

FACTORS AFFECTING ASSESSMENT PRACTICES IN OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING (ODL) System: A CASE STUDY OF ALLAMA IQBAL OPEN UNIVERSITY (AIU)

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ABSTRACT

Aim of the study was to identify factors which are affecting assessment practices in Open and Distance Learning (ODL) system, including factors affecting assessment of assignments, components of workshop and term final examination. The study was intended to answer the questions, how feedback, student faculty proportion, motivation, learning styles and personal problems affect assessment practices during assessment of assignments? What difficulties, students of B.Ed face during presentation of Lesson Plans and compilation of Portfolios? How style of questions, environment and examiners affect assessment practices during term final examination? Population of the study was all students of B.Ed (1.5 year), (2.5 year) and 4 year students, enrolled during semester Autumn-2018, in Multan region of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIU). Sample comprised of 131 male and 119 female students. Sample was taken by simple random sampling technique. The study was descriptive in nature, and self developed questionnaire was used to collect data from sample students Validity of the research tool was determined through expert opinion method. Coefficient of alpha reliability for validated questionnaire had a value of .76 for respondents'. Data was collected and analyzed by employing SPSS to calculate frequencies, means, standard deviation, and percentage. t-test was used to calculate gender differences. The study concluded that all factors which are affecting in Open and distance Learning (ODL) system are also affecting on assessment practices in Multan region of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIU), The study recommends on the basis of findings that factors which affect assessment practices in Multan region may be given due consideration to minimize student difficulties. (1) Assessment of assignments by providing timely feedback on semester assignments, deploying faculty keeping in view the enrolment, motivating students and by adopting flexible teaching styles. (2) Component of Workshop, training regarding lesson plan preparation and portfolio compilation need improvement. (3) Term Final Examination, exam personnel may be deployed on merit, old technological items may be replaced with new ones and physical facilities may be improved at Multan regional campus of AIU.

Keywords: Assessment Factors, Distance learners, Feedback, Workshop and Examinations.

INTRODUCTION

The term assessment in education refers to the wide range of methods or tools used by educators to evaluate, measure, and document students' academic readiness, learning progress, skill acquisition, or educational needs. Assessment involves the use of empirical data on student learning to improve programs and improve student learning, (Allen, 2004). Different patterns of assessments, including, pre-assessments, formative assessment, summative assessment, interim assessments, placement assessments, performance assessments, Portfolio-based assessments and Term Final Examinations are used in formal and ODL system. Assessment of Learning plays an important role in measuring the quality in education (Makamane, 2011). Allama Iqbal Open University resides in ODL system and always looks chasing excellence. Due to its open nature, it seems to face problems in trying to ensure quality products through assessment of learners' work. Kanwar's (2014) found that the highest standards must be met through proper quality assurance policies. Generally ODL system administers two tools of assessment, 1- Traditional tool of assessment (term-final examination) and 2-Alternative Tool of Assessment (assignments/coursework and workshops), (Ngwarai R. & Mhute, 2012). Researcher's own experience, available empirical evidences and literature review shows clearly that in ODL system some factors are affecting on traditional as well as on alternative tools of assessment. According to Roblyer & Wienke "The commonly used model for interaction qualities for distance learning have two insights; (1) Qualities which define interaction in distance learning and (2) factors which affect it in distance learning design"(P. 79). Literature review is self explanatory in depicting most common factors affecting assessment practices in Open and Distance Learning System.

Much has been discussed on assessment practices in the ODL system including assessment patterns, challenges of assessment, and effectiveness of assessment, and so on but least has been discussed about factors that directly or indirectly affect assessment practices in the ODL system. Prior research studies has discussed one or two factors affecting assessment practices, this study is encapsulating all possible factors which affect assessment practices in ODL system.

In pursuance of excellence, modernizing culture, and improving moral standards, due to the open nature of Open and Distance Learning, Allama Iqbal Open University, it seeks to address issues through assessing learners' work in order to assure quality output. Allama Iqbal Open University assesses students' coursework/assignments and examinations. Assessment through assignments, workshops, and examinations, presents a challenge. Therefore there is a dire need to highlight factors that affect assessment practices in the ODL system. This study has been designed to investigate the effect of these factors on assessment practices in the ODL system in general and AIOU in particular. Resource persons, workshop organizers, and tutors can utilize this study as a starting point to discuss assessment challenges, as well as assessment-related aspects. It will take other university departments and AIOU, as an institution of Open and Distance Learning, into consideration as well. Researcher greatly wishes that this study's findings might lead to additional research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Assessment in ODL

Assessment is a derivation of the Latin word "asseior," which means "to set" (Curzon 1990). The term assessment is used in education to describe a wide range of methods and technologies that educators employ to evaluate, measure, and document students' academic preparedness, learning progress, skill acquisition, and educational needs. (The Glossary of Education Reforms)

Types of Assessment:

There are more than sixty types of Assessment; few of them are following here.

Placement Assessment:

Placement assessment is a practice that many colleges and universities use to assess college readiness and determine which classes a student should initially take. Placement assessments test abilities in English, mathematics, and reading they may be used in other disciplines such as foreign languages, computer and internet technologies and natural sciences. The objective is to offer low scoring students remedial coursework (Conley & David, 2010)

Formative Assessment

Formative assessment is done during learning process properly monitored to improve student learning, divided into little content areas. "It is purely done to generate feedback on students' performance to expedite learning (Seddler, 1998). The theme of formative assessment is to make students eligible as self-regulated learners, (Pintrich & Zusho, 2002).

