

Determination and Prioritization of Educational Needs of Academic Members in the Area of Educational Assessment

(From educationalists & professors' points of view) ¹

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Abstract

The main aim of the present study is to prioritize the training needs of academic members of Farhangian University and their assessment. This research method is descriptive-analytical

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survey, and the qualitative and quantitative methods have been used to carry it out. The statistical population in the qualitative section consisted of all education authorities throughout the country, out of whom 19 were selected using goal-oriented sampling. The quantitative statistical population comprised 181 of permanently employed academic members of Farhangian University which 150 samples were randomly selected. The research data were collected from semi-structured interview and researcher-made questionnaire. In order to determine the validity, content validity and to check the structural validity, operating analysis, and to estimate the reliability of the questionnaires, Cranach's alpha coefficient was used. The findings showed that the results obtained in the qualitative section are in agreement with those obtained from the quantitative section. According to the research results, the most important educational needs of academic members in the area of assessment are: 1) ability in carrying out the qualitative assessment, 2) ability in carrying out the combined assessment, 3) ability in "skill-oriented" assessment instead of "memory-oriented" assessment. Moreover, the research findings in the qualitative section indicated that the amount of need of academic members of Farhangian University in the area of assessment were more than the medium level.

Keywords: Educational need, Needs analysis, Educational assessment, Academic members, Farhangian University

1. Introduction

Assessment is a necessary and comprehensive process for all organizations and it is also of great importance for higher education institutes targeting justice and excellence (Shinkfield & Stufflebeam, 1995). According to the views of experts, curriculum elements range from one to nine. Most experts agree regarding the four elements of aim, content, method (implementation) and assessment. Indeed, assessment is one of the important elements of curriculum as only via assessment, we can increase efficiency and effectiveness of curriculum (Momeni Mahmuyi, 2009, 14). The main value of academic institutions is mostly improvement of learning –teaching quality and assessment plans are important section of their activities. The guarantee of learning-teaching quality in academic systems requires a serious approach to all factors involved with learning-teaching process. Indeed, in this process, the faculty members of University are effective factors and their continual development is one of the aspects of a successful University (Yamani et al., 2006). As the lecturers of the most valuable part of high education system, the investigation of their educational needs is of great importance. Therefore, based on the changes and innovations in the present society as turning the teacher education centers to Farhangian University, it is necessary to consider the process of planning for updating the required skills of faculty members of this University in accordance to the current needs of the country and it is available via scientific need assessment.

Unfortunately, this issue is less considered by researchers. The present study aimed to determine and prioritize educational needs of faculty members of Farhangian University regarding educational assessment via educational need assessment. The development of their job empowerment is an important factor in improvement of professional performance, improvement of educational and main returns in continuance of optimized educational conditions (Timperlry, Wilson, Barrar, & Fung, 2007). As the effectiveness of Universities depends upon the empowerment of its faculty member, this question is raised, can we teach the future teachers with the past knowledge? The evidences show that teacher education courses in Iran were not effective and efficient and they need research, review and re-planning. In order to achieve the mentioned goals, local and international studies were evaluated by the researcher. The review of literature showed that no study has been conducted in this regard and relevant studies have been conducted and the results of some of the studies are as followings:

According to the study of Sharifi (1995), final tests were superior to local tests in terms of testing principles; it means that local tests were weak in terms of testing principles. The results of some studies including Abedi (1995, 1996) and Sobhaninejad (1996) showed that the questions of final tests had serious problems in terms of execution validity and correction methods and the application of results were ambiguous. Also, Abedi (1996) evaluated the final test questions regarding cognitive levels as unsuitable and showed that in all tests, knowledge level was mostly considered and high levels of learning were ignored. Thus, final test questions were superior to questions of local tests in this regard. According to Hassani and Kiamanesh (2009), the evidences showed that test results were unique tools in

educational assessment and the test namely written tests were tools for decision making about academic performance of learners. The change in structure and educational system plans less emphasized on educational assessment and mostly emphasized on the role of academic achievement assessment (p.75). The results of the study of Asadi et al., (2011) showed that holding workshops and educational courses in standard assessment methods was a good step to improve educational competence and quality of educational services of faculty members of University.

