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The Current Model of Literacy Assessment and Curriculum Evaluation in Elementary School Teachers (Presenting a Model with a Grounded Theory Approach)

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This research investigates the current state of literacy assessment and curriculum evaluation among primary school teachers.

Methods: A qualitative research methodology employing grounded theory was adopted, with the statistical population comprising individuals selected through purposive sampling. Data acquisition was facilitated through semi-structured interviews conducted with a cohort of twelve teachers, seven school administrators, and four supervisory figures in primary education. The ensuing data were subjected to analysis via open, axial, and selective coding techniques, with the validation and reliability of the findings being ensured through the application of Lincoln and Guba's criteria.

Results: This study delineated twenty-two principal concepts alongside seven thematic categories, which are articulated within a paradigmatic model. The model encompasses a central theme of consolidating curriculum power and authority within a broader macro context, in addition to causal conditions that encompass factors contributing to educators' limited engagement, expertise, and motivation in the evaluation of curricula, as well as elements pertinent to the curriculum itself. Contextual determinants such as psychological, cultural, and professional factors were also elucidated, along with enabling conditions for intervention, which include a focus on teacher training and professional development in curriculum evaluation, needs assessment, and support mechanisms. Furthermore, constraining conditions for intervention, such as individual impediments, structural obstacles, and economic challenges were identified, in conjunction with strategies aimed at empowering educators in curriculum evaluation, emphasizing individual motivation and cognitive competencies.

Conclusions: The results establish a foundation for the advocacy of Literacy Assessment among educators and administrators within primary educational institutions, while also yielding significant practical ramifications.

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Introduction

The educator, serving as the principal agent of the educational process, constitutes the most critical variable in the enactment of the curriculum, which significantly influences the efficacy of the educational system, determining its success or failure (Golombek & Johnson, 2021). Educators, as a fundamental pillar within the educational framework, in conjunction with various other components such as students, educational infrastructure, curricular content, pedagogical approaches, and assessment methodologies, collaboratively establish curriculum elements and enhance the quality of both the teaching and learning experiences (Goodwin et al., 2014). In this context, the educator assumes a crucial role in the overall success of the educational institution and the curriculum specifically, by weaving and integrating the various components of the curriculum (Yamtim & Wongwanich, 2014). The educators' understanding of lesson planning and its foundational principles holds significant importance within the realm of education. Within the domain of program design, one examines the fundamental components of a curriculum, while in curriculum planning, the methodologies for the application and execution of these components are explored; therefore, educators must possess familiarity with pertinent concepts to ensure the curriculum's effectiveness (Fathi Vajargah, 2013). The knowledge and concepts associated with this domain are encapsulated within the notion of "curriculum literacy," which is imperative for educators, given their pivotal role in the curriculum and its execution (Khamri, 2022).

Curriculum literacy is generally conceptualized as both horizontal and vertical communication, alongside the associated concepts within the curricula of a given course or subject (Fathi Vajargah, 2015), which pertains to foundational concepts of the curriculum and its constituents. Nonetheless, the notion of curriculum literacy encompasses a more expansive perspective of the aforementioned concepts (Yarmohamedian, 2016). In other terms, the notion of curriculum literacy transcends the mere preparation and formulation of curriculum outlines; it encompasses the anticipation of all activities that a student is expected to engage in under the guidance and leadership of an educator, both within the school environment and, at times, beyond it, to accomplish specified objectives. One dimension of curriculum literacy pertains to educators, as they are intrinsically linked to the act of education or teaching, which in turn is interconnected with the concept of curriculum. In this context, educators' curriculum literacy, encompassing their comprehension of curriculum components and their organizational methodologies within the curriculum, as well as their

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instructional practices that foster coherence and moderation among these elements and external realities, is essential. This also includes their knowledge of the principles and methodologies of curriculum organization at both the course and subject levels, given that the various levels of the curriculum maintain both horizontal and vertical relationships with one another (Fathi Vajargah, 2015). Ababaf et al. (2015) also conceptualize the curriculum literacy of educators as the degree of their comprehension and acquaintance with the components, objectives, content, and organization of the curriculum. To attain curriculum literacy, it is imperative that educators possess the capacity to conduct a judicious evaluation of the curriculum's components, an ability commonly referred to as "curriculum evaluation literacy" (DeLuca et al., 2016).