Summative Assessments

Summative Assessment is conducted to assign grades, evaluate achievement, at the completion of complete chapters. In an educational setting, summative assessments are evaluative, to summarize what student's have learnt, summative assessment is graded (e.g pass/fail, 0-100), can take the form of test, exams etc. (Mctighe, Jay, Connor, & Ken, 2005)

Diagnostic Assessments

Diagnostic assessments are sets of written questions, or multiple-choice questions, which assess a learner's current knowledge base or current views on a topic or issue to be studied in the course. "Assessment is the process of measuring an individual's behavior and then using the results to make relevant decisions about the individual, curriculum and instruction, or a programme" (Ugodulunwas, 2008). As a result, diagnostic assessment entails gathering and carefully analyzing detailed data to identify strengths and areas of need in all students in a given learning area of education. (Deptt. of Education, 2013).

Modes of Learning Assessment in ODL System

A school's main goal when administering an assessment is to help students develop. How much learning an individual has obtained during a specific period of time, against the learning goals that have been set up ahead of time? What kinds of things do learners in a specific learning area enjoy and dislike? The results of the evaluation will help and improve learning to what extent? In addition to this, these are some of the common educational assessment questions. In most cases, an assessment is utilized for the first question, which is linked to the concept of 'evaluation of learning'

that aids teachers in figuring out how to educate their students. The shift now is from teacher-centered learning to learner-centered learning, to build a constructivist approach. Below you will find a list of topics that are associated with assessment of learning, for learning, and as learning:

Learning Assessment

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Assessment of learning | Assessment designed primarily to make judgments about student achievement of knowledge and/or skills at a given point of time. |
| Assessment for learning | Assessment designed primarily to promote student learning and guide instruction. |
| Assessment as learning | Assessment designed primarily to provide students with the opportunity to reflect on their learning. |

Source: (Cooper, 2007)

1- Factors Affecting Assessment of Assignments

In the ODL system, assessment of assignments is implemented by using an alternative method of assessment. The fact that there are numerous students involved and a deadline that must be met limits the quality of tasks that are marked. Inconsistencies among examiners are pointed out" (COL, 1999). The strategic planning exercise conducted with the staff members indicated inter alia, the following as the weaknesses, ineffective assessment approaches, low quality tutoring and marking; ineffective academic support (UNAM, 2015a). List of factors affecting assessment of assignments are as under.

- i) **Feedback**, Feedback is very controversial in teaching and learning (Chokwe, 2015), It is evident that feedback is a vital learning tool and could foster personal and overall development in many ODL environments. However, there are preconditions to be met and actions to be carried out, both by givers and receivers of feedback.
- ii) **Student Faculty Proportion**, the enrolment of students in higher education doubled. As a result, it has increased the burden of the tutors/teachers (Iqbal, Saeed & Abbas, 2012).
- iii) **Motivation** plays an important role in ODL students due to loneliness, among the most prominent motivation factors explored are achievement, personal growth, personal fulfillment, compensation and administrative support (Lawler & King, 2003).
- iv) **Learning Styles**, acquaintance with one's learning style is necessary. This shows students being not aware of their learning style cannot analyze and hint out the place where the improvement is required (Klement, 2014).
- v) **Personal problems**, Rai, Bajpai & Singh (2007) reported, students getting admission in distance education courses mostly take admission to broaden their knowledge. They are mostly aged, have jobs and families. Some factors solely relate to tutors/teachers, for instance, factors such as teacher's gender, age, ethnicity, class size, course type (compulsory/elective, undergraduate/postgraduate), and their possible influence on students' ratings (Marsh, 2007).

2- Factors Affecting Component of Workshop, workshop is an alternative tool of assessment in the ODL system in which every student has to perform the presentation of his assigned topic before the class and workshop supervisor. The workshop supervisor measures the presentation parameters

and assigns marks keeping in view the presenter's capabilities. Following are the factors which affect component of workshop during assessment practices.

- i) **Lesson Plans**, It is mandatory for trainee teachers to perform teaching practicum at a school. At the end of the practicum, the trainee teacher is required to prepare two final lesson plans. None of the educators believe that Lesson Plans that have educational activities conducted by the students are effective; therefore, they believe ineffective Lesson Plans exist (Kizlik, 2008; McBer, 2000). Assessment panel award marks which are added up in his her final score for the course "Teaching Practice"
- ii) **Portfolios**, Portfolios are an alternative way to measure students' development. Assessment methods must have at least two members on the judging panel (Peterson, 2000; Strong & Tucker, 2003). Students of ODL system have reservations on judging panel and awarding marks process.
- iii) **Training**, Evaluation and feedback should be important facets offered in initial teacher education and continuous professional development activities (OECD, 2009).
- iv) **Assessment Panel**, Assessment of Portfolios is purely the task of the assessment panel, mostly it proves useless practice that becomes untrustworthy or may apathy as best on the part of teachers being evaluated (Margo et al. 2008). Students use unfair means during compilation and assessment of portfolios, therefore it present a challenge and need to locate factors responsible.

