

Prospective Teachers' Attitudes towards the Use of Portfolio

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Abstract

The purpose of the study was to explore prospective teachers' attitudes towards the use of portfolio in ADE program of Regional Institutes of Teacher Education in Hazara Division KPK Pakistan. The study sample consisted of 80 prospective teachers (23 male and 57 females) of three Regional Institutes of Teachers Haripur, Abbottabad and Manshera. Descriptive research was considered most suitable for this research study and survey method was applied. Data of the study was collected through questionnaire based on five points rating scale. Before administration of questionnaire its reliability and content validity was checked by the experts of PEACE Abbottabad. After amendment questionnaire was sent to three RITEs for data collection. Collected data were analyzed by applying SPSS. The data was analyzed by using mean scores and *t-test* on (0.05 level of significance). The study concluded that overall female prospective teachers have positive attitudes towards the use of portfolio as compare to male prospective teachers with regard to gender. There was no significant difference in attitudes across residence and qualification of prospective teachers.

Keywords: Portfolio, Prospective Teachers, Attitudes,

Abbreviations Used

PEACE	Provisional Evaluation, Assessment Centre of Education
KPK	Khyber Pakhtoon Khawa
RITEs	Regional Institutes of Teacher Education

1. Introduction

In teacher training institutes portfolio is used as a powerful tool for analyzing, assessing, and promoting academic progress and professional development of prospective teachers. Portfolio enables the trainees and educators to observe skills focus on strengths, and develop compensatory strategies for unskillful areas, and plan for future. Portfolio works as the bridge for integrating the diverse experiences prospective teachers have both in and out of the classroom. Using portfolios, prospective teachers examine a broad range of their own work, collected over time and to analyze their own progress and achievement. According to Rhodes & Shankline, (1993) portfolio made the work of prospective teachers to build up their own common sense about the exceptionality and worth of their skills.

Buttler, N.D & Nancy D. McMunn (2006) stated that, "portfolios are often collection of student written work but unlike notebooks, they do not usually indicates the totality of student work. A portfolio integrates collection of student work showing effort, progress or a degree of proficiency. A teacher may choose to use a portfolio when it is important to collect student work to reflect upon".

Portfolio is a collection of objects, facts, and reflections' in professional institutes. Now days the use of professional portfolio has become increasingly popular in the field of teacher education, becoming a method for creating paths for expression and documentation of both personal and professional growth and development for both pre-service and in-service teachers. In many teacher education programs are now giving more value for the development of portfolio as a valuable process (Costantino & De Lorenzo, 2002).

Portfolios show progress toward competence on one or more learning targets. They document increasing levels of achievement. Students, selects evidence related to a given learning target at two or more points in time and their annotations explain the level of achievement each artifact represents (Chappuis, j et al, 2012).

Portfolio is not only a collection of documents, files or busy students, but it is a systematic process of organizing and developing documents. Many educational targets or objectives are attained with the use of portfolio. Mc Millan, J.H (2011) stated that, portfolio is a systematic process of collecting and evaluating student product to document progress toward the attainment of learning targets or show evidence that a learning target has been achieved. Portfolio include specific and predetermine guidelines for the selection of materials and criteria for scoring and evidence of student self-reflection on what has been achieved.

In teacher education institutions now portfolios are used to developed prospective teachers' habits to work

more systematic in many areas of teaching learning process. According to Shulman (1988) the, use of portfolios in teacher education institutes provides a connection and make possible to develop document in teaching and learning process.

Portfolio is used as collecting document in language subjects. According to Payne, D. A (2003) the, portfolio tend to focus on subject matter in the usual classroom descriptive such as language arts, mathematics, social studies and science, other more focused and interdisciplinary collections are possible.

Campbell, Melenyzer, Nettles, and Wyman (2000) stated that portfolios permit prospective teachers to well-known with these guidelines and standards and objectives which are developed for their course by the concerned university or institute, but also facilitate an in-depth understanding of them. Portfolio provides an included, purposeful and complete collection of assignments, materials, projects and objects and progress of prospective teachers in many areas of their courses (Ring & Foti, 2003).