Also, a review of international studies is useful. For example, Weshan (1999) in the study considered evaluating student learning effective for teaching faculty members. He believed that assessment of learning of students was assessment of perception and performance of students of learning experience. Some components as assessment of lecturer of previous learning of students, the learning of students about new textbooks, using various assessment techniques and application of assessment results to improve education process and improve lecturer performance in teaching process are the components in assessment item.

Fook& Sidhu (2010) found the results that there was a mismatch between curriculum content and assessment practices in higher education. The findings indicated that alternative and authentic assessment had more acceptances from students and should therefore be viewed as an alternative to traditional standardized assessment.

Sebasaza (2010) in a study showed that majority of students conceived assessment as course lecturers' ways of collection evidence from students to be used as benchmarks for grading and ranking students. Assessments could be both course-oriented in line with the curriculum and teacher-oriented in line with teacher's course-notes. Moreover, the findings revealed that students relied heavily on senior students' information about teachers' styles of assessing as a source for adopting study strategies. Tova (2011) believed that in universities, "assessment prior learning (APL)" was necessary to determine the final skill and knowledge and this assessment model was mostly to determine the position of one's knowledge before entering academic system. This type of assessment in universities has great effect on the results of educational designs and it leads to correction of educational plans. Justin (2012) in his PHD thesis stated that only focusing on "assessment from learning results" can cause that assessment is far away from learning process and the students only achieve the minimum in learning results. Thus, creating new approaches is necessary for assessment process. In addition, as student participates in both learning and assessment process, education and assessment process should match.

According to Rexwinkel (2012) Studies in the UK, the US indicates that there is no appropriate instrument available to evaluate the degree program level validly and reliability. The general question is that by which instrument, the level of programs in higher education in terms of validity and reliability can be assessed? In response we can say:

First: Empirical evidences are good criteria for assessment of educational program level.

Second: Four important factors are considered for assessment of educational program level in higher education as:

a) Level concept that should be clear and transparent, b) The tools that are exact and accurate, c) Empirical, the assessment should be done empirically, d) Applied, it means that assessment should be applied.

Laguador and Dotong (2014) in a study showed that theoretical mastery of faculty members in assessment, 1) Introduction to assessment methods and competence in selection of good assessment methods. Practical mastery of faculty members in this regard means 1) Using outcome-based approach in academic affairs, 2) using direct and indirect techniques of assessment to evaluate curriculum and assessment of learners. Khan, Lee, Golnik & Paraniham (2013) believe that lecturers and students in assessment skills can be affected by external factors and outcomes as time, work pressure, hunger, anger, social mental stresses, disease or other environmental factors of University.

Also, Casey, Saunders, O'Hara (2010) showed that performance-based reward was effective on people feeling of competence and caused that people be effective in designing suitable assessment methods. In this view, empowerment of lecturers in assessment methods is a multi-dimensional concept as Self-effectiveness, Self-Impact, Self-determination, Trust in others and meaning of lecturers in selecting assessment approaches based on knowledge and innovation-based approaches. Beside motivational issues, providing resources and facilities can play important role in this regard. For example, in University, the required conditions should be provided regarding the selection of new assessment methods. Assessment element is one of the external criteria in assessment of educational group and faculty members.

Hughes, Arbogast, Kafer & Chen (2014) consider assessment as a group activity and state that successful implementation of this element is dependent upon participation of faculty members and specifically educational group. According to these researchers, participation process is important and they recommend that in formulation and design and implementation of assessment methods, the experts, graduates of assessment and curriculum developers can be applied. The results showed that the nature and quality of design approaches of learning-teaching activities and content of curriculum determined the consistency and efficiency of lecturers' assessment methods.