3- Factors Affecting Term Final Examination: Examination is a process for testing the abilities or achievement of the student in any area of academic program. Every educational system consists of an examination system through which the qualities and abilities of the students are assessed by giving grades and positions (Ahmed, 2014). So there are also some factors, which create obstacles to measure the real performance of the student. Some prominent factors are as under.

- i) **Style of Questions** in Term Final Question Paper, The irregular structure, changing style of questions, design, and typology of question papers, are the main factors that affect student's progress in the examination. (Rasul & Bukhsh, 2011)
- ii) **Environment**, The environment of examination hall in ODL system is also affected by factors, Light disappearance, student to student and row to row distance, noise and suffocation, rattling of traffic outside the examination hall, exam personnel, Seating plans, and poor discipline (Rasul & Bukhsh, 2011)
- iii) **Examiners**, in order to maintain uniformity amongst examiners, training is also valuable for both new and veteran examiners (Prof., 2017).

Although many improvement attempts have been made in assessment practices of ODL education still have some challenges. The most important assessment challenges are: Assessment of assignments (feedback, student faculty proportion, motivation, learning styles and personal problems) Assessment of components of workshop (lesson plans and portfolios), Term final examination (style of questions, environment and examiners)

The literature has shown that assessment of assignments; assessments during component of workshop and term final examination are possible factors that affect assessment practices in ODL. From the literature reviewed it is evident that all factors have been identified in individual position but this study constitutes on all possible factors that can affect on assessment practices. Though various studies have been conducted on the factors affecting assessment practices in ODL system, it is important to examine those factors to AIOU.

Statement of the Problem

Allama Iqbal Open University is an ODL institution Generally the ODL system administers two tools of assessment, 1- Traditional tool of assessment (term-final examination) and 2-Alternative Tool of Assessment (assignments/coursework and workshops), (Ngwarai & Mhute, 2012). Some students when assessed through alternative tools show good performance, but the same students when assessed through traditional tools mostly fail.

There is a dire need to highlight factors which affect assessment practices in the ODL system. Therefore this study has been designed to investigate the effect of these factors on assessment practices in the ODL system.

Objectives

Following were the objectives

- 1- To identify factors affecting assessment of assignments in Multan region of AIOU.
- 2- To identify factors affecting assessment of the components of workshop in Multan region of AIOU.
- 3- To identify factors affecting term final examination in Multan region of AIOU.
- 4- To compare male and female students of B.Ed (1.5, 2.5 and 4 year), responses regarding factors affecting assessment practices in Multan region of AIOU.

Research Questions

- 1- How feedback, student faculty proportion, motivation, learning style and personal problem factors affect assessment practices in Multan region of AIOU?
- 2- What difficulties, students of B.Ed face during presentation of Lesson Plans in Multan region of AIOU?
- 3- Whether students of B.Ed receive proper training for preparation of lesson plans and compilation of Portfolios in Multan region of AIOU?
- 4- How style of questions, environment and examiners factors affect assessment practices in Multan region of AIOU?
- 5- Why mostly students fail in term final examination, and whether services provided from examination department are satisfactory?
- 6- What is significance level of different categories of B.Ed students in Multan region of AIOU?

METHODOLOGY

Population

The population of the study all students of B.Ed (1.5, 2.5 and 4 year) program enrolled during Autumn-2018.

Sample

Total 250 students (131 male and 119 female) were taken as sample by using simple random sampling technique.

Table 1
Population and sample of study

| Year | Program | Region | Total Enrolment | Sample |
|--------------|------------------|--------|-----------------|------------|
| Autumn-2018 | B.Ed (1.5 year) | Multan | 3225 | 84 |
| Autumn-2018 | B.Ed (2.5 year) | Multan | 1250 | 110 |
| Autumn-2018 | B.Ed (4 year) | Multan | 260 | 56 |
| Total | | | 4675 | 250 |

Tool of Research

In order to collect data related to the objectives, closed ended questionnaire was developed as research instrument for data collection from students of B.Ed (1.5, 2.5 and 4 year) program enrolled during Autumn- 2018, in Multan region. The questionnaire content, language, and format got validated by expert opinion method. Coefficient of Alpha reliability had a value of $\alpha = .768$.

Table 2
Factor wise Coefficient of Alpha Reliability for the items of questionnaire

| S. No | Factors | No. of items | A |
|----------------------------------|---|--------------|-------------------------------------|
| Assessment of Assignments | | | |
| 1. | Feedback (Q # 1 to Q # 3) | 03 | .76 |
| 2. | Student Faculty Proportion (Q # 4 to Q # 6) | 03 | .78 |
| 3. | Motivation (Q # 7 to Q # 9) | 03 | .75 |
| 4. | Learning Styles (Q # 10 Q # 12) | 03 | .75 |
| 5. | Personal Problems (Q # 13 to Q # 14) | 02 | .76 |
| Component of Workshop | | | |
| 6. | Assessment of Lesson Plans (Q # 15 to Q # 25) | 11 | .76 |
| 7. | Assessment of Portfolios (Q # 26 to Q # 34) | 09 | .76 |
| Term Final Examination | | | |
| 8. | Style of Questions (Q # 35 to Q # 36) | 02 | .76 |
| 9. | Environment(Q # 37) | 01 | .76 |
| 10. | Examiners (Q # 38 to Q # 40) | 03 | .76 |
| Total | | 40 | Avg. $\alpha=.76$ |

Data Collection

After getting permission from regional director AIOU, data was collected from sample students during workshops of B.Ed (1.5, 2.5 and 4 years) program of Multan region.

