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An Analytical Study of Perceived Pedagogical Competencies of Prospective Teachers in the light of National Professional Standards for Teachers

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Abstract

Every year, a substantial number of prospective teachers are trained in Pakistan. As they immediately begin teaching in schools, prospective teachers spend a lot of time learning about and comprehending the teaching context, and this is when pedagogical competences begin to take shape. The recent focus of the research was on perceived pedagogical competencies of prospective teachers in the public sector universities of Punjab Province. The proposed study was aimed to assess the perceived level of pedagogical competencies of prospective teachers in the light of National Professional Standards for teachers. The study was descriptive in nature and survey method was used to collect data. A self-reported scale derived from three pedagogical competencies of NPSTs (Subject matter knowledge, Instructional planning and strategies and Assessment). The study was delimited to these three standards only due to time restraints. All prospective teachers at Punjab's public sector universities made up the study's population. To gather data, a simple random sampling technique was used. Thirty six male and seventy two female prospective teachers constituted the sample of the study. Descriptive statistics were applied to analyze the data. It is concluded that male and female prospective teachers perceived high level of Instructional Planning & Strategies competencies. Likewise it was concluded that prospective teachers have lower scores in Assessment competencies as compared to subject matter & knowledge competencies.

Keywords: Pedagogical Competencies, National Professional Standards for Teachers in Pakistan, Prospective Teachers

Introduction

Pedagogical competencies are comprehensive in nature and combine several attributes. These attributes are summarized in the Ministry of Education document on National Professional Standards for Teachers in Pakistan (NPSTs-2009) to raise the standard of the educational process According to Ali (2001) over the past ten years, teachers as professionals have become a major focus for scholars, policy-makers and leaders in education. The fundamental need, pre-requisite and requirement of the teaching profession revolve around pedagogical competencies. It covers teachers' attitude towards instruction, instructional skills and grasp over the teaching process. Besides, the ambit of teaching profession further includes issues pertaining to the curriculum, pedagogy and student assessment are addressed (Rizvi, 2003).

Policy-makers of developing nations emphasise on the importance of teachers' pedagogical competencies as key component in attaining high-quality education (Wei, Andree & Darling-Hammond, 2009). Similarly the educational system in developing nations offers possibilities in the form of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for in-service teachers to train them how to participate in decisions on curriculum development and instructions. Professional growth and development of teachers have globally been replaced with academic achievement as the ultimate aim of teaching profession. Kramer (2003) places a strong emphasis on preparing future teachers in the aspects of attitudes, abilities and knowledge area in order to enhance professionalism of teachers.

Pedagogical competencies of teachers are build and promoted by teaching experience, style of teaching, understanding and instructors pedagogical skills fostered through training. These competencies play a crucial and pertinent role in improving educational quality. The teaching profession is established through developing educational policies, professional standards and benchmarks. For instance, Finland's laws on teacher education places strong emphasis on a research-based methodology that will increase teachers' professionalism. In the UK, decision-makers work to

create standards and link them to the advancement of professionalism (Webb, Vulliamy, Hamalainen, Sarja, Kimonen, & Nevalainen, 2004).

In contemporary education it is necessary to maintain uniformity in the standards that are known as demands or targets. Standards, according to Shami (2006) are explanations of expectations, beliefs and practices relating to the calibre of services offered. The pre-services, introductory trainings and certification system are often defined by standards to give a clear road map for professional development. Standards are primarily utilized in teacher education to assure quality and are concentrated on the need of professional development for teachers both before and after service. Standards in teacher education focus on the professional needs and skill development of teachers so they can contribute to the creation of a knowledge-based economy.

In Pakistan professional standards for teachers were introduced in Pakistan in 2009. Ironically, this radical move toward educational reforms in Pakistan has sparked a number of debates and questions about the extent to which these NPSTs will ensure academic excellence, how teachers will be better equipped to instruct their students and how quickly they will impart their newly gained knowledge to them. All of this only serves to further muddle the issue and casts question on whether these professional standards would genuinely improve operations (Tuinamuana, 2011). The present study will probe deeper into evaluating the extent to which the perceived pedagogical competencies are incorporated.

