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# Attitudes of course participants towards evaluation at the training courses of pedagogical staff

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# Abstract

The article demonstrates some of the results identified in a comprehensive study of the assessment process for certification of training courses. The study focuses on the attitude of the course participants towards the assessment, based on which recommendations were developed to improve the effectiveness of the assessment. Based on the views of the course participants who passed the assessment procedures, the impact and opportunities of assessment to improve learning outcomes are discussed. As part of the study, a Likert-scale survey questionnaire was taken from 2445 course participants who were assessed on training programs in different regions of the Republic of Kazakhstan from 2012 to 2020. According to the results of the survey, the explanatory statistical analysis showed that the majority of course participants experienced a positive effect of the assessment. Based on the parametric-correlation analysis, cognitive-action and emotional-motivational components were identified as factors influencing the attitude of course participants towards the assessment, and the issues of concern to the course participants in terms of the assessment process are explained.

Keywords: Teacher training courses, certification, assessment, assessment tools, objectivity, cognitive-action, emotional-motivational;

# 1. Introduction

The main condition for the effectiveness of reforms in the field of education is the increase of professional competence of teachers in accordance with the new requirements (Kurt, Genc Kose, Balik & Ozturk, 2018; Harangus, HorvÃįth & Szentes, 2020). In this regard, special attention has been given to the system of professional development. In 2011-2012, the system of professional development of teachers in the Republic of Kazakhstan was amended and modernized. Since 2012, the Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools Independent Educational Organization and the Faculty of Education of the University of Cambridge have developed three levels of teacher training courses: "Effective teaching and learning - basic level", "Schoolteacher leadership - basic level", "Teacher leadership in the pedagogical community - "Advanced Level" programs are being successfully implemented. The tiered approach to teaching is an innovative aspect of this project. The content of the programs is in line with the objectives of Kazakhstan's education development strategy and the recommendations of UNESCO and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. The professional development of in-service teachers is being performed based on the subject following the project of updating the content of secondary education since 2015, and on "development and examination of assessment tasks" programs since 2017 in line with the training program.

A special part of the change in the modernization of the system of training was the introduction of the assessment process for certification of learning outcomes (Lai & Zou, 2018; Dybikowska & Kazmierczak-Piwko, 2019). Previously, certification in the field of professional development had a default nature by confirming only the completion of the course. Now the assessment process is carried out to confirm the knowledge and skills acquired by teachers in the training course, the results of which define the possibility of a teacher being certified (Kurt, Genc Kose, Balik & Ozturk, 2018; Truong & Vuong Pham, 2020).

The subject of the study is the assessment process for certification, which confirms the results of training in the training course. As a result of cooperation between the "Center for Pedagogical Measurement" under AEO "Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools" and Cambridge (Cambridge International Examination Board and the Faculty of Education of the University of Cambridge), an evaluation system for teacher training has been developed. A team of appraisal experts were trained and specially certified as appraisers. During the assessment process, the Cambridge International Examinations Board provided external supervision over the accreditation of the assessment system. This allowed ensuring the reliability of the evaluation results. In 2016, the "Center for Pedagogical Measurements" was successfully accredited, and a team of experts conducts assessment on their own in the framework of training courses (Nazarbayev Intellectual Schools, 2020). In this sense, identifying learning difficulties expands the function of assessment by being a tool to guide learners to results besides providing a basis for deciding whether to recommend for certification at the end of a training course (Bibekov & Zhumykbaeva, 2020; Dagnew & Mekonnen, 2020).

In recent years, it is evident that the study of teachers' views on assessment has become more widespread and relevant at the international level (Devedzic & Devedzic, 2019). The teacher's approach to assessment, identifying the factors that affect it and determining its relationship to the teacher's learning outcomes, helps to improve assessment and learning. At the international level, the issue of teachers' views on general assessment has been widely studied, but it is worth mentioning that in the Republic of Kazakhstan it is not fully explored in terms of summative assessment within specific in-service training courses. Therefore, it is important to study the attitude of teachers to assessment in professional development courses (Sedofia & Kumassah, 2020; Jahangard, Rahimi, & Norouzizadeh, 2020).