Data Analysis

$$\text{Score Mean Formula} = \frac{S A (f) \times 5 + A (f) \times 4 + N (f) \times 3 + DA (f) \times 4 + SDA (f) \times 1}{SA (f) + A (f) + N (f) + DA (f) + SDA (f)}$$

RESULTS

Factors Affecting Assessment of Assignments

Table 3

a) Feedback

| S. No. | Statement | Gender | N | Mean | SD | T | Mean Diff. | P |
|--------|---|--------|-----|------|-------|-------|------------|------|
| 1 | I submit my assignments on time and receive feedback well before exam. | Female | 119 | 3.50 | 1.178 | -.290 | -.045 | .772 |
| | | Male | 131 | 3.55 | 1.284 | -.292 | -.045 | .771 |
| 2 | Tutors award high grades on written assignments without dispatching feedback to respective students. | Female | 119 | 3.58 | 1.182 | .527 | .076 | .599 |
| | | Male | 131 | 3.50 | 1.098 | .525 | .076 | .600 |
| 3 | Teachers/Tutors encourage students' feedback on their teaching and overcome professional mistakes in the light of students' feedback. | Female | 119 | 3.11 | 1.261 | .667 | .102 | .505 |
| | | Male | 131 | 3.01 | 1.147 | .664 | .102 | .507 |

(N=No. of samples, SD=Standard Deviation, T= t-test value, P= Probability value)

Table No. 3 shows that no significance difference overall exist between male and female students of B.Ed. (1.5, 2.5 and 4 year) program of Multan Regional Campus of AIOU. Higher mean value than 3.00 and p value is greater than $P > .05$ indicates that Sub Factor Feedback of Principal factor Assessment of Assignments is affecting Assessment Practices in Regional Campus Multan, Mean difference values indicate that factor is affecting both male and female students equally. Therefore Objective No.1 (To identify factors affecting assessment of assignments) sub factor Feedback has been identified.

Table 4

b) Student Faculty Proportion

| S. No. | Statement | Gender | N | M | SD | T | Mean Diff. | P |
|--------|---|--------|-----|------|-------|-------|------------|------|
| 4 | There is student overcrowd and issue of time shortage with my tutor. | Female | 119 | 3.09 | .005 | 1.353 | .001 | .996 |
| | | Male | 131 | 3.09 | .005 | 1.160 | .001 | .996 |
| 5 | Mostly I face inadequate academic support from my tutor due to work load. | Female | 119 | 3.30 | 2.353 | 1.211 | .348 | .019 |
| | | Male | 131 | 2.95 | 2.345 | 1.129 | .348 | .020 |
| 6 | There are enough teachers/Teaching Assistants working for B.Ed courses to be able to cater to students needs. | Female | 119 | 3.31 | 1.581 | 1.326 | .257 | .115 |
| | | Male | 131 | 3.05 | 1.577 | 1.248 | .257 | .116 |

(N=No. of samples, SD=Standard Deviation, T= t-test value, P= Probability value)

Table No. 4 shows that no significance difference overall exist between male and female students of B.Ed. (1.5, 2.5 and 4 year) program of Multan Regional Campus of AIOU. Higher mean value than 3.00 and p value is greater than $P > .05$ indicates that Sub factor Student Faculty Proportion of Principal factor Assessment of Assignments is affecting Assessment Practices in Regional Campus Multan, Mean difference values indicate that factor is affecting both male and female students equally. Therefore Objective No.1 (To identify factors affecting assessment of assignments) sub factor Student Faculty Proportion has been identified.

Table 5

(C) Motivation

| S. No. | Statement | Gender | N | Mean | SD | T | Mean Diff. | P |
|--------|---|--------|-----|------|-------|--------|------------|------|
| 7 | My tutors motivate me by giving clear guidelines about course materials and appreciate on my personal growth and achievements. | Female | 119 | 3.15 | 1.300 | -.153 | -.024 | .879 |
| | | Male | 131 | 3.18 | 1.218 | -.152 | -.024 | .879 |
| 8 | Mostly I feel discouraged due to excess of written work and try to motivate myself because Distance Education is a lonely affair. | Female | 119 | 3.24 | 1.249 | -2.078 | -.314 | .039 |
| | | Male | 131 | 3.56 | 1.138 | -2.068 | -.314 | .040 |
| 9 | Awarding high marks in written assignments is a source of motivation for me. | Female | 119 | 3.34 | 1.361 | -.719 | -.114 | .473 |
| | | Male | 131 | 3.45 | 1.152 | -.713 | -.114 | .477 |

(N=No. of samples, SD=Standard Deviation, T= t-test value, P= Probability value)

Table No.5 shows that no significance difference overall exist between male and female students of B.Ed. (1.5, 2.5 and 4 year) program of Multan Regional Campus of AIOU. Higher mean value than 3.00 and p value is greater than $P > .05$ indicates that **Sub Factor Motivation of Principal factor Assessment of Assignments** is affecting Assessment Practices in Regional Campus Multan, Mean difference values indicate that factor is affecting both male and female equally.