The standards for specific knowledge, skills, and dispositions as proposed by UNESCO (2008) are primarily concerned with describing the abilities, aptitudes and characteristics thought to be essential for teachers. Additionally, they help pre and in-service teacher education programs advance comprehensively. They also provide effective systems, regulations and procedures for recognizing the institutions that deliver teacher education programs and the programs themselves (Shakir, 2012). Pakistan seeks to effectively participate in the global information economy and thinks it can turn the fundamental labour of its relatives into sources of money. A world-class educational system from pre-school to post-graduate levels will soon be a reality, but there are certain challenges in its way, including a shortage of highly competent teachers, at least at the pre level, which makes world-class training impractical. Generally speaking, the phrase "Guidelines for Teachers" refers to the descriptions of the traits that society looks for, in educators. The (NPSTs) present the attributes of skilled and registered Pakistani educators. In a similar vein, it establishes national benchmarks for teachers in Pakistan as established by the Ministry of Education

According to Messo (2010) on October 12th, 2005, Pakistan officially launched the "Strengthening Teacher Education in Pakistan (STEP)" project. The fundamental goal of the project was to increase the capacity of the government to guarantee high-quality teacher preparation by strengthening the regulatory framework, promoting uniformity, and establishing standards. These Standards are:

- i. Subject Matter Knowledge
- ii. Human Growth and Development
- iii. Knowledge of Islamic/ Ethical Values/Social Life Skills
- iv. Instructional Planning and Strategies
- v. Assessment
- vi. Learning Environment
- vii. Effective communication and proficient use of information communication technologies
- viii. Collaboration and Partnerships
- ix. Continuous Professional Development and Code of Conduct
- x. Teaching of English as a second/foreign language (ESL/EFL)

The standard-based improvement of teachers and other educators is undoubtedly one of the best examples of the global evolution of value assertion in many human endeavours. Each standard has three components.

- a. Knowledge
- b. Disposition
- c. Performance and skills

These standards form the foundation of pedagogically competent teachers, but it is questionable whether they are carried out with the same spirit as anticipated. Voss, Kunter & Baumert (2011); Konig et al. (2011); and Guerriero (2017) have enumerated three basic elements of pedagogical competencies as knowledge, method of teaching and assessment for a professional teacher. Based on the above mentioned elements, the researcher in this study selected three competencies Subject matter knowledge, Instructional planning & strategies, Assessment. The pedagogical competencies of prospective teachers have been analysed in light of the afore-mentioned selected standards.

Research Questions:

Q.1 What is the level of perceived pedagogical competencies among prospective teachers in the light of National Professional Standards for Teachers in Pakistan?

Methodology:

The research design of present study was chosen in accordance with Gay (2000) and Fraenkel, Wallen, & Hyun (2011) surveys which are the most widely utilised descriptive methodology to summarise the characteristics of individuals or groups such as their abilities, preferences, habits, etc. The purpose of this research was to assess the perceived level of pedagogical competencies of prospective teachers in the light of National Professional Standards for teachers. The study was descriptive in nature and survey was used to collect the data from the respondents. The research was based on the three perspectives; knowledge and understanding, Dispositions and Performance & skills. For this purpose, Questionnaire (self-reported scale) was prepared to achieve the objective of the study. A self-reported scale was adopted to assess the level of perceived pedagogical competencies of prospective teachers in the light of National Professional Standards for teachers in Pakistan.

The population of the study included all 370 prospective teachers in the Punjab province. The study's sample according to L. R. Gay (1987) was 29% which formed 108 prospective teachers selected through simple random sampling technique. The sample consisted of 72 (67%) females (N=72) and 36(33) males (N=36) respondents.

Instruments:

A self-developed tool was employed to achieve the objectives of the study. A self-reported tool is a form of questionnaire that compiles information filled by each research participant in a research study. It is particularly used to gather information about behavior and attitudes, thinking, belief, emotions, values and intentions of research participants (Johnson & Christensen, 2008).The present research was undertaken on three NPSTs competencies namely: subject matter knowledge, instructional planning and strategies and assessment. It used the format of a self-report, thus the respondents rate their own level of pedagogical competencies. The items on the self-reported scale were developed from indicators taken from the three selected NPSTs. Eighteen (18) items made up the first portion of the self-reported scale, followed by 28 items in the second and 20 items in the third. The items and statements had a direct bearing on measuring prospective teachers' pedagogical competencies.