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Gibbs and Simpson (2004) stated that the system of assessment of learners has a strong impact on the learning process and learning outcomes. Research on assessment shows that the evaluation of learning outcomes is the key to measuring the actual achievement of learners (Alexandron, Wiltrout, Berg & Ruipérez-Valiente, 2020). In addition, the assessment allows determining the quality of the educational process and curriculum. In Marcia Prieto and Gloria Contreras, there is a need to examine teachers' attitudes toward assessment since it also affects their assessment practices (Prieto & Contreras, 2008).

The long-term and large-scale research by Brown (204) helps to understand teachers' attitudes toward assessment (Brown, 2003, 2004, 2006). Research by Brown and colleagues suggests four types of teachers' conceptions of assessment: a) assessment creates school accountability, as it provides information on the operation of colleges, b) assessment makes learners accountable, measuring their academic performance, c) assessment improves education, providing clear and valuable information on the development and progress of learners and their learning and d) assessment is irrelevant since it is unfair for learners and an incorrect guide for teaching (Brown, 2004).

The study conducted by Gavin T.L. Brown & Gerrit H.F. Hirschfeld shows that assessment motivates learners to be responsible and that this has a positive effect on their learning outcomes. These results are consistent with theories of self-regulation and formative assessment. Therefore, the more learners perceive assessment as a tool to increase their responsibility for learning, the higher their learning outcomes (Brown & Hirschfeld, 2008; Mimoso, Bravo & Gomes, 2018). Therefore, learners' attitudes towards assessment affect the effectiveness of learning.

According to the studies of Wei et al. (2020) on assessment, learning outcomes can be divided as follows: cognitive, behavioral, and affective. It is concluded that assessment helps learners to clearly define learning objectives and increase learning outcomes (Wei, Saab, & Admiraal, 2020). Pettifor and Saklofske point out that pre-introduction of assessment criteria to learners is a way to focus assessment on effective practice (Pettifor & Saklofske, 2011).

Research by F. Javier Murillo and Nina Hidalgo demonstrates that the process of preparation for assessment reflects the effectiveness of assessment, which helps learners to master the content and successfully pass the final exams. Based on this conclusion, questions in this area were included in the questionnaire to determine the extent to which the process of preparation for assessment in professional development courses contributes to improving learning outcomes (Murillo & Hidalgo, 2020). Thus, research in the field of assessment shows that learners' attitudes to assessment have an impact on learning effectiveness.

## 2. Methods

Teachers who took part in the study were trained in 2012-2020 based on AEO NIS "Center of Excellence" and NCPD Orleu. To ensure the reliability of the survey results, the selected teachers were from different regions of the Republic of Kazakhstan, who have passed training courses in different years, in different programs. It covers 5 regions of the Republic of Kazakhstan - Almaty, Zhambyl, Turkestan, East Kazakhstan, Mangistau regions. In order not to be one-sided, the participants of the course programs in three main areas from 2012-2020 were selected as respondents:

- Level programs: I (advanced level) Teacher leadership in the pedagogical community», II (basic level) School teacher leadership, III (basic level) Effective teaching and learning.
  - Discipline programs within updating the content of secondary education.
  - Development and analysis of assessment tasks.

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The opinion questions and recommendations of the appraisal experts conducting the summative assessment within the advanced training courses were considered in the formulation of the survey questions. The questionnaire consisted of 23 questions. To determine the composition of the respondents in the survey, questions №1-8 were aimed at determining the following: the year in which the teacher took the course, in what courses, in what language, work experience, qualification category, and in what locality (village / how). The purpose of knowing the composition of respondents was to determine the impact of the proposed parameters on the attitude of respondents to the assessment. The items №9-23 of the questionnaire were designed to determine the attitude of respondents to the assessment based on the results of training courses using the Likert scale. Respondents were asked to comment on the 15 findings contained in items №9-23 of the questionnaire at levels 5,4,3,2,1. Here 5 - strongly agree, 4 - partially agree, 3 - neutral, 2 - disagree, 1 difficult to answer.