The curriculum evaluation literacy of educators pertains to their expertise and proficiency in assessing the curriculum, as well as the various elements and factors that influence it ((Rahman et al., 2018). In this framework, the concept of evaluation literacy encompasses a broad spectrum, including diverse types of evaluation, curriculum evaluation literacy, prevalent methodologies of curriculum evaluation, and the intrinsic nature of curriculum evaluation from the educators' perspective (Shawer, 2017). Curriculum evaluation constitutes a systematic inquiry aimed at enhancing the fundamental essence and substance of the curriculum, implementation processes, pedagogical strategies, and the curriculum evaluation literacy of educators is predicated upon categories such as the methodology of curriculum assessment and the evaluation of various aspects (including goal assessment, content evaluation, implementation strategy evaluation, and evaluation methodology), with a focus on curriculum evaluation models (Maba & Mantra, 2017). It is essential that all stakeholders engaged in curriculum design or program implementation actively participate in the evaluation process and demonstrate a commitment to it. This assertion implies that all designers, educators, administrators, and executive personnel must exhibit a dedication to the execution of the evaluation, while simultaneously ensuring the provision of the necessary conditions for their involvement in the evaluation process. Should the curriculum evaluation subsystem be developed without the engagement and input of educators, the resultant evaluation findings may fall short of being impactful (Fathi Vajargah, 2013). Through the utilization of curriculum evaluation literacy, educators can critically analyze curriculum frameworks and assess their alignment with the contextual implementation environment, thereby facilitating the interpretation and adaptation of curricula (Land et al., 2015).

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Among the components of literacy pertinent to the evaluation of teacher curricula are educational orientation, pedagogical competence, experiences in professional development, proficiency in integrating technology within the classroom, methodologies of engagement with students, and the utilization of student input (Mendoza et al., 2022); Acquiring knowledge of the contextual and background factors that influence the curriculum, understanding the processes and elements involved in curriculum planning, and familiarizing oneself with the content of the curriculum (Tuna & Başdal, 2021); Engaging in teacher-led research, alongside the capability to replicate and modify the curriculum (Troyer, 2019); Upholding principles of fairness and logic, familiarity with diverse methodologies of curriculum evaluation, awareness of contemporary scientific findings in the domain of curriculum, and a focus on the objectives outlined in various curricula (DeLuca et al., 2016); The capacity to adjust curricula, the skill to articulate and analyze curricula, and the ability to holistically assess the curriculum (Land et al., 2015); The aptitude to comprehend, articulate, and convey factual information, the capability to interpret and individually understand the surrounding environment, the proficiency to utilize information and innovate ideas, as well as the ability to employ and integrate systems to derive new interpretations from these systems (Önal, 2010) underscored the significance of professional development and training for educators.

The synthesis of research conducted both domestically and internationally illustrates that, given the critical importance of curriculum evaluation literacy within the educational framework and its significant role in pedagogical practices, its relevance for educators warrants careful consideration. A review of the pertinent research literature has established that the level of teachers' curriculum literacy is contingent upon the level of student learning outcomes (Khamri, 2022); The professional advancement of teachers (Buczynski & Hansen, 2010), the enhancement of requisite skills and attitudes for effective teaching (Ahn, 2016), and their empowerment (Ababaf et al., 2015) are fundamental factors. Furthermore, emphasis on content knowledge, mastery of the curriculum, and its evaluation has been explicitly and implicitly referenced in foundational documents such as the National Curriculum Document and the Basic Transformation Document. The elementary education level represents one of the most critical stages of education; consequently, addressing this level is essential for improving the performance and educational trajectories of learners across various levels and throughout different life stages.

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Nonetheless, despite the highlighted necessity and significance in diverse studies and its correlations with other educational factors, a noticeable research gap exists regarding the current status of teachers' curriculum evaluation literacy and the presentation of comprehensive research aimed at identifying and categorizing the components and indicators within this field. Addressing this gap is imperative. Hence, the objective of this research is to uncover the deficiencies in this area by analyzing the prevailing model of literacy assessment and evaluation pertaining to the curricula of primary school educators. Accordingly, the primary research question seeks to delineate the present model of literacy assessment and evaluation for primary school teachers.