Reliability and Validity of the Tool:

In order to conduct the pilot study on the validity of the amended instrument, questionnaires were circulated to prospective teachers. For the Self-Reported Scale, Cronbach's Alpha was calculated to be 0.78. One hundred and eight prospective teachers who were enrolled in a four-year B.Ed (Hons) programme were approached in their final semester to fill the questionnaire.

Ethical Considerations:

After the pilot testing, data collection was completed. 108 prospective teachers from public sector universities answered the self-reported scale. The responders were not coerced and were free to answer the questions. It was ensured that their responses to the self-reported scale would not have been influenced by their level of education.

Analysis of the Data:

For the purpose of data analysis, Descriptive statistics mean, percentages were calculated to assess the level of perceived pedagogical competencies of these prospective teachers of public sector universities.

Section –I

Demographic Distribution of Prospective Teachers

Table1
Gender-based Distribution of Teachers

(N=108)		
Gender of teachers	n	Percent
Male	36	33.33
Female	72	66.67
Total	108	100.0

Table 1 presents the gender-wise distribution of prospective teachers in the sample. It shows that the sample consisted of a total of 108 respondent prospective teachers. It contained 36 male teachers and 72 female teachers.

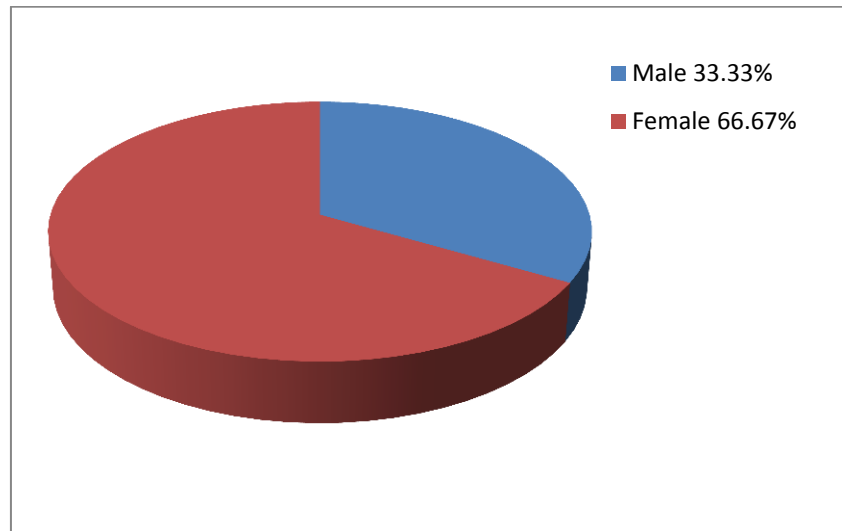


Figure1*Gender-based Percentages of Prospective Teachers*

Figure 1 depicts the percentage distribution of prospective teachers in the sample regarding their gender. It shows that the male teachers, constituted 33.33% of the sample whereas, female respondent teachers constituted 66.67 % of the sample for the study.

Results Table 2 Standard 1: Subject Matter Knowledge (Knowledge & Understanding)

Code	Area	SA	A	UD	D	SDA	Mean	S.D
QSMKU1	National Curriculum Framework for different subjects	53.7	14.8	14.8	5.6	11.1	3.94	1.386
QSMKU2	Understanding of the concepts of the subject	25.0	43.5	10.2	11.1	10.2	3.62	1.258
QSMKU3	Sufficient subject matter knowledge.	40.7	15.7	28.7	13.0	1.9	3.81	1.164
QSMKU4	Being updated regarding developments in the field of teaching.	24.1	32.4	15.7	25.9	1.9	3.51	1.172
QSMKU5	Awareness of the latest emerging trends, theories and concepts in the subject.	25.0	33.3	15.7	3.7	22.2	3.35	1.468
QSMKU6	Depth in knowledge of the subject which I teach.	54.6	25.0	1.9	11.1	7.4	4.08	1.298
QSMKU7	Establishing relationship the subject with other subjects.	28.7	48.1	7.4	8.3	7.4	3.82	1.159
QSMKU8	Knowledge of unique practical utility of various subjects.	43.5	33.3	13.9	7.4	1.9	4.09	1.019
QSMKU9	Competence in reading, writing and arithmetic as essential elements for the study of the subject.	45.4	51.9	2.8	0.0	0.0	4.43	0.550