The survey was conducted anonymously in an online format to ensure the objectivity of the respondents' answers.

The survey questions were compiled in three focal points:

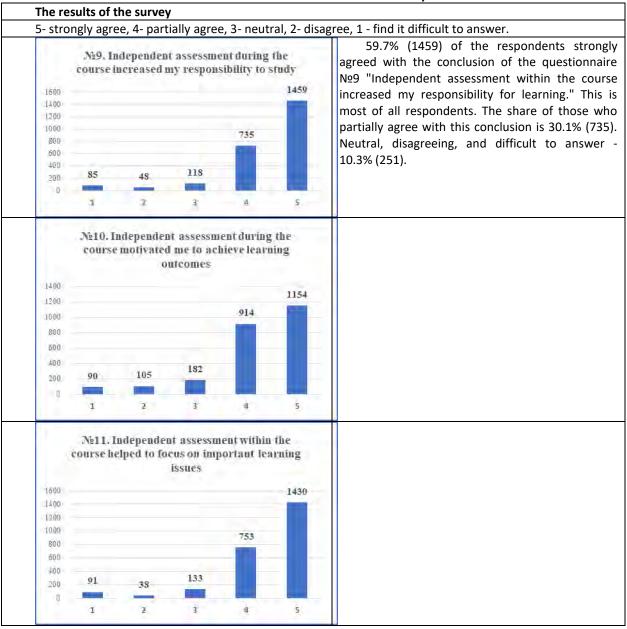
- the influence of the development of professional competencies of teachers in the process of preparation for assessment in the course.
- the impact of certification on the possibility to practice new knowledge and skills from the age of certification.
- to identify the influence of summative assessment on teacher's understanding of what was successfully acquired and what still needs to be improved.

To analyze the results of the survey taken among the learners of training courses "SPSS" Statistics 23.0. program was used. Explanatory statistical analysis and parametric correlation analysis were conducted to determine the attitudes of learners to the assessment and to determine the factors influencing their attitudes. The validity of the survey is mirrored in the correlation coefficients of the survey findings that are moderately and strongly positive.

