THE DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES AS THE PREDICTORS OF THE TEACHING COMPETENCIES OF ONLINE INSTRUCTORS IN THE UNIVERSITIES OF PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT

Instructors’ demographic variables plays an important role in their teaching competencies for quality instruction (Aramide, Ladipo, & Adebayo, 2015). The demographic variables includes instructors' qualification, age, years of teaching experience, and the number of professional training attended. The main aim of this research was to identify the influence of demographic variables on the teaching competencies of the instructors, teaching in online learning environment. The ‘online teaching competencies (OTCs)’ matrix was utilized as theoretical framework for current research. This study was conducted in the three universities of Pakistan those who are offering online programs and courses to their students. The sample of the study consisted of 250 instructors, teaching in online learning environment. Data was collected through a Five-point Likert scale questionnaire developed by Bigatel, Ragan, Kennan, May, & Redmond (2012). Multiple regression analysis was applied to analyze the data. Finding shows that the demographic variables ‘years of experience’ and ‘qualification’ influenced teaching competencies of instructor, as compared to their age and ‘number of professional trainings attended. Findings showed that ‘years of experience’, ‘number of professional training attended’ and ‘qualification’ are the predictor of instructors’ teaching competencies.

Keywords: Demographic Variables, Teaching Competencies, Online Education

RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

1. The demographic variable plays a significant role in instructors’ teaching competencies (Aramide, Ladipo, & Adebayo, 2015). In the current research, multiple linear regression analysis showed that some of the demographic variables had a strong influence on the teaching competencies as compared to the other demographic variables.

2. The results of the current study show that the independent variables ‘years of Experience’, and the ‘number of Professional trainings attended’ influences on the ‘community and Netiquettes’ component of the online teaching competencies. Therefore, these two variables help instructors in terms to improve their teaching competencies. The rest of the two independent variables ‘age’ and ‘qualification’ did not influence the ‘community and Netiquettes’ component of the teaching competencies. Thus, the demographic variables have an impact on teaching competencies of the instructors, that the experienced and professionally trained teachers have more quality in their teaching.

3. Moreover, the results indicated that the independent variables ‘years of experience’ and ‘qualification’ were the significant predictors of the ‘Active Teaching’ component of teaching competencies. Experience and qualified instructors bring quality in their teaching. Aslam, Rehman, Imran, and Muqadas (2016) stated that the demographic variable ‘qualification’ has the relationship with the instructors teaching competencies as compared to the experience of the instructors in terms of the effective learning of the students. On the other hand, Ahmad, and Khan (2016) conducted research and found that qualification does not affect the teaching competencies of the teacher.
Research Objectives

This study aimed to identify the influence of the demographic variables (qualification, age, years of teaching experience, and the number of professional training attended) on the teaching competencies of the instructor, teaching in online mode of education.

Online teaching is still the field of emerging and also in progress. Based on the findings of this research, the educational institution can plan workshops to improve the teaching competencies of their instructors. Various professional training institutions’ are keeping their efforts about how to improve the instructor competencies and qualifications to teach in an online mode of education. The tool used in this research, can help instructors to assess the level of their teaching competencies that will help them to teach online.

Methodology

The research study was quantitative in nature.

Sample

The sample of this research was 250 online instructors from three universities of Pakistan; one is a virtual university, and the other two offer online programs and courses.

Data Collection Tool

An adapted questionnaire developed by Bigetal et al., (2012) was used to collect the data about the competencies of teachers, teaching in the online mode of education. These competencies are community and netiquette, active teaching, instructional design, tools and technology, leadership, and instructions. The first section of the questionnaire consists of items about the information of demographic variables such as instructor qualification, age, year of experience, and numbers of professional training attended. The questionnaire consisted of 54 Likert scale type items scored on five-point options a) Not important b) Slightly important c) Fairly important d) important e) Most important. This questionnaire was used first time in Pakistan, therefore, it was mandatory to find out its suitability in the Pakistani context. For this purpose, the reliability analysis of the scale was conducted through Cronbach’s alpha, which is usually stated as the alpha coefficient of reliability (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison 2007). The questionnaire was administered to 50 instructors involved in online teaching. Cronbach’s alpha coefficient value 0.80, indicated the suitability of the questionnaire to use in Pakistan.

Results

Multiple Regression Linear regression analysis was applied for the data analysis. In the first component, ‘Community and Netiquette’ of the Online Teaching Competencies (OTC) the demographic variable ‘years of experience’ and ‘qualification’ influences the instructors ‘Teaching Competencies’. The instructors’ who have more ‘years of Experience’ and ‘Qualification’ they have the highest level of their teaching competencies in their teaching.
There is no influence of the independent variables ‘number of training events’ and ‘Age’ on the dependent variable ‘Community and Netiquette’.

In the second component ‘Active teaching’ of Online Teaching Competencies (OTC) the demographic variable ‘Experience’ and ‘Qualification’ have influence on the instructors ‘Teaching Competencies’. The instructors who have more ‘Experience’ and ‘Qualification’ have the highest level of their teaching competencies in their teaching and they can effectively teach their students in the light of their online teaching competencies.

In the third component ‘Leadership & Instruction’ of Online Teaching Competencies (OTC) the demographic variables ‘Number of the professional training events’ has an influence on instructors ‘Teaching Competencies’. Therefore, all four independent variables are non-significant predictors of the “Leadership & Instruction” component of teaching competencies.

In the fourth component ‘Tools and Technology’ of Online Teaching Competencies (OTC) the demographic variable ‘number of professional training attended’ influences the instructors ‘Teaching Competencies’ for detail. The instructors who have attended ‘more training events’ and have ‘qualification’ have to influence on the component ‘Tools and Technology’ of the Online teaching competencies.

In the last component ‘Instructional Design’ of Online Teaching Competencies (OTC) there is no influence of demographic variables ‘age, qualification, numbers of experiences, and number of training events’ influences the instructors ‘Teaching Competencies’.

**Findings**

Findings of this research highlighted that the demographic variables of instructors played a significant role in their teaching competencies. The demographic variables ‘years of experience’ has significant effect on the teaching competencies of the instructors as compared to the rest of the variables. The demographic variables ‘age’ has the least influence on the teaching competencies of the instructors. The ‘qualification’ of the instructors influenced on the ‘community and netiquette’ component of the online teaching competencies matrix. The merely ‘age’ of the instructors' predict on the ‘tools and technology’ component of the online teaching competencies matrix.

This research concluded that the demographic variables ‘qualification’ and ‘years of teaching experiences’ have an influence on the teaching competencies of instructor but their age, and the number of the ‘professional trainings attended’ did not affect the teaching competencies of the instructors. Albrahim (2020) found that the competencies and the skills of online teaching help them to plan and design professional development programs for instructors. Demographic variables can play an important role to improve the teaching competencies of the instructors.

In conclusion, the professional development institutions and administration of the university should develop effective professional development training programs for the online instructors. Future research might be conducted on the impact of the demographic
variables and instructors' teaching competencies to improve the students' learning and also to improve the quality of the teaching in an online mode of education.

References


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