpha is normally used to determine the internal consistency of an instrument. Responses of 109 teacher respondents which were 30% of sample size were used for pilot testing to check the reliability. Cronbach Alpha was used to check the reliability of the instrument. These responses of teachers were tabulated by using SPSS version 22 to determine the validity of questionnaire. The results of Cronbach Alpha were as under.

Table 3

No. of Respondents	%age of Sample	Cronbach's Alpha
109	30%	0.912

The calculation of above table indicates that the reliability level of this questionnaire was above the good level.

Administration of Instruments

The questionnaire was sent through post mail along with written addressed and self-stamped envelopes to the respondent who belong to BISE Karachi, Peshawar, Quetta and Lahore. However the data were collected personally from the respondents who belong to the vicinity of FBISE Islamabad. Total 363 questionnaire were distributed but 304 filled questionnaire received in this way response rate remained 83.33%.

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed in the light of research objectives. According to the frequencies of Likert Scale the data were arranged and tabulated. SPSS version 22 was used to analyze the data. To find the results of first and second objective percentage, mean, standard deviation and Chi Square was calculated. Regression method was calculated to find the effects of assessment practices on teaching contents.

Table 4Recall Knowledge: Recall knowledge of students is assessed in question papers of BISEs.

Level	F	%age	Mean	SD
SDA	1	0.3		
DA	2	0.7		
UD	3	1.0	4.55	0.590
A	122	40.1		
SA	176	57.9		

Table 4 shows that 98% teachers collectively agreed that recall knowledge of students is assessed in question papers of BISEs. The mean value 4.55 expresses that majority teacher

respondents group lies round the mean. This shows that the opinion of respondents was significantly in favour that recall knowledge is assessed in question papers of BISEs.

Table 5Oral Communication: Question papers of Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education assess oral communication skills.

Level	E	%age	Mean	SD
SDA	147	48.4		
DA	140	46.1		
UD	11	3.6	1.59	0.659
A	6	2.0		
SA	0	0.0		

Table 5 explains that 94.5% respondents collectively disagreed that question papers of BISEs assess oral communication skills. The mean value 1.59 shows that majority teacher respondents disagreed with the statement. The

SD values was 0.659 represents that teacher respondents clustered round the mean. This shows respondent's opinion significantly disagreed that question papers of BISEs assess the oral communication skills.

Table 6Thinking Skills: Thinking skills of learners about social values of the society are assessed in question papers of BISEs.

Level	F	%age	Mean	SD
SDA	149	49.0		
DA	148	48.7		
UD	7	2.3	1.53	0.544
A	6	2.0		
SA	0	0.0		

Table 6 tells that 97.7% respondents collectively disagreed that thinking skills of learners about social values of the society are assessed in question papers of BISEs. The mean value 1.53 shows that majority teacher respondents

disagreed with the statement. The SD remained 0.544 which shows that respondent clustered round the mean. It reflects that respondent's opinion was significantly in favour of the statement.

Table 7Creation of New Ideas: BISEs assessment creates new ideas among learners.

Level	F	%age	Mean	SD	
SDA	143	47.0			
DA	156	51.3			
UD	4	1.3	1.55	0.543	
A	1	0.3			
SA	0	0.0			

Table 7 tells that 98.3% respondents collectively disagreed that BISEs assessment creates new ideas among learners. The mean value was 1.55

which represents that a great majority respondents disagreed that assessment of BISEs do not create new ideas. The SD was 0.543 which shows that respondent's opinion was significantly disagreed with the statement. It

means that BISEs assessment do not create new ideas among learners.

Table 8Hand Writing Skills: Teachers emphasize on hand writing skills of learners as a result of BISEs assessment.

Level	F	%age	Mean	SD	
SDA	0	0			
DA	2	0.7			
UD	7	1.3	4.52	0.563	
A	133	43.8			
SA	165	54.3			

Table 8 tells that 98.1% respondents collectively agreed that teachers emphasize on hand writing skills of learners as a result of BISEs assessment. The mean value was 4.52 which represents that a great majority of respondents were agreed with statement. The SD value was 0.563 it shows that

respondent's majority lies round the mean. It means that respondent's opinion was significantly agreed with the statement. It proves that Teachers emphasize on hand writing skills of learners as a result o BISEs assessment.

Table 9Cramming: Assessment of Boards of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BISEs) encourage cramming.

_			_	-	
Level	F	%age	Mean	SD	
SDA	0	0.0			_
DA	6	2.0			
UD	14	4.6	4.48	0.679	
A	112	36.8			
SA	172	56.6			

Table 9 indicates that 93.4% of respondents collectively agreed that assessment of BISEs encourages cramming. The mean value was 4.48 which shows that a large majority of respondents agreed with the statement. The SD value was

0.679 which represents that respondents clustered round the mean. This shows that respondents' opinion was significantly in favour of the statement.

Table 10Text Book Contents: Teachers normally give emphasis to text book contents.

Level	F	%age	Mean	SD
SDA	1	0.3		
DA	6	2.0		
UD	9	3.0	4.34	0.676
A	144	47.4		
SA	144	47.4		

Table 10 shows 94.8% respondents agreed that teachers normally give emphasis to text book contents. The mean value 4.34 specifies that a large majority of teacher respondents were agreed with the statement. The SD 0.676 shows

that majority respondents lies round the mean. This signifies that teacher's respondents were significantly in favour of the statement. These calculations indicate that textbook contents are preferred by teachers during teaching process.

Table 11Helping Books: Teachers use quide books to make their teachings easy.