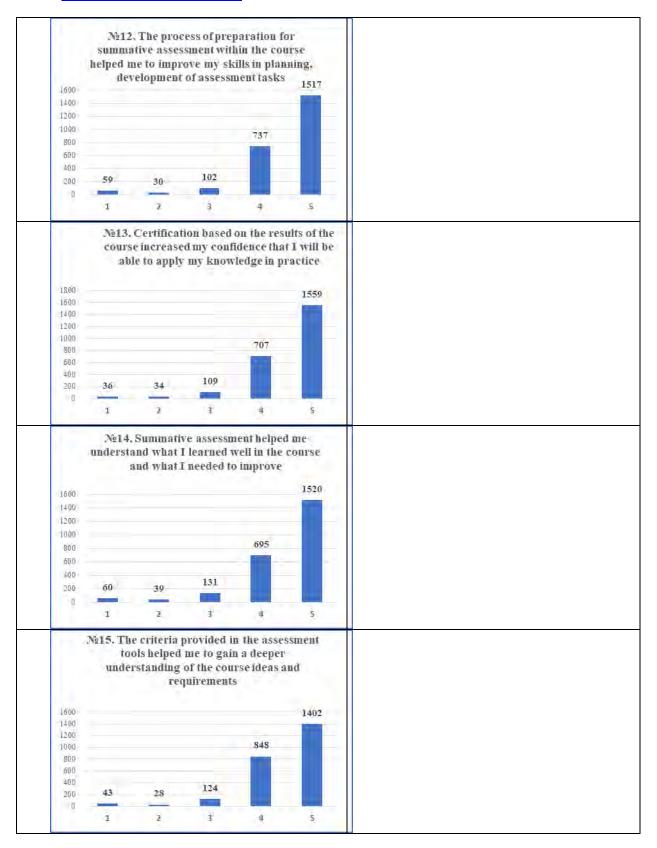
# 3. Results and discussion

The survey involved 2,445 in-service teachers who took part in training between 2012 and 2020. 24.9% of respondents took one course, 33.1% - two courses, 42% - more than three courses. Work experience 0-5 years - 17.8%, 6-10 years - 16.5%, 11-15 years - 19.6%, 16-20 years - 13.3%, more than 20 years - 32.8%, from urban area - 36.8%, from rural - 63.2%. Most respondents in this survey took more than two courses and demonstrate diversity in terms of length of work and involvement in rural/urban work experience. This ensures that the survey results are not one-sided. The results of the survey are analyzed and presented in Table №1.

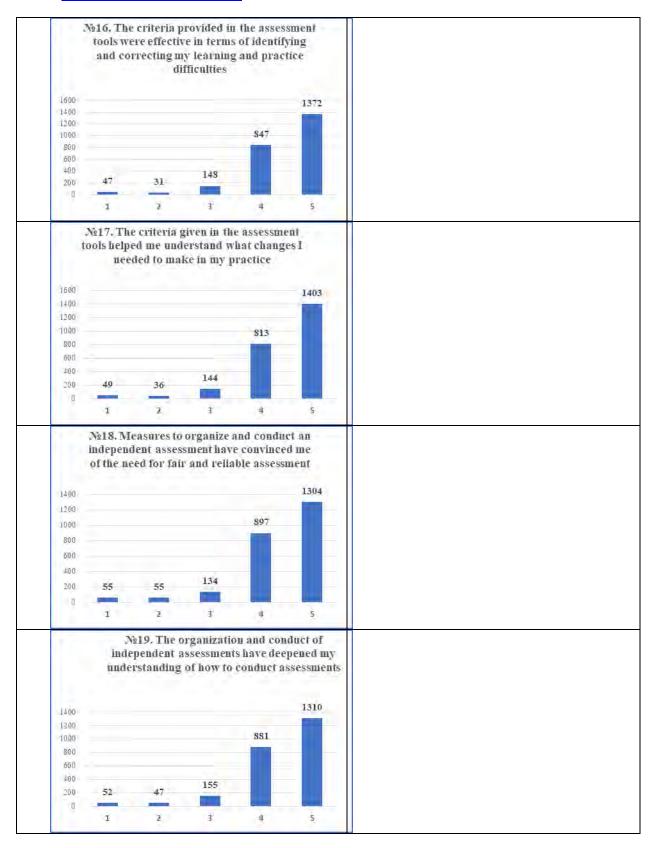
Table №1: The results of the survey



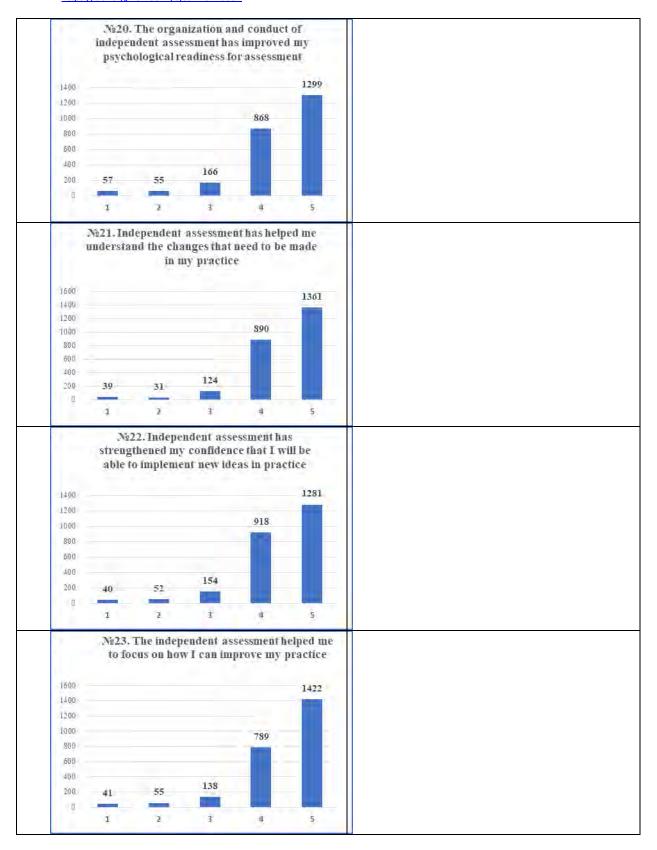
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Nº Table 2: Summary table of survey results