Note- Except statement No. 2, there is significant difference in which $P < .05$, which indicates that factor, is affecting differently on Female and Male students. Female students are more affected as compared to the male students.

Therefore Objective No.1 (To identify factors affecting assessment of assignments) sub factor **Motivation** has been identified.

Table 6

d) Learning Styles

| S. No. | Statement | Gender | N | Mean | SD | T | Mean Diff. | P |
|--------|--|--------|-----|------|-------|--------|------------|------|
| 10 | Our teachers do not keep in mind the learning styles of every student. | Female | 119 | 2.84 | 1.255 | -1.018 | -.152 | .310 |
| | | Male | 131 | 2.99 | 1.106 | -1.012 | -.152 | .313 |
| 11 | Our teachers use a mixture of different learning styles which work best for each individual student. | Female | 119 | 3.17 | 1.244 | -1.252 | -.183 | .212 |
| | | Male | 131 | 3.35 | 1.066 | -1.243 | -.183 | .215 |
| 12 | Different learning style facilities are easily available and accessible in Regional Campus. | Female | 119 | 2.75 | 1.385 | -.791 | -.138 | .430 |
| | | Male | 131 | 2.89 | 1.362 | -.791 | -.138 | .430 |

(N=No. of samples, SD=Standard Deviation, T= t-test value, P= Probability value)

Table NO. 6 shows that no significance difference overall exist between male and female students of B.Ed. (1.5, 2.5 and 4 year) program of Multan Regional Campus of AIOU. Higher mean value than 3.00 and p value is greater than $P > .05$ indicates that Sub factor Learning Style of Assessment of Assignments is affecting Assessment Practices in Regional Campus Multan, Mean difference values indicate that both male and female students are equally affected. Therefore Objective No.1 (To identify factors affecting assessment of assignments) sub factor Learning Styles of Students has been identified

Table 7

(e) Personal Problems

| S. No. | Statement | Gender | N | Mean | SD | T | Mean Diff. | P |
|--------|--|--------|-----|------|-------|-------|------------|------|
| 13 | I lack sufficient time for study at home and face conflicts between family, work and study schedules | Female | 119 | 3.73 | 1.148 | 1.460 | .212 | .146 |
| | | Male | 131 | 3.52 | 1.146 | 1.460 | .212 | .146 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|--------|-----|------|-------|-------|------|------|
| 14 | I receive no support for study from family, employer and friends. | Female | 119 | 3.79 | 1.255 | 1.173 | .179 | .242 |
| | | Male | 131 | 3.61 | 1.161 | 1.169 | .179 | .244 |

(N=No. of samples, SD=Standard Deviation, T= t-test value, P= Probability value)

Table No. 7 shows that no significance difference overall exist between male and female students of B.Ed. (1.5, 2.5 and 4 year) program of Multan Regional Campus of AIOU. Higher mean value than 3.00 and p value is greater than $P > .05$ indicates that Sub factor Personal Problems of Assessment of Assignments is affecting Assessment Practices in Regional Campus Multan, Mean difference values indicate that both male and female students are equally affected. Therefore Objective No.1 (To identify factors affecting assessment of assignments) Sub factor Personal Problems has been identified.

Factors Affecting Component of Workshop

Table 8

a) Assessment of Lesson Plans

| S. No. | Statement | Gender | N | Mean | SD | T | Mean Diff. | P |
|--------|---|--------|-----|------|-------|--------|------------|------|
| 15 | Tutors provide proper training about major components of lesson planning. | Female | 119 | 3.17 | 1.434 | -2.973 | -.481 | .003 |
| | | Male | 131 | 3.65 | 1.116 | -2.938 | -.481 | .004 |
| 16 | I duly inform tutor and Regional campus about school of teaching practicum as per site approval form. | Female | 119 | 2.89 | 1.339 | -4.769 | -.712 | .000 |
| | | Male | 131 | 3.60 | 1.013 | -4.707 | -.712 | .000 |
| 17 | Workshop hall is not conducive to all types of learning styles. | Female | 119 | 3.35 | 1.286 | 2.016 | .307 | .045 |
| | | Male | 131 | 3.05 | 1.122 | 2.003 | .307 | .046 |
| 18 | Assessment panel assign marks to students without viewing student profile. | Female | 119 | 3.05 | 1.178 | 1.311 | .195 | .191 |
| | | Male | 131 | 2.85 | 1.177 | 1.311 | .195 | .191 |
| 19 | Assessment Panel is cooperative and assess lesson plans as per set criteria. | Female | 119 | 3.13 | 1.164 | .246 | .035 | .806 |
| | | Male | 131 | 3.10 | 1.101 | .245 | .035 | .807 |
| 20 | Students cannot present lesson plan due to noisy/overcrowding classroom. | Female | 119 | 2.79 | 1.248 | -2.658 | -.416 | .008 |
| | | Male | 131 | 3.21 | 1.226 | -2.656 | -.416 | .008 |
| 21 | I am fully satisfied with the marks of Lesson Plan demonstration. | Female | 119 | 2.92 | 1.229 | -1.856 | -.274 | .065 |
| | | Male | 131 | 3.20 | 1.105 | -1.847 | -.274 | .066 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|--------|-----|------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| 22 | RC provides all technological items and other facilities during presentation of final lesson plans. | Female | 119 | 2.98 | 1.275 | .135 | .021 | .893 |
| | | Male | 131 | 2.96 | 1.224 | .135 | .021 | .893 |
| 23 | Assessment panel, is time bound, cooperative and flexible. | Female | 119 | 3.17 | 1.291 | -.240 | -.038 | .810 |
| | | Male | 131 | 3.21 | 1.213 | -.239 | -.038 | .811 |
| 24 | Workshop assistants and other personnel of Regional campus is well managed and cooperative. | Female | 119 | 3.30 | 1.259 | .823 | .127 | .411 |
| | | Male | 131 | 3.18 | 1.180 | .820 | .127 | .413 |
| 25 | Technological items at RC are old and create problem during presentation of final lesson plans. | Female | 119 | 3.47 | 1.141 | 2.012 | .295 | .045 |
| | | Male | 131 | 3.18 | 1.173 | 2.014 | .295 | .045 |