Material and Methods

The objective of this study was to elucidate the contemporary model of literacy assessment and evaluation as perceived by educators in primary education; consequently, this investigation is characterized as qualitative in nature concerning its methodological approach and relies on foundational data analysis as its methodological framework. In this inquiry, the systematic methodology articulated by Strauss and Corbin was employed to facilitate grounded theory. Within the systematic methodology, it is imperative for the researcher to adopt a particular method and technique for analysis, executing a sequential coding process (open, axial, and selective) and ultimately presenting the findings within the same paradigmatic model. The population under investigation encompasses all principal stakeholders engaged in the curriculum development of elementary education, specifically; the educators, administrators of primary schools, and heads of primary education divisions within the Sistan and Baluchistan province. Through purposive sampling based on predetermined criteria, the requisite sample was identified, with the sampling process persisting until theoretical saturation of the data was attained. Consequently, the research participants comprised twelve educators (aligned with the research's objective, possessing a minimum of five years of teaching experience at the elementary level and at least a bachelor's degree), seven elementary school administrators (with an entry criterion of a minimum of two years in school management), and four individuals serving as heads of elementary education groups (with an entry criterion of at least two years of experience within the provincial elementary education group). To uphold the confidentiality of each participant throughout the research phases and adhere to ethical research standards, a distinct code was allocated to each individual. The

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instrument employed for data collection in this study was a semi-structured interview. The analysis of the data derived from the interview transcripts, given its significance within the data-based theoretical approach, was conducted concurrently with data collection across three stages: a) open coding; b) axial coding; and c) selective coding. The methodological framework established by Guba and Lincoln (1994) was utilized to ascertain the validity and reliability of the research. They identified four criteria—"reliability, transferability, dependability, and confirmability"—for assessing the scientific rigor of the study. In terms of dependability, the participant validation method was implemented. For transferability, the findings were presented to subject matter experts. Regarding reliability, an inter-coder agreement method was employed, and for confirmability, peer review and feedback mechanisms were utilized.

Results

In order to derive a theoretical model informed by the intrinsic characteristics of the prevailing model of literacy assessment and evaluation pertaining to primary school teachers' curriculum, the researchers engaged in discussions with key informants who possessed sustained theoretical and practical engagement with the research subject (literacy assessment and evaluation of primary school teachers' curriculum). Moreover, they endeavored to reflect upon the internal composition of these informants' values, attitudes, and experiences. Throughout the interviews, various concepts emerged and were unveiled through the comparative analysis of conceptual categories, subsequently guiding the researchers' cognition towards diverse theorems and propositions regarding the literacy model of assessment and evaluation of the curriculum for primary school teachers. Following the implementation phase, the recorded interviews underwent a meticulous line-by-line review, whereby they were conceptualized, categorized, and subsequently, based on identified similarities, conceptual interconnections, and shared features, open, axial, and selective codes (categories of concepts) were established. For the execution of this analysis, the methodologies proposed by Strauss and Corbin were employed (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). This model encompasses seven core categories, which are delineated below.

1- Core conditions

The core category represents the principal theme of the research, which, although it emerges from the research, is fundamentally an abstract construct (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). To ascertain the

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central phenomenon, the researcher engaged in a continuous process of modification, supplementation, integration, and development of categories through comparative reclassification (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). In the present study, the focal point of the existing model of literacy assessment and evaluation of the curriculum for primary school teachers was identified as "the aggregation of the power and authority of the curriculum in the macro domain." The findings are illustrated in Table 1.

Table 1. The core conditions of literacy assessment and evaluation of the curriculum for elementary school teachers

Instances of participants' statements (open code)	Axial code	Selective code
Weakness in compiling professional and specialized in-service courses	Lack of attention to the empowerment of teachers in the field of curriculum evaluation	Integrating the power and authority of the curriculum in the macro area
Lack of attention to the empowerment of teachers in the field of research and curriculum		
One-dimensional attention to education and teaching in the teaching profession and neglecting different aspects of the curriculum		
Ignoring organized coaching in the transfer of experiences between teachers in the field of curriculum		
Lack of attention to teachers' skills in simulating and adapting the curriculum		
Lack of educational discussion and neglecting to give skills to teachers in this field		
A one-sided and top-down approach to the education system	Centralism in curriculum design	
Lack of attention to local capacities and potentials in curriculum design		
The assumption of the teacher, as the executor of the curriculum		
Not using surveys and teachers' educational needs assessments in curriculum design		
Limiting the curriculum to books and not using multiple educational resources		
Sending numerous directives to schools in line with the implementation of the curriculum and preventing the development of in-school creativity in designing the curriculum	Quantitative approach in curriculum evaluation	
Ignoring the hidden curriculum and effective dimensions in the education evaluation process		
Conducting numerous festivals related to teachers' specialized knowledge and neglecting its effectiveness		
Limiting specialized and professional on-the-job training to increasing on-duty hours regardless of its quality		
Making the teachers' understanding of curriculum evaluation superficial and neglecting to add depth to the knowledge experiences of the curriculum		
The use of various data sources regardless of their participation in the curriculum by researchers and educational authors		
Paying attention to the competencies of new teachers in selection instead of maximum absorption		