Scale	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
1	3%	4%	4%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%
2	2%	4%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%
3	5%	7%	5%	4%	4%	5%	5%	6%	6%	5%	6%	7%	5%	6%	6%
4	30%	37%	31%	30%	29%	28%	35%	35%	33%	37%	36%	36%	36%	38%	32%
5	60%	47%	58%	62%	64%	62%	57%	56%	57%	53%	54%	53%	56%	52%	58%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

According to the summary table of the survey results, around 57% of respondents strongly agreed with the conclusions No9-23, 34% - partially agreed, 6% - neutral, 2% - disagreed, 2% - find it difficult to answer. Although more than half of these respondents indicated that the assessment had a positive effect, it is shown that there were 43% of respondents who partially agreed and disagreed only with the positive effect of the assessment.

Therefore, a certain number of course participants do not always agree that summative assessment has a positive effect on professional development courses. At the same time, one must not disregard the proportion of those who disagree and find it difficult to answer. This may be a disagreement with the assessment itself. Therefore, we believe that it is necessary to identify the factors that affect the approach to assessment.

To achieve this goal, a correlation analysis of the answers of course participants based on the following parameters (conditions) was conducted:

- What course was passed in which the summative assessment was conducted.
- number of times a course participant was assessed after the course.
- In what language the course was held?

The goal was to identify how the course participants' attitudes towards assessment were affected by the type of the course they were assessed in and how many times they were assessed.

According to the correlation matrix of answers 9-23 shown in Table 3.1, even though the teachers who took the course in the program "Development and analysis of assessment tasks" demonstrate correlation coefficients 0.059, 0.062 in terms of the item №12 "The process of preparation for summative assessment within the course helped to improve my skills in planning, development of assessment tasks" and item №14 "Summative assessment helped me to understand what I learned well in the course and what I need to improve", and it shows that there is a weak positive relationship (weak positive correlation). Given that the course "Development and analysis of assessment tasks" is a subsequent course and based on the results of assessments in other courses, it can be concluded that the assessment conducted in 2017-2020, compared to 2012-2016, had an impact on teachers' performance and reflection on their experiences. From the correlation matrix it is evident that as the

number of assessments in advanced training courses increases, a positive attitude to assessment is being shaped. Studies by Rabin, Kalman, and Marco (2019) examine many conflicting studies on the relationship between learner's age and learning outcomes (Rabin, Kalman & Kalz, 2019). For example, while Guo and Reinecke (2014) found a positive correlation between age and mark, Breslow (2013) did not echo this result. Our study found a weak positive relationship between teacher age and learning outcomes. It was found that there is a strong negative relationship (strong negative correlation) between the language of learning of the training courses and assessment. This can be explained by the fact that the language in which teachers teach the course does not affect their attitude towards assessment.

Nº9 Nº10 Nº11 Nº12 Nº13 Nº14 Nº15 Nº16 Nº17 Nº18 Nº19 Nº20 Nº21 Nº22 Nº23 Cor. Type of course 004 800 019 059\*\* 016 062\*\* 027 031 017 ,014 023 800 027 001 012 taken Coef Cor. How many 038 Coef times Coarse Cor. language 069\*\* )78\*\* .067\*\* ,082 Coef

**Table №3.1:** Correlation matrix

Below there is a correlation matrix concerning the items Ng-23 that shows the correlation coefficient between the findings is in the range of 0.411g-20.701. This indicates that there is a positive above-average correlation between the survey items. At the same time, the fact that the correlation coefficients for all the items of the survey are consistently above average indicates that the findings are formulated in one direction and are valid in accordance with the goals.