Level	F	%age	Mean	SD
SDA	0	0.0		
DA	7	2.3		
UD	14	4.6	4.38	0.683
A	140	46.1		
SA	143	47.0		

Table 11 indicates that 93.1 % of huge teacher's majority agreed that teachers use guide books to make their teachings easy. The calculated mean value 4.38 shows that bulk of respondents lies

round the mean. The SD 0.683 shows that respondents cluster lies near the mean. This indicates that respondent's opinion was significantly supports the statement.

Table 12Selective Contents: Selective contents are preferred by teachers for exam preparation.

Level	F	%age	Mean	SD
SDA	0	0.0		
DA	1	0.3		
UD	7	2.3	4.44	0.559
A	154	50.7		
SA	142	46.7		

Table 12 shows that 97.4% of respondents collectively agreed that selective contents are preferred by teachers for exam preparation. The calculated mean value 4.44 proves that a large majority of respondents were in favour of the

statement. The SD value 0.559 shows that majority respondent's cluster lies round the mean. It proves that respondent's opinion was significantly approves the statement.

Table 13Past Question Papers: Teachers guide students to remember the answers of BISEs past question papers for preparation of exams.

Level	F	%age	Mean	SD
SDA	0	0.0		
DA	6	2.0		
UD	9	3.0	4.47	0.654
A	124	40.8		
SA	165	54.3		

Table 13 describes that 95.1% of respondents collectively agreed that teachers guide students to remember the answers of BISEs past question papers for preparation of exams. The mean value 4.47 indicates that a huge majority of

respondents were agreed with the statement. The SD 0.654 shows that respondents' majority group lies round the mean. It proves that the respondents' opinion was significantly approval of the statement.

Table 14Speaking Skills: Teachers overlook speaking skills of learners during their teaching.

Level	F	%age	Mean	SD
SDA	0	0.0		
DA	8	2.6		
UD	14	4.6	4.41	0.703
A	126	41.4		
SA	156	51.3		

Table 14 indicates that 92.7% of respondents collectively agreed that teachers overlook speaking skills of learners during their teaching. The mean value 4.41 identifies that majority respondents agreed with the statement. The SD value 0.703 means that respondents' majority

group lies around the mean. It means that the respondents' opinion significantly approves the statement. These calculations confirms that teachers overlook speaking skills of learners during their teaching.

Table 15Additional Notes: Teachers provide additional notes to students during their teaching to supplement the text book.

Level	F	%age	Mean	SD
SDA	175	57.6		
DA	108	35.5		
UD	12	3.9	1.52	0.713
A	9	3.0		
SA	0	0.0		

Table 15 reveals that 93.1% of respondents collectively disagreed that teachers provide additional notes to students during their teaching to supplement the text book. The mean value 1.52 shows that majority of respondents disagreed with the statement. The SD value was 0.713 means that majority respondents cluster lies around the mean. This indicates that respondents' opinion was significantly disapproves the statement. These calculations shows that teachers do not provide additional

notes to students during their teaching to supplement the text book.

Effect of Assessment Practices on Teaching Contents

The analysis of teacher respondent's views to find the effect of assessment practices on teaching contents the Regression Test was used. The calculation in this regard are given as.

Table 16 *Effect of Assessment on Teaching Contents*

						95% C.I.		
Variable	В	SE	β	t	P	LL	UL	
Constant	5.20	.36		14.34		4.48	5.91	
Assessment	0.68	0.01	0.91	51.26	.000	0.66	0.71	

Criterion = Assessment, $F = 2628.05^{***}$, $R^2 = .823$

Data was analyzed by using Regression test to find the effect of assessment practices on teaching contents. Table 16 shows significant positive effect between assessment practices of BISEs on teaching contents. The analysis supposed for 82.3% variance in teaching contents by the interpreter question paper assessment as $R^2 = .823$ with F(1,566) = 2628.05 at p < .001

Findings

The most upsetting finding of this study is that question papers of BISEs assess recall knowledge of students and encourage cramming. Assessment of oral communication is ignored in exams in this way teacher do not give priority to communication skills of students. The present assessment process of BISEs do not encourage to create new ideas among students. Teachers focus on good hand writing skills of students because students have to write with hands examinations. Teachers emphasize to teach students from text book contents. Teachers use guide books because they think it is easy way to teach them. Teachers give emphasis on selective contents for preparation of examinations. Past question papers of BISEs are preferred to remember because some particular questions are repeated again and again. According to findings of this research teachers normally overlook the speaking skills of students because these are not part of examination. Teachers do not provide additional notes to provide supplement help to students.

The findings further suggest that teaching practices of teachers are directly linked with the assessment process of BISEs. The things which

are repeatedly asked in examinations, teachers focus on them in their teaching practices.

Conclusions

Assessment at SSC level is effecting teaching contents. Assessment practices of BISEs are negatively effecting the creative skills of SSC students. As a result of BISEs examinations students are giving their attention remembering and recall knowledge. There is no attention by both students and teachers on speaking skills because these are not part of BISEs examinations. The assessment practices are training students to remember the solution of past question papers because question items are repeating again and again. Assessment at SSC level in the subject of English is not based on creative writing abilities that is why teachers focus on textbook contents and guide books material.

Recommendations

Conclusions of the findings of this research proposes the following recommendations:

The assessment must satisfy the valid criteria. The questions should not be repeated in exams. Unseen questions should be included in question papers. Oral communication skills should be part of assessment. Additional allied material should be provided to students instead of only text book contents.

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