2. Literature Review

2.1 Advantages of Portfolio

According to Nona Lyons (1998, p. 4), portfolio help prospective teachers in the areas of organizing tasks, setting of hypothesis about learning and provide self reflection opportunity. Similarly Robert Tierney et al (1991) stated that, portfolio allows prospective teachers to reflect where they are, what are their goals and objectives and at what level they have achieved them. Portfolio helps prospective teachers become more reflective about their teaching practice (Wade & Yarbrough, 1996).

Portfolio provides opportunities to prospective teachers to work with proper planning, designing their assignments, presentation records and their projects data in more systematic way. Bird, T. (1990) reported that developing portfolio promotes thoughtful thinking, provide a systematic, continuous way of planning and organizing, feedback and monitoring a teacher's professional development.

Portfolio in teacher training is a type of substitute assessment method that asks prospective teachers to show what they have learned and how they can connect theory with practical (Viechnicki, et.al, 1993). Similarly Lyons, (1998) concluded after studying many research studies on portfolio that, it is a significant reflective learning practice for prospective teachers. Furthermore, prospective teachers can use portfolio in a multiple ways and methods after getting their jobs (Ambach, 1996).

Portfolio is not used for collecting documents. It provides prospective teachers opportunities improve their teaching and also used more innovative strategies and techniques in better way. Lyons (1999) described the advantages of portfolio in these words: portfolios helps prospective teachers to coherent their teaching thinking and develop their teaching techniques. Van Wagenen and Hibbard (1998) stated that portfolio is a great advantage for both prospective and in-service teachers, because portfolio helps them in discovering important connections between teaching and learning.

2.2 Use of Portfolio in Teacher Education

Portfolio used in many ways in teacher education institutions such as development of assignments, presentation, lesson planning etc. According to Wade & Yarbrough (1996) portfolio in teacher education can be used for wide selection of resources, such as lesson plans, tests, prospective teacher assignments, self-assessment, formal assessment and for obtaining certificates/degrees.

In teacher training institutions the use of portfolio is a very multifaceted process, both in terms of content and organization and is inundated with frequent drawback. Successfully use of portfolio in training institutes depends on instructors' skills and with common vision and their methods of teaching according to needs and objectives of the tasks. The training how to use and implement portfolio is also must for instructors for the best possible implementation of portfolio (Smith & Tillema, 2001).

In many teacher education institutions use of portfolio is new and in the use of portfolio both instructors and prospective teachers have limited experience. According to Elshout-Mohr et al. (2003) both instructors and prospective teachers have limited experience how to use portfolio as an assignments.

Grant et al., (2007) stated that, in mostly teacher education intuitions instructors received training from their department and get expertise in the use of portfolio and they guide prospective teachers in the development, designing, and in the completion of portfolio so, that they become aware of their own idea of education and to

help them optimize those ideas. According to Lyons, (1998) portfolio provides an opportunity to prospective teachers to create something new and improve their professional development.

In teacher education institutions many subjects and activities are planned and organized for prospective teachers to not only increase their content area but also improve their pedagogy skills. Mostly activities are designed in that sense that prospective teachers get their own reflection and use of portfolio provide opportunity of getting reflection and feedback. According to Moss, (1997) successful teachers as those who continuously replicate critically about their own teaching and adjust classroom practice accordingly.

3. Objectives of the Study

Following were the objectives of the study:

1. To find out prospective teachers awareness towards the use of portfolio with regard to:
 - i. Gender
 - ii. Residence
 - iii. Qualification
2. To find out prospective teachers attitudes towards advantages and disadvantages of the use of portfolio

4. Hypotheses

Following hypotheses were made:

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in attitudes among prospective teachers towards use of portfolio with regard to their gender.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in attitudes among prospective teachers towards use of portfolio with regard to their residence.

H₀₃: There is no significant difference in attitudes among prospective teachers towards use of portfolio with regard to their qualification.

5. Significance of the Study

The study will be beneficial for prospective teachers of training institutions to develop and organize portfolio for themselves. Study will also helpful for instructors and prospective teachers of Regional Institutes of Teachers to explore and use portfolio in their teaching learning and assessment process. The study may contribute to improve professional skill and provides opportunities to prospective teachers to review their own work.