	Table 1423.2. Correlation matrix															
		Nº9	Nº10	Nº11	Nº12	Nº13	Nº14	Nº15	Nº16	Nº17	Nº18	Nº19	Nº20	Nº21	Nº22	№23
Nº9	Cor. Coef	1,0	,545**	,639 <sup>**</sup>	,489**	,475**	,473 <sup>**</sup>	,469 <sup>**</sup>	,453 <sup>**</sup>	,493**	,506**	,496**	,490**	,496**	,514**	,501**
Nº10	Cor. Coef	,545**	1,0	,559**	,410**	,427**	,428**	,411**	,425**	,425**	,428**	,447**	,430**	,449**	,468**	,429**
Nº11	Cor. Coef	,639**	,559**	1,0	,495**	,495**	,504**	,483**	,462**	,516**	,487**	,486**	,509**	,496**	,507**	,513**
Nº12	Cor. Coef	,489**	,410**	,495**	1,0	,588**	,614 <sup>**</sup>	,543**	,539**	,539**	,495**	,518**	,496**	,512 <sup>**</sup>	,507**	,530**
Nº13	Cor. Coef	,475**	,427**	,495**	,588**	1,0	,640 <sup>**</sup>	,513**	,493 <sup>**</sup>	,549**	,493**	,513**	,501**	,500**	,518**	,516**
Nº14	Cor. Coef	,473**	,428**	,504**	,614**	,640**	1,0	,544**	,570**	,592**	,507**	,540**	,532**	,519**	,515**	,538**
Nº15	Cor. Coef	,469**	,411**	,483**	,543**	,513**	,544**	1,0	,608**	,635**	,548**	,566**	,552**	,555**	,540**	,518**
Nº16	Cor. Coef	,453**	,425**	,462**	,539**	,493**	,570**	,608**	1,0	,666**	,543**	,593**	,574**	,561**	,557**	,579**
Nº17	Cor. Coef	,493**	,425**	,516**	,539**	,549**	,592**	,635**	,666**	1,0	,570 <sup>**</sup>	,594**	,608**	,582**	,579**	,592**
Nº18	Cor. Coef	,506**	,428**	,487**	,495**	,493**	,507**	,548**	,543**	,570**	1,0	,667**	,696**	,592**	,600**	,571**

**Table №3.2:** Correlation matrix

<sup>\*\*.</sup> Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

<sup>\*.</sup> Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

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Nº19	Cor. Coef	,496**	,447**	,486**	,518**	,513**	,540**	,566**	,593**	,594**	,667**	1,0	,701**	,590**	,626**	,604**
Nº20	Cor. Coef	,490**	,430**	,509**	,496**	,501**	,532**	,552**	,574**	,608**	,696**	,701**	1,0	,613**	,635**	,653**
Nº21	Cor. Coef	,496**	,449**	,496**	,512**	,500**	,519**	,555**	,561**	,582**	,592**	,590**	,613**	1,0	,671**	,690**
Nº22	Cor. Coef	,514**	,468**	,507**	,507**	,518**	,515**	,540**	,557**	,579**	,600**	,626**	,635**	,671**	1,0	,715**
Nº23	Cor. Coef	,501**	,429**	,513**	,530**	,516**	,538**	,518**	,579**	,592**	,571**	,604**	,653**	,690**	,715**	1,0

Nº4 The Total Variance Explained table shows that the value of factor 2 is higher. Therefore, two main factors will be considered in this study.