Table 2. According to the afore-mentioned analysis, the items' mean scores fell between 4.43 and 3.35, showing that prospective teachers agreed with every assertion. They scored this statement high and agreed that competence in reading, writing and arithmetic are essential elements

for the study of the all subjects. The prospective teachers gave poor marks for keeping themselves up to date (3.35) and awareness of new theories, trends, and concepts in the subject. It is obvious that prospective teachers still need to learn more about current trends and the theoretical underpinnings of teaching techniques. The overall mean score of 3.85 indicates that prospective teachers agreed with the subject matter's knowledge and understanding competency.

Results Table 3 Standard 1: Subject Matter Knowledge(Disposition)

Code	Area	SA	A	UD	D	SDA	Mean	S.D
QSMD1	Catering for students' needs, requirements and interests during teaching.	58.3	29.6	6.5	3.7	1.9	4.39	0.905
QSMD2	Flexibility in instructional methods to help students learn.	34.3	53.7	4.6	3.7	3.7	4.11	0.931
QSMD3	Teaching in real life situations to students.	53.7	38.0	2.8	0.0	5.6	4.34	0.978
QSMD4	Adopting diversified instructional strategies keeping in view the diversity of the students.	50.0	41.7	2.8	5.6	0.0	4.36	0.791
QSMD5	Use of the teaching methods that foster individual differences of learners.	48.1	45.4	6.5	0.0	0.0	4.42	0.613
QSMD6	Use of alternate method for teaching so that every student can learn.	35.2	50.9	3.7	5.6	4.6	4.06	1.016

The above table 3 highlights that the mean score of items ranged from 4.42 to 4.06. It indicates the agreement of prospective teachers with all statements. They agreed that they use the teaching methods that foster individual differences of learners (4.42). They rated "Use of alternate method for teaching so that every student can learn", as low (4.06). So, it predicts that prospective teachers are having high disposition level about subject matter, but there is need that teachers should be more flexible and friendly while implementing alternate method for teaching. Overall mean score 4.28, points that prospective teachers' higher disposition in subject matter knowledge.

Results Table 4 Standard 1: Subject Matter Knowledge (Performance & Skills)

Code	Area	SA	A	UD	D	SDA	Mean	S.D
QSMPS1	Teaching the contents to students in multiple perspectives.	47.2	39.8	8.3	1.9	2.18	4.27	0.903
QSMPS2	Prior knowledge of students by using appropriate means of inquiry.	37.0	59.3	1.9	0.0	1.9	4.30	0.687
QSMPS3	Use of examples from daily life to clarify an idea or concept to students.	43.5	44.4	9.3	0.0	2.8	4.26	0.847

Table 4 presents the mean scores of items ranged from 4.30 to 4.26, highlighting the agreement of the prospective teachers with all the statements. They were of the view that they check prior knowledge of students by using appropriate means of inquiry as they rated this statement as high. (4.30). They rated low that use of examples from daily life to clarify an idea or concept to students.(4.26). The overall mean of all three statements is 4.26 that indicated strong agreement of prospective teachers with the indicator of performance and skill. So, it solicits that prospective teachers are confident about their performance and skill, but need actual classroom practice to enhance their performance and skill in teaching.

Overall, it was observed that prospective teachers were agreed with competence in knowledge & understanding, disposition and performance & skills in the standard of subject matter knowledge.