Davis, Kirkland, Ojano Sheehan (2014) showed that 1) Most of faculty members believed that management and leadership of colleges and educational departments were necessary components in success of faculty members in execution of assessment methods, 2) The presence in educational courses was useful for their learning, improving skills in methods and process of assessment. The personal character of the lecturer can determine need assessment process but learning continuity in job process depends upon the support and encouragement of group, college and University and finally, according to Tandeter, Castel, Nave, Jotkowitz (2014), educational needs of faculty members of University were including some components as assessment of learning of students, formulation, design and assessment of curriculum.

In a summary of mentioned researches, we can say the skill in implementation of assessment element is a dynamic feature as occurred in curriculum of any lecturer. Thus, it is required that faculty members of Universities have theoretical and practical mastery. It means that they be familiar with assessment methods and be powerful in selection of good methods and evaluation techniques to evaluate curriculum and evaluation of empowered learners.

Generally, assessment as success evaluation of learners has always been taken into attention of teachers and all those dealing with teaching and education. In traditional methods, assessment is the last part of education or even separated from education and is conducted at the end of an educational course. According to new educational theories, assessment should continuously assess learning of learners in the entire education. Based on this method,

assessment is not only grading and educational degree and its comprehensive aim is helping the teacher to recognize the shortcomings of teaching method and educational problems of learners and eliminating them. Indeed, educational system is a combination of classroom, textbook, teacher, test, etc. and to promote each learner to higher levels, assessment is required (Shoarinejad, 1985, p.451). Indeed, in an educational institution, determining the success and achieving goals, correction of system, finding the strengths and weaknesses, comparison of profit and loss, data collection, avoiding mistake repetition, moving from better to the best and planning reformation can be possible only via assessment (Asadollahi, 1998, p.15). The presence of an assessment system is effective on creating change, improvement of education and some tools as assessment define whether educational programs and their implementation can lead to fulfillment of the required goals or not. Indeed, assessment is one of the basic sections of each educational program as assessment determines the reason of not achieving the pre-determined goals and eliminating the shortcomings can lead to goals achievement.

As it was said, the researcher attempted to identify the needs of faculty members of Farhangian University regarding educational assessment. The general purpose of this study is to determine and prioritize required skills of educational assessment in Farhangian University and in the form of six questions, they are investigated.

- 1- Which are the educational needs of faculty members of Farhangian University regarding “educational assessment”?
- 2- How much faculty members need education in assessment?
- 3- What are the most important needs of faculty members in assessment?
- 4- Is there any difference between educational needs of faculty members regarding assessment based on demographic variables (gender, degree, service experience and province of service)?

2. Research Method

2.1 Type of research

The present research is analytical-descriptive and surveying method. Depending on the theme of the research, two qualitative and quantitative approaches were employed in performing the different sections of this research work. Qualitative method was used to collect information from specialists and authorities in education while quantitative method was employed to collect information from full-time instructors and the academic members of Farhangian University. The findings of the qualitative section were used not only to answer the research questions but also to construct the tools for the quantitative section. After the implementation of the interview texts, the basic statements related to “educational assessment” were extracted and added to the text of the questionnaire to construct the tools. Therefore, the combined exploratory method was also used in this research (Plano Clark, et al. 2008: 372; Creswell and Plano Clark, 2007: 62-72 quoted by Sharifiyan, et al. 2013:54).

2.2 Population and sample

The population in this research work consists of two sections: A) the authorities and high-ranking experts in education at the country level form the qualitative section of the population in this research work. Nineteen authorities in education who were the sample of this research work were interviewed in a semi-structured manner. B) The full-time instructors and the academic members of Farhangian University from the fourth axis of the country consisting of Esfahan, Chaharmahalva Bakhtiyari, Lorestan, Yazd, Khuzestan, and Ilam formed the population of the quantitative section of this research work. The frequency distribution of the research population is presented in Table (2) according to sex and academic degree.

