



FACTORS AFFECTING LECTURERS' ASSESSMENT PRACTICES IN SOMALIA HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract:

This study aims at the design and evaluation of an educational Android application; the purpose of this study was to investigate the factors affecting lecturers' assessment practices in Somalia's higher education. Design, interpretation, and application were hypothesized as the factors influencing assessment practices in Somalia's higher education. A questionnaire was used to collect data from a sample of 314 university lecturers. A simple random sampling technique was used to select the sample. A multiple regression analysis was utilized to analyze the quantitative data. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 was used to analyze the data. This also implies that the predicted variables are indicative of academic staff assessment methods in Somalian universities. Multiple regression analysis shows that design, while still a significant predictor, has a greater influence on the academic staff's evaluation processes than interpretation and application.

Keywords: assessment practices, design, interpretation, application

1. Introduction

Any process that is used systematically to gather data about individuals, things, or programs is referred to as an assessment (Sims, 2019). To acquire information about students' academic development and to enhance both student learning and the learning process, assessment is a sensible strategy. Assessment goals in education have typically been described as certification, direction, selection, and motivation. The gathering of data from which conclusions about students' abilities, knowledge, and attitudes can be drawn is the core purpose of educational evaluation. In other terms, an assessment is any action taken to learn more about a candidate's performance and competency. Since the way lecturers conduct assessments has major repercussions for both students and the general public, it is crucial to understand how and why they do it.

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There is sufficient evidence to conclude that in schools, assessment mostly refers to tests, exams, and grading. In order to complete this role, teachers must receive specialized training in how to evaluate students' discourse in order to gauge children's thinking (Susuwele-Banda, 2005). The ability of teachers to comprehend their students and link activities to correct assessments is what allows for good teaching decisions to be made (Cárdenas López, 2012).

One of the most important components of academic work is assessment. This is due to the fact that assessment is a crucial component of both teaching and learning. It is understood that assessment plays a crucial role in a university's identity and the caliber of its academic offerings. Consequently, educational institutions place a greater emphasis on student satisfaction. Assessment of quality is related to student satisfaction. To measure and control what is meant by "quality" across the tertiary education sector, quality assessment calls for a systematic approach.

As a result, academics are under pressure due to the growing emphasis on quality education to ensure competitiveness and improve the student experience; nevertheless, many academics lack the skills and/or confidence to develop and administer quality assessments (Charlton, 2017)

The learning of students depends heavily on assessment. It establishes boundaries for what matters to students, how they use their time, and how they view themselves as both learners and people. It is suggested that altering assessment practices is the best way to alter student learning (Gobena, 2014).

The assessment had a greater impact on students than the actual instruction. We must first examine its assessment practices if we want to learn the truth about a system of education (Gibbs & Simpson, 2004).

There are several assessment types, and various research has highlighted them. Assessments can be used to measure learning, measure progress toward learning, or measure learning itself. For the purpose of improving instruction, assessment for learning is used to gather data on the learning process and individual students. Additionally, assessment for learning encourages students to reflect on their errors and learn from others and their own experiences in order to enhance their learning and learning environment.

When utilized in the learning process, assessment of learning is equal to summative assessment. At the conclusion of a course, assessment of learning is a one-time assessment that comprises assessing what the students have learned and the study plan(s). At the conclusion of the course(s) the students have taken, assessment of learning is used to determine whether the students have fully gained the requisite information.

Students must evaluate themselves as part of assessment for learning. Students assess their own learning on an individual basis and use the results to advance their academic performance. In order to improve their learning, students might find their own errors through assessment as well as from their classmates (Matovu & Zubairi, 2014).

The administration component of student assessment is described in the research on institutional support for student assessment. The design, interpretation, and use or

application of an assessment, as well as how the results are utilized or applied, are all parts of the student assessment process.

The assessment process's initial level, design, lays the foundation for the subsequent levels. When creating an assessment, it is important to consider how it will be given, scored, and understood as well as how the various stakeholders will use the results. Analyzing is the process of structuring assessment results in order to derive meaning from them. Scoring an assessment involves assigning students' marks or grades in accordance with their academic achievements. Once assessment results have been received, they can be applied to the learning process in a variety of ways. The gathered assessment findings can be used to develop policy, make informed decisions, improve the learning process, and improve the next test for competency. This is the managerial support provided to the assessment process by either specific lecturers or the university administration. The administrative support operations for the assessment process include anything from informing students of the results to limiting outside interference (Matovu, 2019).

2. Objective of the Study

To examine the factors influencing lecturers' assessment practices in Somalia higher education institutions.

2.1 Research Hypothesis

Assessment components do not explain lecturers' assessment practices in Somalia higher education institutions.

3. Methods

For the purpose of this study, only quantitative methods were used for data collection and analysis. The academic staff at all of Somalia's universities made up the study's population. Public and private universities in Somalia are grouped together, and the academic staff there is at various academic levels (teaching assistants, assistant lecturers, lecturers, associate professors, and professors). One public university and two private institutions in Somalia were randomly chosen as the sample for this study. The universities were chosen from their clusters based on whether they were publicly or privately owned using simple random sampling. A questionnaire was distributed to 314 academics staff at different academic levels and specializations of the different universities in Somalia. Data was analyzed and interpreted using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. The amount of gradient corresponding to the size of the bivariate correlations between the various predictor factors (design, interpretation, and application), and assessment practices was determined by the analysis of the data using multiple regression. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients' findings showed that the questionnaire's reliability was 0.917, indicating that it was a highly effective tool for assessing the assessment practices of university academic staff.