Table №4: Total Variance Explained

Componen	Initial Eiger	nvalues	Cumulativ	Extract	uared Loadings Cumulative	
•	Total	% Of Variance	e %	Total	Variance	%
1	8,536	56,906	56,906	8,536	56,906	56,906
2	1,193	7,950	64,856	1,193	7,950	64,856
3	,929	6,195	71,051			
4	,687	4,580	75,631			
5	,619	4,125	79,756			
6	,427	2,850	82,606			
7	,397	2,644	85,251			
8	,353	2,354	87,605			
9	,328	2,189	89,794			
10	,294	1,957	91,751			
11	,288	1,918	93,670			
12	,266	1,776	95,446			
13	,250	1,668	97,114			
14	,235	1,569	98,683			
15	,198	1,317	100,000			

The first factor is 56.906%, the second factor is 7.950%. The explanation of the factors selected based on each conclusion:

**Table №5: Component Matrix** 

Nº	Survey items	Factor	
		1	2
9	Independent assessment during the course increased my responsibility to study	0,667	0,529
10	Independent assessment during the course motivated me to achieve learning outcomes	0,594	0,599
11	Independent assessment within the course helped to focus on important learning	0,687	0,529

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	issues		
12	The process of preparation for summative assessment within the course helped me to improve my skills in planning, development of assessment tasks	0,739	
13	Certification based on the results of the course increased my confidence that I will be able to apply my knowledge in practice	0,742	
14	The summative assessment helped me understand what I learned well in the course and what I needed to improve	0,743	
15	The criteria provided in the assessment tools helped me to gain a deeper understanding of the course ideas and requirements	0,770	-0,134
16	The criteria provided in the assessment tools were effective in identifying and correcting my learning and difficulties in practice	0,789	-0,191
17	The criteria given in the assessment tools helped me understand what changes I needed to make in my practice	0,787	-0,166
18	Measures to organize and conduct an independent assessment have convinced me of the need for fair and reliable assessment	0,777	-0,192
19	The organization and conduct of independent assessments have deepened my understanding of how to conduct assessments	0,797	-0,215
20	The organization and conduct of independent assessment have improved my psychological readiness for assessment	0,805	-0,210
21	Independent assessment has helped me understand the changes that need to be made in my practice	0,768	-0,120
22	Independent evaluation has strengthened my confidence that I will be able to implement new ideas in practice	0,810	-0,135
23	The independent assessment helped me to focus on how I can improve my practice	0,806	-0,146

**Table Nº5:** According to the Component Matrix table, we see that factor 1 covers all questions from Nº9 to 23. Questions Nº9, 10, 11, 15-23 are common to both factors 1 and 2. It can be noted that questions 12, 13, 14 belong only to factor 1. In addition, based on the coefficients shown in the table it is evident that the correlation of the survey questions with the factors is at different levels. It was found that the correlation with factor 1 questions is strong:

- №22 "Independent assessment has strengthened my confidence that I will be able to implement new ideas in practice" 0.810.
  - Nº23 "Independent assessment focused on how to improve my practice" 0.806.
- №20 "The organization and conduct of independent assessment have improved my psychological readiness for assessment" -0,805.

Thus, the assessment helps learners to increase their self-confidence in the implementation of new ideas in practice, to determine the direction of further development of their professional experience. In addition, the psychological condition of the course participants during the assessment procedures is identified as a matter of concern.

Only three questions were identified relating to 1 factor:

- №14 "Assessment helped me to understand what I learned well in the course, and what I need to improve" 0.743.
- №13 "Certification on the results of the course increased my confidence that I can apply my knowledge in practice" 0.742.
- №12 "The process of preparation for the summative assessment within the course helped to improve my skills in planning, development of assessment tasks" 0.739.

It is apparent that the assessment of the course results of the 1<sup>st</sup> factor will help to determine what new knowledge and professional competencies learners have acquired in accordance with the objectives of the program and to identify steps to further improvement in their practice based on new knowledge. In line with this, we draw conclusions about the relation of factor 1 to the cognitive-action component. In other words, the cognitive-action component - summative assessment involves determining the level of knowledge and skills developed at the end of the course, focusing on what knowledge and skills learners need to improve in accordance with the objectives of the course.