Table 1. Frequency distribution of the instructors and academic members of the research population

Sex population	female	mail	total
MS/MA academic members	45	66	111
PhD Academic members	27	43	70
total	72	109	181

2.3 Sampling method and the sample size

The initial sampling method for the selection of the authorities and experts in education in this research work was targeted (Creswell, 2007). In fact, the authorities and experts selected for the subject of research work were “significant samples” (Williams, 2006: 79). In addition to targeted sampling, network-sampling method was also used during the interviews (Noori, 2008:330). The first interviewees were asked to recommend those whom they considered competent for the topic of the interview. Regarding the authorities in education, the size of the sample was not quantitatively calculated, but to obtain some standards like data saturation and information redundancy show the adequacy of the sample (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2007:242; Guest et al. 2006:59 quoted by Sharifiyan et al. 2013:54). The stratified random sampling was also used for the selection of the full-time instructors and academic members of the desired provinces so that all the full-time instructors and academic members of the desired provinces were selected. The sample of the quantitative section of this research work included 150 teachers in total consisting of 45 (30.6%) teacher holding PhD, 102 holding MA/MS (69.4%), and three unspecified teachers. The size of the teachers and academic members was calculated by different methods. In the first method, Cochran sample size was used to specify the number of the teachers and academic members required. Additionally, after performing the research work, the test statistical power was calculated and with regard to the fact that the statistical power was equal to 1, the adequacy of the sample was confirmed.

2.4 Data collection tools

A semi-structured interview and a researcher-made questionnaire were used in this research

work. The researcher interviewed the authorities to acquire their views. The validity of the interview form was investigated and confirmed by those who examined the validity of the questionnaire. The reliability of the questionnaire form was examined by three experts knowledgeable in the qualitative research methods. They studied the summary of the issues and determined the categories by the use of the triangulation method. Since there was no standard questionnaire regarding the research subject, a researcher-made questionnaire was used to collect information from the intended sample. To determine the content validity of the two tools of interview and questionnaire, the views of 12 academic members of the Faculty of Education and Psychology at Esfahan University who enjoyed the required specialty were employed. The Cronbach's Alpha was used to estimate the reliability and internal correlation of the questionnaire questions. After performing the preliminary studies on 36 individuals of the population and analyzing the questionnaires, the reliability of educational assessment background was estimated to be 0.891. To study the construct validity of the responses, they were analyzed by the use of factor analysis and Varimax rotation method. Therefore, the number of the statements and the components remained unchanged. A minimum factorial load of 0.4 was the standard for the statements to remain in the questionnaire. The results of KMO test was 0.848 and the Bartlett test for the study of sphericity of the data was 632.817 $P < 0.01$ which was meaningful and satisfactory. The amount of the specific values and the justifiable variance percentage for the factor of educational assessment were 62.594 and 4.084, respectively, indicating the suitable validity of the tools.

2.5) Methods of collection and analysis of information

Some methods have been presented for the analysis of the information obtained from the interviews that can be used to analyze the propositions and the views of the interviewees (Campbell et al. 2004: 125-147; Mason 2002: 91-96). Normally, to analyze the data obtained from the interviews, several stages or steps including data preparation, data organization, and data reduction within the framework of the propositions by encoding and condensing the codes are used and ultimately, the data are presented in an image, table or discussion format (Creswell, 2007:148). In this manner, the stages of data analysis are also performed as the above in the present research work. It is done in so that the interviews are performed in person by recording and then by transcribing the interview; the statements are categorized by MAX. QDA Software and after the determination of their reliability they are categorized. To collect the data by the in-person questionnaire related to the academic members, the questionnaires were distributed among them and 150 copies were collected. To analyze the qualitative data, the descriptive-inferential statistics were employed and the average and frequency were calculated at the descriptive level. At the inferential level, the data were first examined for two specifications of normality and homogeneity of variances. In cases when the data enjoy these two specifications, the parametric tests were employed; otherwise, the non-parametric tests were used. The tests used in this research work consisted of multi-way analysis of variance, factor analysis, and single-variable t with a hypothetical average of three.