(N=No. of samples, SD=Standard Deviation, T= t-test value, P= Probability value)

Table No. 8 shows that no significance difference overall exist between male and female students of B.Ed. (1.5, 2.5 and 4 year) program of Multan Regional Campus of AIOU. Higher mean value than 3.00 and p value is greater than $P > .05$ indicates that Sub factor Assessment of Lesson Plans of Principal factor Component of Workshop is affecting Assessment Practices in Regional Campus Multan, Mean difference values indicate that both male and female students are not equally affected. Therefore Objective No.2 (To identify factors affecting Workshop) sub factor has been identified .Note- Statement No. 18, 19, 21, 22, 23 and 24 there is no significant difference in which, $P > .05$ indicates that these points of sub factor Assessment of Lesson Plans is affecting equally both Female and Male students. While, Statement No. 15, 16, 17. 20 and 25 values $P < .05$ show that there is significant difference which indicates that these points of sub factor Assessment of Lesson Plans is affecting differently on Female and Male students of Multan Regional Campus .

Table 9

a) Assessment of Portfolio

| S. No. | Statement | Gender | N | Mean | SD | T | Mean Diff. | P |
|--------|--|--------|-----|------|-------|-------|------------|------|
| 26 | Teachers do not provide clear guidelines and scoring criteria for designing portfolios. | Female | 119 | 2.89 | 1.148 | -.758 | -.109 | .449 |
| | | Male | 131 | 3.00 | 1.130 | -.757 | -.109 | .450 |
| 27 | Tutors regularly reflect on student growth and provide quick feedback for designing portfolios. | Female | 119 | 3.14 | 1.223 | 1.279 | .189 | .202 |
| | | Male | 131 | 2.95 | 1.108 | 1.273 | .189 | .204 |
| 28 | Some students use approach and unfair means for award of high marks during portfolio assessment. | Female | 119 | 3.41 | 1.337 | .826 | .137 | .409 |
| | | Male | 131 | 3.27 | 1.283 | .825 | .137 | .410 |
| 29 | | Female | 119 | 2.89 | 1.220 | -.636 | -.094 | .525 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|--------|-----|------|-------|--------|-------|------|
| | Tutor share rubric before I start work on portfolio. | Male | 131 | 2.98 | 1.116 | -.633 | -.094 | .527 |
| 30 | I am satisfied with the assessment criteria of my portfolio assessment. | Female | 119 | 3.18 | 1.262 | -1.745 | -.288 | .082 |
| | | Male | 131 | 3.47 | 1.344 | -1.750 | -.288 | .081 |
| 31 | Port folios are not excellent communication tools between student, peers and teachers. | Female | 119 | 2.87 | 1.268 | .682 | .102 | .496 |
| | | Male | 131 | 2.76 | 1.101 | .677 | .102 | .499 |
| 32 | Tutors rate all portfolios without looking at student name. | Female | 119 | 2.88 | 1.250 | -1.409 | -.209 | .160 |
| | | Male | 131 | 3.09 | 1.099 | -1.400 | -.209 | .163 |
| 33 | AIOU and RC arrange a proper training session regarding designing of portfolios. | Female | 119 | 2.92 | 1.329 | .051 | .008 | .960 |
| | | Male | 131 | 2.92 | 1.271 | .051 | .008 | .960 |
| 34 | AIOU hire more than one trained ratters for assessment of portfolios before making major decisions. | Female | 119 | 3.14 | 1.392 | -.539 | -.086 | .591 |
| | | Male | 131 | 3.23 | 1.134 | -.533 | -.086 | .594 |

(N=No. of samples, SD=Standard Deviation, T= t-test value, P= Probability value)

Table No. 9 shows that no significance difference overall exist between male and female students of B.Ed. (1.5, 2.5 and 4 year) program of Multan Regional Campus of AIOU. Higher mean value than 3.00 and p value is greater than $P>.05$ indicates that Sub factor Assessment of Portfolio of Principal factor Component of Workshop is affecting Assessment Practices in Regional Campus Multan, Mean difference values indicate that factor of Assessment of Portfolio is equally affecting both male and female students.