6. Methodology

To find out the attitudes of prospective teachers' descriptive type of research was consider most suitable. A survey method was adapted to gathered data in effective way. A written questionnaire was used.

In this study gender, residence and qualification of prospective teachers were independent variable. Prospective teachers' attitude toward portfolio was dependent variable.

The target population in this study consisted of prospective teachers of ADE program were enrolled during session of 2012-13 at RITE Haripur, RITE Abbottabad and RITE Manshera of Hazara division KPK Pakistan. 23 (male) prospective teachers from RITE Haripur, 30(female) from RITE Abbottabad and 27 (female) from RITE Manshera were selected as the population sample of the study.

To find out the attitudes of prospective teachers towards the use of portfolio in ADE program, the questionnaire was developed by applying survey method. Before administering questionnaire, it validity was checked by experts of PEACE Abbottabad. After amendment questionnaire consisted by two main sections with 10 to 11 items were developed to find out the attitudes of the respondents towards the use of portfolio and also find out the advantages and disadvantages of portfolio. Questionnaire was developed on five point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree to measure prospective teachers attitudes towards use of portfolio.

The self-administered questionnaire was sent to concerned sample respondents. In RITE Haripur researcher himself distributed and collected questionnaire with permission and cooperation of principal. For RITE Abbottabad and RITE Manshera it was sent on their postal addresses. Questionnaire was distributed to 80 respondents with a return rate (100%). Responses were used in statistical analysis by applying SPSS XV. Mean scores and *t*-test at 0.05 level of significance was used to find out whether data were statistically significant.

7. Results and Discussion

Table 1 indicates attitudes of prospective teachers towards the use of portfolio among female prospective teachers were more positive as compared to male prospective teachers. In addition there was highly significant difference as the *p* value (0.000) between male and female prospective teachers in the statement “Work on portfolio is a systematic approach” and “Preparation of portfolio requires creative skills”. While there was significant difference as the

p value (0.001) in the statement “Portfolio reflection helped me for further planning of teaching learning activities”. Moreover no significant difference was found among male and female prospective teachers in the areas of work on portfolio is a new experience, portfolio is a performance record, portfolio help in designing, portfolio as learning tool, portfolio help in lesson planning and portfolio provide chance for self assessment as the *p* values are (0.721), (0.982), (0.368), (0.965), (0.053) and (0.077) respectively.

Table 2 indicates prospective teachers’ attitudes towards the use of portfolio were very positive for all the statements. Means scores of the responses ranged from (2.94 to 4.88) with the highest scores for “Work on portfolio is a new experience”. The lowest scores were for “I have the ability to assess my portfolio through rubric”. The *p* values ranged from (0.968 to 0.143) and also confirmed that all respondents have same perception with statement 1 to 10 towards the use of portfolio and there is no significant difference in their attitudes with regards to their residence.

Table 3 shows prospective teachers’ attitudes towards the use of portfolio were very positive. Means scores ranged from (3.02 to 4.94) with the highest score for “Work on portfolio is a new experience” and lowest scores were for “I have the ability to assess my portfolio through rubric”.

The *p* values range from (0.014 to 0.877) also confirmed that all respondents have same perception with statement 1 to 10 towards the use of portfolio and there is no significant difference in their attitudes with regards to their qualification.

Table 4 reveals attitudes of prospective teachers towards the use of portfolio were very positive for all the statements, in the area of advantages and disadvantages with related as moderate. Mean scores for prospective teachers responses ranged from 3.38 to 4.83 with the highest scores for statement “Creating portfolio helped to reflect my progress at any time” and “Portfolio made me realize that it is possible to learn at any time and place”. The lowest mean scores were for “Creating portfolio is a time consuming activity” and “Creating portfolio increases my assignments load”.

Many research studies have been taken on the use of portfolio in teacher education programs (Mokhtari, Yellin, Bull, & Montgomery, 1996) suggests that use of portfolios in teacher education played a significant role in positively influencing and prospective teachers had positive attitudes toward using portfolios in their teaching learning process.