3. Research Findings

Since the method of this research work is a combined approach, the findings are therefore presented based on the research questions. The data are analyzed in the qualitative section by the use of categorization method. After the transcription of the text of 19 interviews, 168 propositions (codes) were extracted. After the analysis of the content based on the propositions, 107 propositions were obtained in the second stage and 77 propositions in the third stage and the main categories were determined. With regard to the importance of the subject in this article, the category of “educational assessment” has been studied.

3.1 First question

What are the educational needs of faculty members of Farhangian University in “educational assessment”?

According to the respondents, 9 different educational needs in Table 5 are the most important needs of faculty members in educational assessment and they are explained in the following with a brief explanation of interviews.

Table 2. The most important educational needs stated by interviewers in “assessment”

Assessment components	No.
The ability in qualitative assessment or descriptive assessment	1
The ability of performing combinational assessment (written, oral, conference)	2
The ability of “skill-based” assessment instead of “memory-based assessment”.	3
Recognizing the indices and standards of educational assessment	4
The ability of design of different questions with various difficulty coefficients	5
Recognition of standardized tests of academic achievement and its suitable use	6
Introduction to assessment goals in curriculum of student teachers	7
Introduction to philosophical basics of educational assessment	8
Skill in “self-assessment” method	9

3.1.1 The ability in performing qualitative or descriptive assessment

This educational need is emphasized by 13 participants (68.42%) in the study. According to the interviewees, it is required that teachers consider mostly the descriptive assessment and the total score of the student is not only restricted to the quantitative assessment of final term and descriptive result is also considered for students. It is better that the University performs the assessment by an assessment group to assess the lecturer teaching method and give feedback to them. Also, lecturers should respond. Indeed, the teacher only teaches and assessment or written tests are performed by assessment sector of University ² (interviewee

4).

3.1.2 The performing of combinational assessment (written, oral and conference)

This educational need is recommended by 12 participants (63.15%) in the study. According to the participants, one of the important skills of teaching is “assessment “ability as raised in two levels (quality of teacher training and academic achievement of students). It is possible that the lecturer determines that assessment basis of a student is writing paper, another one oral presentation and another student written test. Thus, lecturer should perform different assessments. Unfortunately, lecturers only considered one common method as written test (interviewee 6, 12).

3.1.3 The ability of “skill-based” assessment instead of “memory-based assessment

This educational need is emphasized only by 11 participants (57.89%) in the study. According to the majority of interviewees, the current trend of educational assessment all over the world is changed, it means that it is moving from memory-based assessment to skill-based assessment and it relies on Skills assessment not knowledge and memory of students. This trend change is the present need of our country. At first, we should define “skills”, and then training is presented and after that assessment is performed. Unfortunately, in human science, the same is true. 70% of graduates don’t have required skills (interviewees 5). According to other interviewees, training as applied is practical and skill-based assessment, a necessity for Farhangian University. It means the assessment of what a teacher should perform practically and be his working instrument (interviewee 8, 10).

3.1.4 The identification of indices and standards of educational assessment

This educational need is recommended by 11 participants (57.89%) in the study. They believe that assessment standards are not observed in the tests or they are not considered by relevant authorities. It is required to hold assessment of questions committee as the main duties of educational groups and standard percentage of test questions is determined (interviewee 1).

Otherwise, Farhangian University is merely a University like the rest of Universities. It is expected that this University is superior in this regard compared to other Universities (interviewee 11). According to interviewee 14, based on the teacher assessment, his teaching type is determined. For example, if his questions are regarding knowledge field, his teaching method is based on knowledge and his method is analytical, reasoning, judgment, searching, imaginary, visual, change or in other fields. Thus, a teacher can show his abilities in assessment as he can show his abilities in training field. Indeed, assessment is an instrument at service of training not training at assessment service. Thus, the teacher should train what he tries to assess (Interviewee 14). In this regard interviewee 13 believes that test and assessment of teacher should be based on basis of headlines, reference in curriculum of student teachers. If the required headline is not taught in curriculum, it leads to lack of access to a common aim in the four academic years (Interviewee 13).