Results Table 5 Standard 4: Instructional Planning & Strategies(Knowledge & Understanding)

Code	Area	SA	A	UD	D	SDA	Mean	S.D
QIPKU1	Awareness of aims, goals and objectives of teaching at elementary level.	32.4	46.3	13.0	5.6	2.8	4.00	0.967
QIPKU2	Awareness of aims, goals, objectives and importance of the	46.3	31.5	5.6	4.6	12.0	3.95	1.342

	subject								
QIPKU3	Integrating listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in lessons while teaching.	42.6	29.6	13.9	7.4	6.5	3.94	1.206	
QIPKU4	Use of all available resources and material to make students understand.	47.2	34.3	8.3	2.8	7.4	4.11	1.155	
QIPKU5	Arrangement and integration of AV aids in lesson plans.	30.6	46.3	16.7	6.5	0.0	4.01	0.859	
QIPKU6	Flexibility in instructional methods to help students learn.	31.5	45.4	14.8	4.6	3.7	3.96	0.995	
QIPKU7	Knowledge of the learning methods that can accelerate students learning.	40.7	45.4	6.5	1.9	5.6	4.14	1.018	
QIPKU8	Awareness of the learning environments which can accelerate students learning.	52.8	29.6	8.3	7.4	1.9	4.24	1.013	
QIPKU9	Giving home assignments and group projects that promote learning.	43.5	36.1	2.8	4.6	13.0	3.93	1.351	
QIPKU10	Knowledge of the classroom management strategies that work in class.	41.7	41.7	9.3	2.8	4.6	4.13	1.015	
QIPKU11	Knowledge of different teaching methods that work in different situations.	30.6	54.6	5.6	4.6	4.6	4.02	0.986	

The table 5 indicates the mean score of items ranged between 4.24 and 3.93 showing consensus for agreement with the statements about knowledge & understanding of instructional planning & strategies. They were of opinion that they are aware of the learning environments which can accelerate students learning (4.24). They rated giving home assignments and group projects that promote learning as low (3.93), so it highlighted the need of integration of giving home assignments and group projects that promote learning as whole. The overall mean score for the eleven statements is (4.03).

Results Table 6 Standard 4: Instructional Planning & Strategies (Disposition)

Code	Area	SA	A	UD	D	SDA	Mean	S.D
QIPD1	Activities in classroom that ensure the achievement of SLOs.	53.7	26.9	12.0	1.9	5.6	4.21	1.094
QIPD2	Engaging students in exercises which develop their critical thinking.	53.7	39.8	3.7	0.0	2.8	4.42	0.810
QIPD3	Engaging students in creative work in class.	65.7	22.2	5.6	6.5	0.0	4.47	0.870
QIPD4	Promoting collaborative and cooperative learning among students.	44.4	44.4	3.7	3.7	3.7	4.22	0.960
QIPD5	Creating situations in group work that promote cooperation and inter dependence.	50.0	34.3	5.6	2.8	7.4	4.17	1.148
QIPD6	Arranging different activities in which students learn problem solving in their creative work.	45.4	40.7	1.9	6.5	5.6	4.14	1.106

The table 6 highlights the mean score of items ranged between 4.47 and 4.14 that reflects agreement of the prospective teachers about their disposition level regarding instructional planning & strategies. They were of opinion that they like to engage students in creative work (4.47). They rated arrangement of different activities in which students learn problem solving in their creative work as low (4.14) as compared to other five aspects of disposition. It indicated the need for inclusion of arrangement of different activities in which students learn problem solving in their creative work during practice teaching. Overall mean score 4.37 depicts that, prospective teachers have higher disposition level for standard of instructional planning and strategies.

Results Table 7 Standard 4: Instructional Planning & Strategies (Performance & Skills)