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1-1 Insufficient emphasis on the empowerment of educators in the realm of curriculum evaluation: The literacy of educators concerning curriculum evaluation is delineated as the degree of their knowledge and understanding of the fundamental components, objectives, contents, and headings encompassed within the curriculum. A thorough examination of the definitions pertinent to educators' curriculum literacy reveals that it encompasses a comprehensive concept regarding the curriculum, integrating the triad of knowledge, practical application, and perspective in a synergistic manner. In alignment with the articulated definition of literacy, the empowerment of educators emerges as a critical element necessitating heightened focus and consideration.

2-1 Centralization in the formulation of curricula: As articulated by the participants, the centralized approach to curriculum focusses and design, which is administered from a hierarchical perspective and delegated to educators for implementation, is regarded as a significant factor that concurrently undermines the educators' comprehension of the curriculum. The participants' perspectives within this research highlight that the unilateral and top-down methodology of the educational system, which neglects local capacities and potentials in curriculum design, views educators merely as executors of the curriculum, disregards the inclusion of surveys and assessments of educators' educational needs in the curriculum design process, and confines the curriculum to a limited scope based on textbooks while failing to utilize a plethora of educational resources, including open-source materials, are all salient points raised.

3-1 Quantitative approaches in curriculum evaluation: The augmentation of educators' evaluative knowledge regarding the curriculum will be realized when attention is directed not solely toward the numerical abundance of programs but also towards the qualitative dimensions of diverse programs, with this quality encompassing the design of professional development courses, the recruitment and selection of personnel, and various departmental integrations; below are exemplars of statements provided by participants in this domain.

"Regrettably, I perceive that the initiation of education and training is fraught with challenges when the requisite knowledge and content competencies are overlooked in the entry processes, leading to discussions that are predominately centered around belief systems. Including the curriculum, it perpetuates the prior methodologies due to the realization that the criteria for entry in this context are fundamentally different from those for the continuation of practice, which invariably involves discussions beyond specialized subject matter. (Teacher, 11). In a similar vein, the teacher (10), who is presently pursuing a doctoral degree, articulated: "*We have experienced*

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numerous in-service programs and accrued in-service hours within the educational framework for several years; it is now imperative to ascertain the source of the issues preventing goal attainment, particularly in the domain of curriculum evaluation knowledge. It would be prudent to conduct a diagnostic assessment to identify the segments of the problem that most affect educators and students. Rather than merely addressing the superficial aspects and resolving issues on paper, we ought to investigate whether this problem is resolvable or if we are merely engaged in theoretical coursework. We are intellectually engaged in different challenges."

2- Causal Conditions

Causal conditions refer to those occurrences that influence phenomena (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). In other terms, it can be articulated that causal conditions encompass incidents and events that precipitate the emergence or advancement of the central phenomenon. In any scholarly inquiry, causal conditions denote the circumstances and concepts that exert an influence on the primary phenomenon. In the context of this research, we have systematically delineated the conditions and factors that serve as the principal determinants contributing to the present state of literacy assessment and evaluation within the curriculum for primary school educators in this statement. The findings are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Factors and causal conditions affecting the assessment and evaluation literacy of primary school teachers