3.1.5 The ability of designing different questions with different difficulty coefficients

It is the need that 10 people (52.63%) of interviewees consider its training necessary. They

think that the students complaining the assessment of their teachers (interviewee 1). Unfortunately, the teachers and lecturers are not in good level in this regard. Mostly, in the design of test questions, they show little patience in accordance to assessment standards and they try to use repetitive questions of previous terms or the tests of their co-workers (interviewee 2, 12). Most of multiple question tests and even open questions have problems. If a bank of questions is provided and an expert group investigates them, their mistakes can be revealed. Mostly, assessments don't cover various fields of training and even headlines. Mostly, the question is false and it doesn't what should be assessed and other similar problems (interviewee 7). According to interviewee 18, a few teachers are found to have multiple-choice and open questions together. It is not expected to use all types of questions in a test session, it is expected that multiple-question and open questions together can assess all thinking levels.

3.1.6 Identification of standardized tests of academic achievement and its suitable application

This component is another need emphasized by 10 people (52.63%) of interviewees and its training is emphasized. According to them, educational assessment is an important tool for teachers' job and it is one of the main skills of teaching job. The identification and good application of standardized tests is one of the basic educational needs of teachers in assessment (interviewee 1).

3.1.7 Introduction with assessment goals in curriculum of student teachers

This need is recommended by 10 people (52.63%) of participants. According to MehrMohaammadi (2013), if it is expected the student teachers acquire competencies and educational programs of in Farhangian University can survey this goal and one of the most important grounds is teachers. Thus, if assessment skill is trained to learners, it seems that the teachers should mastery this skill and should have required knowledge and achieve a level of thought mastery (interviewee 16).

3.1.8 Introduction with philosophical principles of educational assessment

9 people (47.36%) of interviewees recommended the necessity of considering this need. According to them, lecturers assessment trend is formed based on approaches and religious and philosophical basics, if his approach to teaching is behavioristic, his assessment is multiple-choice, four answers and short-answer. If his approach is constructivism, the student in assessment should be creative and reveal his mental construct. If the view of lecturer is "idealism", his assessment is only transferring knowledge but if his philosophy is based on ontology or existentialism, his assessment is formed based on the view of student, it means that the student assess himself. Indeed, believing the student power is revealed in the behavior of lecturer. If the view of teacher is "Pragmatism" philosophical school, he should consider thing and problem solving. The type of assessment is based on the type of view of lecturer and teacher and this type of view can develop creativity or raise new questions in students (interviewee 9).

3.1.9 Skill in “self-assessment” method

Empowerment of lecturer is to create skill in “self-assessment” of another need as recommended by 9 people (47.36%) of interviewees. According to them, assessment is based on some parts: 1- Assessment of education quality and presented curriculum by the lecturer or “self-assessment”, 2- Assessment of learning and academic achievement of students. Indeed, a faculty member should master both levels of assessment (Interviewee 6,12). According to the recommendation of participant (18), it can be said the specific questionnaires are given to the lecturers to assess during the term. This trend causes that existing standard components in questionnaire can direct them and the teacher himself can assess his work away from the management opinion.

3.2 Second question

How much faculty members of Farhangian University need education in “educational assessment”?

Table 3. The comparison of the mean of need of faculty members of Farhangian University to training in “assessment” with assumption means 3

component	average	SD	Mean deviation	t	Degree of freedom	Level of Significance
Need for training	3.54	0.77	0.063	8.547	147	0.001

Based on findings of Table 3, the mean of the need of faculty members to training in “assessment” is 3.54. As the calculated t is bigger than t of Table. Thus, the need of faculty members to education in assessment is above average.

3.3 Third question

What is the most important educational need of faculty members of Farhangian University in “assessment”?