Questions N99, 10, 11, 15-23, including factor 1, are also related to factor 2. However, the correlation of questions on the two factors is different. To be specific, factor 1 is 8,536, and factor 2 is 1,193. A further examination of the correlation between factors 2 with items is below.

The largest correlation among the questions related to factor 2 was №10 - "Independent assessment within the course motivated me to achieve learning outcomes." The correlation of this question with factor 2 is 0.599. There are also questions №9 - "Independent assessment within the course increased my responsibility for learning" - 0.529, and №11 - "Independent assessment within the course helped to focus on important learning issues" - 0.529, which have a significant contribution to factor 2. The correlation of questions №15-23 with factor 2 is very small. In line with this, we consider factor 2 as an emotional-motivational component. The emotional-motivational component is associated with teachers' motivation to learn new knowledge, readiness to learn, and their views on transparency, reliability, and fairness of assessment procedures when it comes to in-service teacher training. The assessment of the results of the course includes the same requirements for all course participants and implies the creation of a favorable atmosphere for them during assessment procedures.

Rogers, provides several practical guidelines for conducting a fair assessment, providing equal opportunities for all participants:

- a) Use different assessment methods that are in line with learning objectives. In other words, to ensure the reliability of the assessment results through various assessment tools.
- b) Informing learners about the assessment criteria used, giving specific guidance on what is expected of them.
  - c) The use of assessment tools appropriate to the learner's type of learning.
- d) Provide each learner with a detailed description of the assessment results to ensure their accuracy
- f) Provide feedback to each learner individually to improve their learning and practice based on assessment (Rogers, 1996).

The recommendations provided by Rogers (1996) are valuable because they address the concerns of the course participants identified in this study. The main subject demanding high-quality education and objective assessment is a teacher (Cetinkayaa & Cetinkaya, 2020). Therefore, it is evident that if teachers' attitudes towards assessment are based on improving assessment, it will have a positive effect on learning outcomes. The results presented in this article are interpreted not as the result of a fundamental study, but as an intermediate result of improving the practice of assessment in training courses.

There were certain limitations while conducting this study. For example, the success/failure of an assessment also contributes to a teacher's attitude toward assessment. Thereby, this factor should have been considered during the survey. Since the survey was conducted online, it is not possible to

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evaluate the openness and honesty of the participants in terms of the responses to the survey questions. The pandemic conditions have also excluded the possibility of employing other methods of data collection, such as focus group interviews.

## 4. Conclusions

It is not accidental that during the survey, the cognitive-action and emotional-motivational components were identified among the factors related to the summative assessment within the training courses. The organization of teacher training courses in the Republic of Kazakhstan is carried out by the government as part of large-scale reforms in the field of education. In this sense, teachers may not be aware of the content of in-service training in advance. Therefore, since a teacher does not consciously choose a training course in accordance with his or her professional needs, they do not have a clear idea of what knowledge and skills are important to them. It will be effective if the content of the summative assessment and the assessment tool is chosen correctly in accordance with the expected results of the course and if they meet the future professional needs of the teacher. Otherwise, the summative assessment will negatively affect the course participant's ability to achieve the desired result during the course.

Among the factors of summative assessment, the high cognitive-action component indicates that learners may set assessment requirements higher than their professional needs. And this is a matter of concern, as there is reason to assume that the absence of a summative assessment in the training course might lead to the decrease of the level of achievement of the expected results. The high emotional and motivational component also provokes certain ideas. First, it is obvious that learners have a fear of assessment in the course. Measures to organize the assessment, i.e., the understanding of the assessment, improved the psychological readiness of learners for the assessment. Therefore, if a training course provides a summative assessment, learners should be given a clear idea of it at the beginning of the course. Summative assessment is an external motivation for the course participants. The importance of external motivation indicates a low level of internal motivation among the learners. It can be assumed that the learners themselves admit the need for summative assessment.

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