Factors Affecting Term Final Examination

Table 10

a) Style of Questions

| S. No. | Statement | Gender | N | Mean | SD | T | Mean Diff. | P |
|--------|---|--------|-----|------|-------|-------|------------|------|
| 35 | Style of question paper in term final exam is same as the style of semester assignment questions. | Female | 119 | 3.55 | 1.126 | -1.66 | -.217 | .097 |
| | | Male | 131 | 3.76 | .935 | -1.65 | -.217 | .100 |
| 36 | Out of course questions are asked in term final exam. | Female | 119 | 2.82 | 1.344 | -.816 | -.131 | .416 |
| | | Male | 131 | 2.95 | 1.189 | -.811 | -.131 | .418 |

(N=No. of samples, SD=Standard Deviation, T= t-test value, P= Probability value)

Table N. 10 shows that no significance difference overall exist between male and female students of B.Ed. (1.5, 2.5 and 4 year) program of Multan Regional Campus of AIOU. Higher mean value than 3.00 and p value is greater than $P>.05$ indicates that Sub Factor Style of Questions of Principal factor Term Final Examination is affecting Assessment Practices in Regional Campus

Multan, Mean difference values indicate that factor is affecting both male and female students equally. Therefore Objective No.3 (To identify factors affecting Term Final Examination) sub factor Style of Questions has been identified.

Table 11

b) Environment of Exam Hall

| S. No. | Statement | Gender | N | Mean | SD | T | Mean Diff. | P |
|--------|---|--------|-----|------|-------|------|------------|------|
| 37 | Environment of Examination Hall is suitable as per weather. | Female | 119 | 3.14 | 1.446 | .408 | .069 | .684 |
| | | Male | 131 | 3.60 | 1.051 | .406 | .069 | .685 |

(N=No. of samples, SD=Standard Deviation, T= t-test value, P= Probability value)

Table N. 11 shows that no significance difference overall exist between male and female students of B.Ed. (1.5, 2.5 and 4 year) program of Multan Regional Campus of AIOU. higher mean value than 3.00 and p value is greater than $P > .05$ indicates that Sub Factor Environment of Examination Hall of Principal factor Term Final Examination is affecting Assessment Practices in Regional Campus Multan, Mean difference values indicate that factor is affecting both male and female students equally. Therefore Objective No.3 (To identify factors affecting Term Final Examination) sub factor Environment has been identified.

Table 12

c) Examiners

| S. No. | Statement | Gender | N | Mean | SD | T | Mean Diff. | P |
|--------|---|--------|-----|------|-------|-------|------------|------|
| 38 | Trained examiners are hired for marking of term final exam papers. | Female | 119 | 2.96 | 1.278 | -.994 | .117 | .321 |
| | | Male | 131 | 3.11 | 1.090 | -.986 | .095 | .325 |
| 39 | Marks awarded to students in term final exam are not satisfactory. | Female | 119 | 3.14 | 1.446 | -2.84 | .133 | .005 |
| | | Male | 131 | 3.60 | 1.051 | -2.80 | .092 | .005 |
| 40 | Examination Department of AIOU needs improvement regarding appointment of exam personnel. | Female | 119 | 3.76 | 1.282 | -1.15 | .118 | .249 |
| | | Male | 131 | 3.92 | .886 | -1.13 | .077 | .258 |

(N=No. of samples, SD=Standard Deviation, T= t-test value, P= Probability value)

Table No.12 shows that no significance difference overall exist between male and female students of B.Ed. (1.5, 2.5 and 4 year) program of Multan Regional Campus of AIOU. higher mean value than 3.00 and p value is greater than $P > .05$ indicates that Sub Factor Examiners of Principal factor Term Final Examination is affecting Assessment Practices in Regional Campus Multan, Mean difference values indicate that factor is affecting both male and female students equally. Therefore

Objective No.3 (To identify factors affecting Term Final Examination) sub factor Examiners has been identified.

DISCUSSION

Factors identified by respondents were classified into three principal factors which were further classified keeping in view the assessment practices and discussed as follows.

1- Assessment of Assignments:

Analysis of data regarding Feedback of respondents indicated that, “We did not submit assignments on time and did not receive feedback before exam and teachers did not overcome professional mistakes in the light of students’ feedback”. Rai, Bajpai, and Singh, (2007) have declared, “surface approach of distance teaching” to give less importance to assignments that is not appreciating in any case, (p. 113). Goel, A. and Goel, S. L. (2000) have suggested to “returning marked assignment preferably during 15 days of submission period (P. 146). (James, Krause & Jennings 2010; Nicol, 2010).

Analysis of data regarding Student Faculty Proportion factor, respondents indicated that due to work load teachers/tutors cannot feedback on written component well before exam. The results are in compliance with (Halai 2011), in which he claims that enrolment of students in higher education is doubled as per agenda of HEC, but the number of faculty members is not in proportion with the enrolled students. The data numeric also comply with research findings of (Iqbal, Saeed & Abbas, 2012)

Analysis of data regarding Motivation of respondents indicated that, “Our tutors did not motivate us by giving clear guidelines, there was excess of written work which dishearten, we were not motivated by tutors who awarded high marks in written assignments”. The data numeric also complies with research findings of (Iqbal, Saeed & Abbas, 2012) in which researcher claim that it has increased the workload of the existing supervisor.