Table 4. The most important educational needs of faculty members in “assessment”

	questions				Sum of the two columns high & very high
1	Skill in performing qualitative assessment as descriptive assessment	average	SD	frequency	percentage
		3.60	0.97	90	60
2	The skill of combined assessment application (written, oral, conference)	3.59	1.11	87	58
3	The ability of “skill-based” assessment instead of “memory-oriented”	3.60	0.97	82	54.7
4	Familiarity with the principles of assessment based on the requirements of each field	3.59	0.90	78	52
5	Recognition of standardized tests of academic achievement	3.45	0.92	76	50.7
6	Assessment ability in various fields (cognitive, affective)	3.46	0.99	73	48.7
7	The ability of tests standardization	3.47	0.96	73	48.7

The results of Table 4 show that the highest percent of responses at very much and much is dedicated to “skill in qualitative assessment” with 60% response and then “combined assessment application skill” with 58% responses and the most important educational need of faculty member in “teaching skills” can be shown.

3.4 Fourth questions

Is there any difference between educational needs of faculty members in “assessment” based on demographic variables?

Table 5. The multiple variance analysis of scores of educational needs of faculty members in assessment based on demographic variables

Source	Sum of squares	Degree of freedom	Mean of squares	F	Level of significance
Sex	0.115	1	0.115	0.185	0.668
Level of education	0.506	1	0.506	0.814	0.369
Work experience	3.015	3	1.005	1.618	0.188
Province of teaching	0.644	3	0.215	0.346	0.792

The results in Table 5 show that there is no significant difference between the scores of educational needs of faculty members of faculty members of Farhangian University in “educational assessment” based on gender, education, and work experience and service province.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The presence of an empowered assessment system in change, improvement of education is very effective as the evolution of an educational system requires awareness of its efficiency and planning to improve measurements to fulfill educational goals. We can say that powerful universities are the organizations making efforts to improve competencies of faculty members. Indeed, assessment element is one of the important criteria in educational efficiency of faculty members and Farhangian University has a great mission. Thus, the main aim of present study is determination and prioritization of educational needs of faculty members of Farhangian University in educational assessment and some of the results are referred as followings. The present study aimed to determine and prioritize the educational needs of faculty members of Farhangian University in educational assessment. Some of the results are as followings:

Based on the findings of study, in qualitative section, in response to the first question of study, nine main educational needs are stated by majority of interviewees as shown in Table 2. For example, the ability in qualitative assessment is the need emphasized by 13 participants (68.42%). In quantitative study, “skill in qualitative assessment” is the need with the highest percent of responses of faculty members of Farhangian University as much and very much (60%) and shows the most important educational need of lecturers in this regard (Table 4).

In response to the second study, the results of Table 3 show that the mean of the need of faculty member to education in “assessment” is 3.54. Based on the findings of Table 4, of seven relevant items of assessment, all items have the mean higher than population mean and this indicates the educational need of faculty members in seven components. Indeed, the results of the study show that the need of faculty members of Farhangian University to teaching in assessment is above average and this is consistent with the results of study of Sharifi (1995), Abedi (1995, 1996), Sobhaninejad (1996), Hassani and Kiamanesh (2009), Asadi, Ataollah et al., (2011). The results of the researchers showed the weakness of performance of educational teachers in assessment process. Indeed, holding workshops and educational courses in assessment standard methods is a big step to improve educational power and quality of educational services of faculty members of University. In addition, “recognition of indices and standards of educational assessment” is the need in qualitative section emphasized by 11 participants (57.89%) in the study and shows the distance of existing condition from good condition.

In response to the third question of study “familiarity with the principles on assessment” with 52% and “ability of tests standardization” with 48.7% dedicated the responses of faculty members of Farhangian University as very much and much (Table 4). It is worth to mention that these findings are consistent with the results of the study of Abedi (1995, 1996), Sobhaninejad (1996), “Vishan”(1999), Fook& Sidhu (2010). The results of study of the researchers showed that questions of final tests had some problems in terms of execution validity and correction method of questions and the application of results were ambiguous. Indeed, the findings of the present study showed that in terms of the views of majority of interviewees, in the tests including local tests, standards and assessment were not observed and this obvious weakness was not investigated by relevant authorities. Thus, it is required that authentic, reliable, correct and new assessments are replaced with traditional assessments.