Instances of participants' statements (open code)	Axial code	Selective code
Centralization of the educational system and the creation of a centralized curriculum	Non-participation of teachers in the lesson planning process	Casual conditions
Not holding workshops and seminars related to curriculum design and focusing on holding workshops related to curriculum implementation		
Neglecting curriculum design based on native and local requirements		
The way of looking at the teacher as a faithful executor of the programs presented in the educational system		
Weakness of teachers in the content knowledge of curriculum evaluation	Weakness of teachers' specialized knowledge in curriculum evaluation	
Weakness in teachers' pedagogical and educational knowledge		
Weakness of teachers in technological knowledge of curriculum and use of technology in curriculum evaluation		
Lack of familiarity with the curriculum planning process and its details		
Lack of familiarity with the elements of the curriculum and its compilation and explanation		
Research weakness of teachers and lack of establishment of research approach in the field of educational evaluation		
Limiting a teacher in a daily process and its implementation	Demotivation of teachers and attitudinal factors related to curriculum	
Ignoring the policies of the educational system and lateral evaluation		
Lack of support from the organization and relevant authorities		
Livelihood problems and prioritizing them compared to specialized subjects		

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The examination and scrutiny of the statements provided by the participants indicated that the conditions and causal determinants influencing the literacy regarding the assessment and evaluation of the primary school teachers' curriculum encompass the non-involvement of educators in the curriculum development process, deficiencies in the specialized knowledge of the teachers, a lack of motivation among teachers, as well as attitudinal factors pertinent to the curriculum.

1-2 Non-involvement of educators in the curriculum development process: Within this domain, indicators such as the centralization of the educational framework and the establishment of a centralized curriculum, the absence of workshops and seminars pertinent to curriculum design, and an emphasis on conducting workshops related to curriculum implementation, as well as a disregard for designing curricula that reflect local and contextual requirements, were identified. Additionally, the perception of teachers as mere implementers of the programs disseminated within the educational framework was noted.

2-2 Insufficiency of teachers' specialized knowledge concerning curriculum evaluation: Under this dimension in causal conditions, the inadequacies in teachers' content knowledge regarding curricula, deficiencies in pedagogical and educational knowledge, limitations in technological understanding of the curriculum and its technological applications, unfamiliarity with the intricacies of the curriculum planning process, lack of awareness regarding curriculum components and their formulation and elucidation, as well as the inadequacy of research skills among teachers and the insufficient incorporation of a research-oriented approach within the educational system, were identified. For instance, an expert (2) articulated:

"Regrettably, our educators possess only a cursory and fragmented understanding of the curriculum and its particulars, resulting in a superficial grasp of the subject matter. This inadequacy impedes their ability to integrate these concepts into their pedagogical practices, and consequently, when they do not perceive the practical application of these subjects, their interest in further learning diminishes."

3-2 Deficiency in teachers' motivation and attitudinal dimensions concerning the curriculum: This dimension encompasses constraints placed upon educators within a daily operational framework and its execution, neglect with respect to the policies of the educational system, insufficient support from relevant organizations and authorities, challenges related to livelihood, and the prioritization of these issues over specialized academic subjects. The factors influencing

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the current state of curriculum evaluation literacy constitute a macro index that is subject to the influence of numerous factors necessitating careful consideration.

3-Strategies

Strategies represent deliberate approaches formulated with a specific objective to govern and regulate the phenomenon of interest (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Strategies are predicated on actions and reactions aimed at controlling, managing, and providing feedback regarding the phenomenon under investigation. Such strategies are intentional and executed for particular reasons. The findings derived from the analysis of this segment of the research are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Literacy strategies for measuring and evaluating the curriculum of primary school teachers

Instances of participants' statements (open code)	Axial code	Selective code
Reducing centralism and valuing sub-systems in the educational system	Giving authority and power to teachers in the curriculum	Strategies
Addressing the capacities of the environment and regions in line with curriculum design		
Paying attention to the teacher as a curriculum evaluator		
Creating needs assessment in the field of curriculum from teachers		
Giving teachers authority and freedom of action in classroom activities related to the curriculum area		
Teachers' attention to curriculum elements and lesson plan		
Basing the promotion and improvement of teachers' practical knowledge in the field of curriculum	Attention to the individual motivation of teachers	
Encouraging teachers to build and pay for innovative ideas, commitment and expertise in the curriculum space		
Empowering teachers to benefit from available resources		
Using incentive mechanisms to create a tendency and willingness to review and revise curricula		
Paying attention to teachers to stay away from dogma and accept new curriculum ideas		
Teachers' attention to reasoning and following logic in curriculum analysis	Paying attention to teachers' cognitive and metacognitive skills in curriculum evaluation	
Following the patterns of criticism, criticism and critical thinking by teachers		
Paying attention to wisdom and analysis instead of domination and imposition in examining the dimensions of education		
Attention to the use of planning and self-regulation in the direction of teachers' learning		
The ability to solve problems as a way to review and provide solutions in the curriculum		
Creating interactive and communication platforms based on curriculum evaluation dimensions between teachers	Networking and discourse cultivation in the field of curriculum evaluation	
Establishing constructive communication between teachers and curriculum authors and planners		
Creating and grounding professional discourses between teachers in different regions and provinces		
Creating guidance and coaching fields in curriculum evaluation by experts		