Code	Area	SA	A	UD	D	SDA	Mean	S.D
QIPPS1	Competency to teach learners according to age and learning styles.	32.4	50.9	13.0	0.0	3.7	4.08	0.887
QIPPS2	Pedagogical skills to cater individual differences.	55.6	42.6	0.0	0.0	1.9	4.50	0.690
QIPPS3	Competency to teach students keeping in view to their level and cultural context.	49.1	36.1	6.5	6.5	1.9	4.24	0.965
QIPPS4	The ability to choose materials and content to teach a particular topic or concept.	41.7	52.8	5.6	0.0	0.0	4.36	0.587
QIPPS5	Creating outside-of-class assignments and activities that encourage learning	40.7	37.0	14.8	4.7	9.8	4.14	0.945
QIPPS6	Creating educational environments that encourage students' learning preferences and inspire them to learn	35.2	46.3	11.1	2.8	4.6	4.05	0.999
QIPPS7	Use of variety of teaching methods in the classroom for diverse learners.	35.2	44.4	13.0	1.9	5.6	4.02	1.032
QIPPS8	Ability to use a variety of learning resources to achieve SLOs	52.8	26.9	10.2	10.2	0.0	4.22	0.998
QIPPS9	Reflections on students learning	50.0	40.7	7.4	0.0	1.9	4.37	0.781
QIPPS10	The capacity to help pupils learn from all topic areas	50.0	31.5	8.3	4.6	5.6	4.16	1.120

Table 7 explains that mean scores of the statements about performance and skill of prospective teachers against ten statements ranges from 4.02 to 4.50, it reflects that they agreed with all the statements. The prospective teachers were of the opinion that they have pedagogical skill to address the individual differences among the learners (4.50), whereas they rated use of variety of teaching methods in the classroom for diverse learners as low (4.02). Overall mean score is (4.21).

Overall mean score 4.21 indicates that prospective teachers have agreement to all statements and they consider themselves as competent in sub-standard of performance and skill related to instructional planning and strategies.

Results Table 8 Standard 5: Assessment(Knowledge & Understanding)

Code	Area	SA	A	UD	D	SDA	Mean	S.D
QAKU1	Understanding of assessment methods that are applied in various situations	44.4	40.7	7.4	7.4	0.0	4.22	0.879
QAKU2	Knowledge of diagnostic and placement assessment techniques	29.6	57.4	8.3	0.0	4.6	4.07	0.893
QAKU3	Utilising assessment results to enhance classroom instruction	50.0	38.0	7.4	2.8	1.9	4.31	0.872
QAKU4	Minimising bias and scoring issues when evaluating pupils in the classroom	51.9	38.9	4.6	0.0	4.6	4.33	0.937

The above table 8 explains that mean scores of the statements about knowledge & Understanding aspect of Assessment of prospective teachers against four statements ranges from 4.07 to 4.33. The mean scores (4.33) of the statement about minimizing bias and scoring issues when evaluating pupils in the classroom is high as compared to others. Whereas mean score (4.07) is low for the statement about the knowledge of assessment as diagnostic and placement purpose. Overall mean score 4.23 indicates that prospective teachers have agreement to all statements and they consider themselves as competent in sub-standard of knowledge and understanding related to Assessment.

Results Table 9 Standard 5: Assessment (Dispositions)

Code	Area	SA	A	UD	D	SDA	Mean	S.D
QAD1	Utilising assessment results to aid in pupils' learning	50.0	35.2	6.5	8.3	0.0	4.27	0.913
QAD2	Informing students and parents of assessment findings in an effort to enhance teaching and learning	44.4	32.4	4.6	7.4	11.1	3.92	1.340
QAD3	Using assessment for remedial teaching.	46.3	31.5	10.2	8.3	3.7	4.08	1.112
QAD4	Using ongoing assessment to identify areas for improvement.	51.9	31.5	12.0	1.9	2.8	4.28	0.946

Table 9 elaborates that mean scores of the statements about disposition regarding use of assessment ranges from 3.92 to 4.28. The prospective teachers were of the view that they prefer to use on-going assessment to identify areas for improvement as they rated this high. Whereas mean score (3.92) was low for the statement that they inform the results to parents and students to improve teaching learning process. Overall mean score 4.13 indicates that prospective teachers have agreement to all statements and they consider themselves as competent in sub-standard of disposition related to Assessment.