The development of a portfolio moves the possession of learning to the student (Winograd, Paris, & Bridge, 1991). While some other research studies (Barton & Collins, 1993; Paulson, Paulson, & Meyer, 1991) shows portfolio is useful for documents growth and have changed students attitude more toward organizing documents. Wolf, 1991; Shulman, 1988; Bloom & Bacon, 1995) conducted research studies on portfolio as display work. The findings of the studies reveals that portfolio as a display of best work of students.

Researches studies (Dochy & McDowell, 1997; De Rijdt et al, 2006) shows that portfolio improved prospective teachers’ reflective skills

Findings of the research study of (Meeus, Van Looy & Van Petegem, 2005) indicate that use of portfolio assignments in teacher education are best used towards the end of the course.

Kocoglut, Z (2008) conducted research study on the “Turkish EFL student teachers’ perceptions on the role of Electronic portfolios in their professional development” results of the study indicates that portfolio provides prospective teachers opportunities to find out their strengths and weaknesses in better way and in

systematic way. They were actually conceited towards the use of portfolios and what they had achieved.

Wolffe, R et al.(2013) research study on “portfolio as teaching model” shows that, the process of developing a portfolio, provided more systematic and rich data that assessed progress attainment of program goals while concurrently giving the teachers in the legion a more comprehensive, deeper admiration of their own professional growth.

Stolle, C et, al. (2005) concluded that, using portfolios as one component of a performance-based program that is accountable for pre-service teacher learning beyond traditional means of assessment. The results shows that portfolio is a personal document in which creativity and innovation demonstrate professional teaching characteristics and style that make the most of pre-service teachers’ possible. It helps to prepare prospective teachers for the reflection and analysis necessary for professional development and provides a systematic method for on-going improvement of teacher education program.

8. Conclusions

On the basis of findings of this research study it was concluded that use of portfolio in Associate Degree of Education (ADE) a pre-service programme of Regional Institutes of Teacher Education in Khyber Pakhtoon Khawa is a new experience for prospective teachers and developing of portfolio provided powerfully rich data that assessed prospective teachers to assess their own progress at any time and also provided deeper appreciation of their own growth. It was also concluded that the use and development of portfolio in ADE program is just time consuming activity and burden for prospective teachers.

9. Recommendations

In the light of the conclusions of the study the following recommendations were made in order to improve the use of portfolio in ADE program.

1. For all courses of ADE program the use and development of portfolio may be compulsory.
2. The use of portfolio may be considered an alternate method of assessment.
3. For effective use of portfolio in ADE program a comprehensive training for instructors may be arranged.
4. Prospective teachers’ professional capacity may be developed to assess their portfolio with the help of rubric.

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Table 1. Prospective teachers' awareness toward the use of portfolio with regard to gender

S.No	Statement	Gender	Number	Means	t-value	p-value (2-tailed)
1	Work on portfolio is a new experience for me	Male	23	4.65	-1.825	0.721
		Female	57	4.89		
2	Work on portfolio is a systematic approach for me	Male	23	4.09	-4.479	0.000
		Female	57	4.75		
3	Portfolio is a performance record of prospective teachers	Male	23	4.35	-0.022	0.982
		Female	57	4.35		
4	Portfolio appearance includes its designing	Male	23	4.22	0.905	0.368
		Female	57	4.02		
5	Preparation of portfolio creative skills	Male	23	3.52	-4.628	0.000
		Female	57	4.23		
6	Portfolio reflection helped me for further planning of teaching learning activities	Male	23	3.87	-3.083	0.003
		Female	57	4.40		
7	Portfolio is used as learning tool in the course of child development and method of teaching	Male	23	4.70	-0.044	0.965
		Female	57	4.70		
8	Record /material in portfolio enable me to review my lessons at any time	Male	23	4.43	-1.966	0.053
		Female	57	4.70		
9	Now I have a clear concept of how to compile and complete portfolio	Male	23	4.39	0.863	0.391
		Female	57	4.28		
10	I have the ability to assess my portfolio through rubric	Male	23	3.65	1.794	0.077
		Female	57	2.98		