Analysis of data regarding Learning Styles of respondents indicated that, “Our teacher did not keep in mind different learning styles of students, and different learning style facilities were not available in Multan region of AIOU”. The results are consistent with research findings of (Dickey, 2004; Owens et al. 2009; Venter; 2003; Williams et al. 2006).

Analysis of data regarding Personal factors of respondents indicated that, “We lack sufficient time for study at home, there were conflicts between family and study schedules, also indicated that we did not receive support from family and employer.”. The results are consistent with research findings of Marsh, (2007) and Rubin, (1992) in which they have claimed, factors such as teacher’s gender, age, ethnicity, class size, course type (compulsory/elective, undergraduate/postgraduate) and their possible influence on students’ ratings.

2- Assessment of Component of Workshop

Analysis of data regarding assessment of Lesson Plans sample students responses show that they did not receive proper training regarding major components of lesson planning, different learning styles were not considered, and imposed objection on assessment panel being non-cooperative. Responders also showed dissatisfaction regarding marks given during assessment of lesson plans, and workshop assistants and other personnel at Multan regional campus. They responded that physical facilities like availability of modern technology, drinking water, substitute arrangements for electricity in case of load shading are also not ensured during workshop conduction at Multan

Regional campus”. The results are consistent with, Mowes (2005), students at the University of Namibia did not receive any information or invitation to orientation seminars, they did not receive information about all available student support services during orientation, the orientation seminars were too short for students to attend everything, and career guidance and study skills were not provided during orientation seminars. Other issues cited by Caplan (2008) include poor event preparation and planning. Analysis of data regarding Assessment of Portfolio a group of students responses show that they did not receive proper training regarding compilation of portfolio, tutors do not feedback, tutors do not share rubrics, showed no satisfaction regarding assessment criteria of portfolio. Responders imposed objection on assessment panel that they rate portfolio by looking on the name of student. The results are consistent with research findings of, Peterson, (2000); Stronge and Tucker, (2003). Danielson and McGreal (2000) in which he claims, that some students do not compile their portfolios, purchase readymade portfolios, proxy portfolios, and panel award marks to the dummy portfolios.

3- Term Final Examination

Analysis of data regarding Style of questions in question paper showed that “Questions asked in semester assignments and in term final question papers were not matching and they noted bias based marking of assignments and presentations”. The results are in compliance with research findings of (Rasul & Bukhsh, 2011), In which researcher claims that inappropriate structure of questions, pattern, and type of question papers, subjective marks and individual difference in evaluating the answers, dishonest invigilating staff, wrong marking of scripts, etc are the main factors which affect student's performance in the examination.

Analysis of data regarding Environment of Examination Hall during term end examination showed that The results are consistent with research findings of Eval, (2017) and Rasul & Bukhsh, (2011), in which they have claimed that Temperature, Light, Distance between rows and lines of students, Sound inside the examination hall, Suffocation, Sound outside the examination hall, Invigilation staff, Seating positions, and Lack of discipline (Rasul & Bukhsh, 2011).

Analysis of data regarding Examiners in marking of term end question papers showed that “trained examiners are not hired for conduction of term end examination, and marking of answer sheets, physical facilities in examination hall was not satisfactory. There was no voice proof building and proper light system in examination hall. Examination staff was also not so efficient to control talking and cheating like activities properly”. The results are consistent with research findings of Eval, (2017), In which researcher has claimed that training is therefore important for both novice and experienced assessors in an attempt to ensure consistency across examiners.

CONCLUSIONS

1. A good number of students do no submit assignments on time due to which feedback is delayed; feedback on teaching not followed at AIOU regional centre Multan
2. Number of teachers/tutors is not in proportion with number of students, teaching assistants and other personnel cannot cater student’s needs due to which they receive inadequate academic support.
3. Students of B.Ed of Multan Regional Centre complain excess of written work and a good number of students complain lack of motivation on the part of tutor/teacher.
4. A conflict among different teaching and learning styles of students and missing of different teaching/learning style facilities was noted at Regional Centre Multan.

5. Most students (48%) reported conflict of time and support from family and employer.
6. Inadequate teaching/learning facilities and hindrance of old technological items were reported by B.Ed students during conduction of workshop at Regional Center Multan.
7. Students of B.Ed reported need of training regarding lesson planning, compilation of portfolio.
8. Style of questions in term end examination complicated as compared to semester assignments.
9. Environment in examination centers is not comfortable for learners to attempt examination papers in peaceful environment.
10. Unsatisfactory responses regarding paper marking due to untrained examiners. Students are agreeing that, examination department needs improvement regarding examination services.
11. As far as significance level of different categories of B.Ed is concerned, it was found male and female students of B.Ed 1.5 year were found being affected differently, and rest of the two categories of B.Ed students being affected simultaneously.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1- Assessment of Assignments:

Feedback on semester assignments may be returned to students well before final exam. AIOU may review students faculty ratio, so that teachers may easily handle work load.

Keeping in view the varying physical and social incapacities of ODL learners, learning styles may be considered. An ODL student combats with different social challenges; hence flexible learning schedules may be introduced.

2- Component of Workshop

Neutral and justified assessment panel may be deployed for assessment of final lesson plans.

3- Term Final Examination

Substitute electricity resources may be arranged in case of load shedding during exam. Cheating practices may be discouraged and noisy environment during term end examination may be given due consideration.

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