Results Table 10 Standard 5: Assessment(Performance & Skills)

Code	Area	SA	A	UD	D	SDA	Mean	S.D
QAPS1	Ability to create assessments for in-class formative evaluation	49.1	39.8	11.1	0.0	0.0	4.38	0.680
QAPS2	Competency to develop tests for formative assessment.	35.2	43.5	15.7	5.6	0.0	4.08	0.855
QAPS3	Ability to assess students in multiple ways.	52.8	35.2	1.9	7.4	2.8	4.28	1.012
QAPS4	Learning motivational tips during B.Ed (Hons) programme.	38.0	48.1	8.3	1.9	3.7	4.15	0.925
QAPS5	Capability to provide constructional feedback to the learners	56.5	34.3	5.6	1.9	1.9	4.42	0.833
QAPS6	Capability to prepare learners' progress report.	43.5	47.2	4.6	1.9	2.8	4.27	0.860
QAPS7	Capability of reflecting pupils' learning progress utilising assessment data	48.1	38.0	12.0	1.9	0.0	4.32	0.759
QAPS8	Capability to use variety of assessment techniques to diagnose learners' strength and shortcomings.	62.0	22.2	8.3	4.6	2.8	4.36	1.009
QAPS9	Capability to diagnose teaching and learning problems.	25.9	46.3	6.5	9.3	12.0	3.65	1.292
QAPS10	Encouraging learners to evaluate themselves objectively	29.6	28.7	30.6	11.1	0.0	3.77	1.001
QAPS11	Capability to assess students learning skill through objective type assessment.	28.7	26.9	17.6	22.2	4.6	3.53	1.249
QAPS12	Capability to engage students in self-assessment and self-improvement in the class.	28.7	17.6	9.3	5.6	38.9	2.92	1.719

Table10 explains that mean scores of the statements about performance and skill in assessment of prospective teachers against twelve statements ranges from 2.92 to 4.42, it reflects that they agreed with most of the statements and disagreed with one statement. The prospective teachers

were of the opinion that they have capability to provide constructional feedback to the learners as high (4.42). However they rated their skill to engage students in self-assessment and self-improvement in the class as low as (2.92). Overall results indicating they have knowledge but need practice of self-assessment and self-improvement strategies in actual classes.

Overall mean score 4.01 indicates that prospective teachers have agreement with most of the statements, but it highlights the need for development of performance and skill competence among prospective teachers regarding use of assessment for teaching.

In answer to research question and main objective of the study it was observed that perception level of prospective teachers was high and they rated themselves as competent in all three standards namely: Subject matter knowledge, Instructional Planning and Strategies and Assessment.

Results

The analysis of the NPSTs helped to determine the perceived level of pedagogical competencies of prospective teachers in each standard. This allowed us to describe the level of developed competencies. Considering distribution of the results obtained by analysing the questionnaire data with overall mean of means we can assume that:

- (1) Instructional Planning & Strategies competencies are at high level with mean score (4.20).
- (2) Subject Matter Knowledge, competencies are at average level with mean score (4.13).
- (3) Assessment, competencies are at a low level mean score (4.12).

The research results indicate that in the area of NPSTs pedagogical competencies of prospective teachers have high level of Instructional Planning & Strategies but average level of pedagogical competencies of Subject Matter Knowledge. They also got low results when it comes to Assessment competencies unpredictable situations (the only ones that can be experienced in school reality).

Conclusions

Given the 5-point scale, the diagnosis results show that prospective teachers declare their perceived pedagogical competencies at high level. The results lead to the following conclusions:

- (1) Prospective Teachers evaluated their pedagogical competencies as the lowest in the area of Assessment. This results from the fact that, the lack for development of performance and skills competence among prospective teachers regarding use of assessment for teaching.
- (2) Subject Matter Knowledge competencies are also evaluated as average. Prospective teachers still need to learn more about current trends and the theoretical underpinnings of teaching techniques. This might be due to insufficient number of internships during the whole studies.

Recommendations

1. It is recommended that a system of educational internships may be developed, both in terms of quantity and quality for the enhancement of pedagogical competencies among prospective teachers.
2. It is recommended that that an effort be made so that prospective teachers receive high quality professional development in the light of NPSTs to help them understand how to use assessment strategies in actual classroom settings.
3. It is recommended to make modifications to university curricula in the light of NPSTs in both the content and practical application of theoretical knowledge in order to address the identified weak points in the process of teacher preparation with relation to certain pedagogical competences. This should involve putting knowledge to use in controlled workshops before applying it to real-world situations in schools.

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