Table 2. Prospective teachers' awareness toward the use of portfolio with regard to residence

S.No	Statement	Residence	Number	Means	t-value	p. value (2-tailed)
1	Work on portfolio is a new experience for me	Rural	46	4.78	-0.806	0.423
		Urban	34	4.88		
2	Work on portfolio is a systematic approach for me	Rural	46	4.57	0.042	0.967
		Urban	34	4.56		
3	Portfolio is a performance record of prospective teachers	Rural	46	4.35	-0.041	0.968
		Urban	34	4.35		
4	Portfolio appearance includes its designing	Rural	46	4.17	1.106	0.272
		Urban	34	3.97		
5	Preparation of portfolio creative skills	Rural	46	3.98	-0.699	0.486
		Urban	34	4.09		
6	Portfolio reflection helped me for further planning of teaching learning activities	Rural	46	4.28	0.458	0.649
		Urban	34	4.21		
7	Portfolio is used as learning tool in the course of child development and method of teaching	Rural	46	4.76	1.132	0.261
		Urban	34	4.62		
8	Record /material in portfolio enable me to review my lessons at any time	Rural	46	4.59	-0.705	0.483
		Urban	34	4.68		
9	Now I have a clear concept of how to compile and complete portfolio	Rural	46	4.24	-1.485	0.142
		Urban	34	4.41		
10	I have the ability to assess my portfolio through rubric	Rural	46	3.35	1.176	0.243
		Urban	34	2.94		

Table 3. Prospective teachers' awareness toward the use of portfolio with regard to qualification

S.No	Statement	Qualification	Number	Means	t-value	p. value (2-tailed)
1	Work on portfolio is a new experience for me	FA	50	4.94	2.513	0.014
		F. Sc	30	4.63		
2	Work on portfolio is a systematic approach for me	FA	50	4.66	1.695	0.094
		F. Sc	30	4.40		
3	Portfolio is a performance record of prospective teachers	FA	50	4.36	0.207	0.836
		F.Sc	30	4.33		
4	Portfolio appearance includes its designing	FA	50	4.14	0.742	0.460
		F.Sc	30	4.00		
5	Preparation of portfolio creative skills	FA	50	4.14	1.950	0.055
		F.Sc	30	3.83		
6	Portfolio reflection helped me for further planning of teaching learning activities	FA	50	4.26	0.156	0.877
		F.Sc	30	4.23		
7	Portfolio is used as learning tool in the course of child development and method of teaching	FA	50	4.78	1.667	0.099
		F.Sc	30	4.57		
8	Record /material in portfolio enable me to review my lessons at any time	FA	50	4.64	0.308	0.759
		F.Sc	30	4.60		
9	Now I have a clear concept of how to compile and complete portfolio	FA	50	4.22	-2.107	0.038
		F.Sc	30	4.47		
10	I have the ability to assess my portfolio through rubric	FA	50	3.02	-1.171	0.245
		F.Sc	30	3.43		

Table 4. Prospective teachers' awareness toward portfolio with regard to its advantages and disadvantages

S. No	Statement	Means	Standard Deviation	Degree
1.	Creating portfolio helped me to review my progress in a systematic way	4.64	.534	High
2.	Creating portfolio helped in developing my psychomotor skills	4.16	.462	High
3.	Portfolio made me realize that it is possible to learn at any time and place.	4.70	.664	High
4.	Creating portfolio helped to reflect my progress at any time	4.83	.414	High
5.	Developing portfolio helped to identify my strengths and weaknesses	4.46	.635	High
6.	Creating portfolio is valuable self-assessment tool to get feedback at any time	4.51	.657	High
7.	Creating portfolio is a time consuming activity	3.58	1.230	Moderate
8.	Creating portfolio helped to showing my planning and designing activities	4.43	.655	High
9.	Creating portfolio helped me to get good marks in internal and in external examination	4.46	.526	High
10.	Creating portfolio helped to improve my GPA and CGPA	4.35	.553	High
11.	Creating portfolio increases my assignments load	4.00	1.136	Moderate

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