



How Do Faculty Beliefs and Practices Affect Learning Outcomes Assessment?

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Impact of market driven higher education on assessment of learning outcomes

- ❖ Focus on employability skills, competition, comparability, accountability
- ❖ Assessment: objective, quantifiable, replicable, based on procedures and techniques

 ***Faculty and other stakeholders share same perception of purposes/ criteria/standards/contexts***

Objectives for assessment

- ❖ Measuring learners' current achievement/abilities/ adaptability in short or long-term/ranking students/ suitability to job market
- ❖ Improving learning/programmes/teaching methods
- ❖ Accountability and institution accreditation reasons

Faculty beliefs & practices

- ❖ Faculty's conceptions about learning & assessment vary
- ❖ Faculty conceptions affect their assessment choices & practices
- ❖ Faculty are more engaged when assessment supports learning
- ❖ Culture and expertise may affect faculty beliefs about assessment

Standards & Criteria are no guarantee for assessment quality

- ❖ Learners' massification & diversity of contexts → interpretation, implementation of S&C problematic
- ❖ S&C → narrow responses & invalid assessment
- ❖ Students cue-seekers, not engaged in deep learning

Context of study

- ❖ Moroccan HE aligns with European system: market-driven vision
- ❖ Need for cost-effectiveness, visibility & comparability
- ❖ Focus on assessment
- ❖ Reforms carried out in managerial, top-down manner
- ❖ Little is known about faculty's beliefs & practices

Participants

- ❖ 17 voluntary faculty: 8 males and 9 females
- ❖ 12 full Professors, 3 Associate Professors and 2 Assistant Professors
- ❖ Faculty experience ranging from 3 to over 20 years
- ❖ 11 disciplines, 7 institutions of HE in Rabat

Procedure & limitations

- ❖ Semi-structured interviews ranging from 1h 30 to 3h
- ❖ Four sets of questions to guide the interview
- ❖ Study exploratory: small number of subjects & lack of quantifiable responses

Research questions

1. What perceptions do Moroccan faculty hold regarding the objectives of learning outcomes' assessments?
2. What criteria, references and methods do they use to design and implement assessments?
3. How do they perceive the quality of assessments in their institutions, what challenges do they think affect assessments and what alternatives do they propose?

Moroccan faculty perceptions regarding objectives of learning outcomes' assessments

Ranking of objectives according to faculty:

1. Supporting learning
2. Judging students' abilities
3. Judging content acquisition
4. Qualification and suitability to job

References, criteria & methods used by faculty to design and implement assessments

1. Gap between wide respondents' stated objectives and narrow criteria used in practice
2. Criteria used focus on overcoming practical constraints
3. Faculty, professional, institutional and international standards are ranked after practical criteria
4. Continuous assessments and final exams : based on different criteria and assessment methods

Faculty perceptions of the quality of assessments in their institutions : Challenges

1. Assessments are badly designed and their results unreliable
2. A third of all cited challenges are related to students
3. Managerial and institutional challenges are overwhelming
4. Some faculty members can be part of the setbacks

Faculty perceptions of the quality of assessments in their institutions: Proposed alternatives

- ❖ Reasonable students-faculty ratios
- ❖ Faculty commitment, ethical behavior & coordination
- ❖ Improvement of students' motivation, personal abilities, autonomy & level of achievement
- ❖ Use of varied methods (mainly to support learning)

Observation: Focus on students/faculty factors and methods. ***Neglect of reform aspects***

Conclusion (1/2)

- ❖ Faculty under study hold a variety of conceptions
- ❖ Faculty conceptions are noticeably different from a market driven vision
- ❖ Faculty define assessments objectives in terms of supporting learning
- ❖ For faculty, learners generic abilities and competencies attainment are more essential than suitability to a given job

Conclusion (2/ 2)

- ❖ Faculty's focus on practical issues in assessment
- ❖ Proposed alternatives highlight significance of human factor and ethical behaviour
- ❖ Faculty's striking disregard of the current reform