4. Results

The demographic characteristics of the respondents included gender, university, class size and academic qualification, which were generated from the data are as follows. In terms of gender, 203(64.6%) of the respondents were males while 111(35.4%) were females (Table 1). In terms of university, public university staff was 142(45.2), while private university staff number was 172(54.8). On the class size assessed by academic staff, 108(34.4%) assessed small classes while 206(65.6%) assessed large classes.

For the highest academic qualification attained by the academic staff, 28(8.9%) had bachelor degrees, 16(5.1%) had postgraduate diplomas, 188(59.9%) had master's degree while 82(26.1%) had doctorates as their highest qualifications.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

	Frequency	Percent
Gender		
Male	203	64.6
Female	111	35.4
University		
Public	142	45.2
Private	172	54.8
Class size		
Small class	108	34.4
Large class	206	65.6
Qualification		
Bachelor's degree	28	8.9
Post graduate diploma	16	5.1
Master's degree	188	59.9
Doctorate	82	26.1

4.1 Multiple Regression Analysis

The result in Table 2 indicated that there is a strong positive relationship between assessment design and assessment practice. As shown in the correlation table, $r = .636$ $P=0.000<0.05$. From the correlation findings, there was a strong positive and significant correlation between the assessment interpretation and assessment practice $r = .575$ with $P=0.00<0.05$. This demonstrated that the assessment interpretation contributes to the assessment practice in Somalia's higher education. The correlation findings also indicated that there was a strong, significant, and positive relationship between assessment application and assessment practice in Somalia as indicated by a correlation factor, $r = .516$ with $p = 0.000 < 0.05$.

The results of the coefficients for multiple regressions $R = .923$, $R^2 = .851$, and adjusted $R^2 = .850$ show that the three statistically significant predictive variables have an important contribution to the assessment practice in Somalia higher education.

Table 2: Correlation Matrix of Multiple Regression

		Assessment	Design	Interpretation	Application
Pearson Correlation	Assessment	1.000	.636	.575	.516
	Design	.636	1.000	.082	.027
	Interpretation	.575	.082	1.000	.177
	Application	.516	.027	.177	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Assessment	.	.000	.000	.000
	Design	.000	.	.074	.317
	Interpretation	.000	.074	.	.001
	Application	.000	.317	.001	.
N	Assessment	314	314	314	314
	Design	314	314	314	314
	Interpretation	314	314	314	314
	Application	314	314	314	314

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.923 ^a	.851	.850	.13163
a. Predictors: (Constant), Application, Design, Interpretation				
b. Dependent Variable: Assessment				

F= 590.431, and P= 0.000 were reported in the analysis variance. This indicated that, there existed a favorable significant relationship between assessment design, assessment interpretation and assessment application and assessment practice in Somalia higher education.

Table 4: ANOVA of the Multiple Regression

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	30.691	3	10.230	590.431	.000 ^b
	Residual	5.371	310	.017		
	Total	36.062	313			
a. Dependent Variable: Assessment						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Application, Design, Interpretation						

This model can be represented as $Y=0.661+0.310X_1+0.252X_2+0.241X_3$ it is evident that holding assessment design, assessment interpretation, and assessment application to a constant zero, assessment components in Somalia higher education would be at 0.661. In addition, any unit increase in assessment design would increase the assessment practice in Somalia by a factor of 0.310. Any unit increase in assessment interpretation would improve the assessment practice in higher education institutions in Somalia by a factor of .252. Lastly, any unit in assessment application would increase the assessment practice in Somalia higher education by a factor of .241.

Table 5: Multiple Regression Confidents

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	.661	.064		10.304	.000		
	Design	.310	.012	.588	26.722	.000	.993	1.007
	Interpretation	.252	.012	.452	20.246	.000	.963	1.039
	Application	.241	.013	.421	18.888	.000	.969	1.032

5. Discussions and Conclusions

The results showed that the assessment practices among the academic staff in Somalia's universities are explained by the determinants for assessment practices. In this study, three elements—design, interpretation, and application—were incorporated as predictor variables for the academic staff's assessment practices in multiple regression models. In the model, each of the three predictor variables was statistically significant. This also implies that the predicted variables are indicative of academic staff assessment methods in Somalian universities. Multiple regression analysis shows that design, while still a significant predictor, has a greater influence on the academic staff's evaluation processes than interpretation and application.

Several implications of this study's findings have been realized, both theoretically and practically. The three factors in this study—design, interpretation, and application—were drawn from Ainsworth and Viegut's (2006) theory of assessment. This underlines the fact that the assessment practices consist of a number of different components, all of which the academic staff should be familiar with in order to conduct accurate student assessments (Matovu, 2019).

In conclusion, the design, interpretation, and application have a significant impact on how lecturers in Somalia's higher education conduct assessments.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

About the Author

Ali Araye Addow is a deputy chairman of the Board of the University of Somalia (UNISO) possessing a Master's degree in Education from the University of Bristol (UK) and currently pursuing PhD educational management program at the Islamic University in Uganda (IUIU). His research interests span curriculum studies, pedagogy, educational policy, management, and leadership.

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