The findings indicated that alternative and authentic assessment had more acceptances from students and should therefore be viewed as an alternative to traditional standardized assessment.

“The ability of assessment in various fields” is another need dedicated 48.7% of responses of faculty members as much and very much (Table 4) and is consistent with the result of study of Abedi (1996). This researcher evaluated final questions of test as unsuitable cognitive levels and showed that in all tests, the knowledge level is considered mostly. High levels of learning were ignored. The final test questions were superior to local tests.

Also, the skill of application of combined assessment (written, oral and conference) and skill-based assessment ability instead of “memory-based” are other needs consistent with the results of study of Laguador and Dotong (2014)(Table 4). These researchers have shown that familiarity with assessment methods and empowerment in selection of good methods of assessment indicated the theoretical mastery of faculty members and using direct and indirect techniques of assessment to evaluate curriculum and assessment of learners show the practical mastery of faculty members in this field.

In addition, the researcher in review of literature, the interview with participants and the results of questionnaires, it was found that existing assessment methods showed the lack of valid and reliable instrument for assessment. Thus, it is required to formulate assessment methods based on various approaches of knowledge and specialization-based content and also the lecturers assess their professional growth with the attitude of coherence of curriculum elements (learning-teaching activities, content, assessment method). Based on these findings, implementation and designing such significant experiences for students, learners and lecturers, is a tool to develop assessment skills and coherence of curriculum plans (internal consistency). In addition, the only focus on “assessment form learning results” can cause that assessment is far away from learning process and students only achieve minimum learning results. Thus, considering new approaches or formulating new approaches is a necessity for assessment process. As assessment element is one of the important external criteria in assessment of University, educational group and faculty members, the Universities should provide the resources and facilities, conditions in formulation, selection and training new assessment methods for faculty members. Here, the participation and supervision of management of universities and educational groups is a necessary component in success of faculty members in execution of new assessment methods.

This question is raised, what is the mission of Universities namely Farhangian University in this regard? Now, Farhangian University should emphasize continuously on training and improving assessment skills of faculty members from the beginning also should plan for it. It is recommended that in formulation, design and execution of assessment methods, experts, learners, assessment experts and curriculum can be used. The evidences show that the nature and quality of design approaches and learning-teaching activities and curriculum content show the consistency and efficiency of assessment methods of lecturers. As student is a person participating both in learning and assessment processes, it is required that training and assessment processes are consistent with each other.

In addition, the universities by identification of needs and regulating educational goals can increase the professional growth of faculty members in this regard to provide efficiency, growth and development of the country. As skill in formulation and implementation of curriculum assessment element is a dynamic feature in curriculum of each lecturer, it is required that Farhangian University via training and supervision, improve theoretical and practical mastery of faculty members in this regard. For example, we can make the teachers familiar with new assessment methods in educational workshops and improve empowerment in selection of good assessment methods. Thus, we can provide practical mastery of faculty members and skill in using direct and indirect assessment techniques for assessment of learners. As it was mentioned, the planners of educational system of Universities should have convincing reasons to formulate their educational plans. Thus, identification, explanation and prioritization of needs before selection of any solution can increase the efficiency and effectiveness of educational plans in Universities. Having access to this aim is achieved by need assessment and we can guarantee effectiveness and efficiency of trainings by this method. Thus, to facilitate their educational efficiency and improve assessment skills in faculty members, Farhangian University should assess the assessment element in curriculum via formulating good educational goals and make the job and skills empowered and this aim is fulfilled via considering the identified educational needs and correct planning.

The following recommendations are presented:

- 1- Establishing an independent system or assessment office in Farhangian University
- 2- Establishing a specialized committee for assessment of test questions
- 3- Defining assessment standards in Farhangian University and control of questions based on them
- 4- Holding written tests of students by assessment office

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