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The comprehensive examination of the interviews and the perspectives of the research participants indicates that the literacy strategies pertaining to the measurement and evaluation of teachers' curricula can be systematically categorized into the previously mentioned four fundamental components, which will be elucidated in the subsequent sections:

1-3 Empowering educators within the curriculum framework: Among the strategies identified for enhancing the literacy of assessment and evaluation within the teachers' curricula, as per the insights gathered from the conducted interviews, is the empowerment of educators concerning curricular matters; this encompasses the elements of diminishing centralization, recognizing the value of sub-systems within the educational framework, leveraging the inherent capacities of local environments and regions in alignment with curriculum development, acknowledging the role of the teacher as a curriculum evaluator, and conducting a needs assessment specific to teachers within the curriculum domain. The delegation of authority and autonomy to educators regarding classroom activities pertinent to the curriculum domain was aimed at emphasizing the significance of curricular elements and instructional planning.

2-3 Fostering teachers' intrinsic motivation: The synthesis of participant viewpoints suggests that to effectively enhance the literacy of assessment and evaluation concerning teachers' curricula, it is imperative to prioritize their intrinsic motivation and personal circumstances. In this regard, participant feedback highlighted indicators such as incentivizing educators to innovate and financially supporting their creative endeavors, reinforcing commitment and expertise within the curricular context, empowering teachers to leverage available resources, and employing motivational mechanisms to cultivate a willingness to reassess and revise curricula. Additionally, there was a notable emphasis on encouraging educators to transcend dogmatic approaches and embrace novel curricular concepts.

3-3 Emphasizing teachers' cognitive and metacognitive competencies in curriculum evaluation: The foundational and systematic instruction of curricula through rigorous analyses constitutes one of the pivotal strategies that bolsters teachers' curriculum literacy. Within this framework, the research participants asserted that educators' focus on logical reasoning and analytical rigor in their curriculum evaluations, adherence to critical models of assessment, and the application of wisdom and analytical thinking instead of authoritarianism in educational analysis are crucial. Moreover, the utilization of planning and self-regulation to enhance teachers'

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learning, alongside the cultivation of problem-solving skills as a mechanism for analyzing and proposing solutions within the curriculum, is integral to this process. As an illustration, one educator (15) remarked: *"Critique and constructive criticism have become exceedingly rare within the teaching profession in our society. Numerous factors may contribute to this phenomenon. While I do not wish to delve into those factors, their implications are undoubtedly detrimental. The absence of practice in constructive critique and the acceptance of criticism impedes one's ability to contemplate various facets of a subject such as curriculum, let alone aspire to evaluate and subsequently enhance one's literacy in this domain. Thus, the foundational requirement for engaging in this activity is the capacity to critique and to embrace criticism, as well as to maintain an openness to evaluative feedback."*

4-3 Networking and professional discourse within the domain of curriculum evaluation: The establishment of professional networks and interactive exchanges constitutes a significant strategy for effective practice. Networking facilitates the optimal utilization of diverse individuals' capacities, encompassing their unique knowledge and experiential insights. Within this framework, the establishment of interactive and communicative platforms focused on curriculum dimensions among educators, fostering constructive dialogue between educators, authors, and curriculum developers, promoting and solidifying professional discourses among educators across various regions and provinces, and generating guidance and mentorship opportunities within the curriculum by specialists are all included.

4- Contextual factors

Contextual factors denote a constellation of distinctive attributes that characterize a phenomenon and serve as the contextual backdrop for occurrences or events associated with that phenomenon along a specific dimension in which the phenomenon resides (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The findings derived from the analysis of this segment of the research are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Contextual factors underlying the current model of literacy assessment and evaluation of teachers' curriculum

Instances of participants' statements (open code)	Axial code	Selective code
Individual attention and interest in educational topics and curriculum evaluation	Psychological factors of the teacher	Contextual conditions
Teacher's internal motivation to change working conditions		
The importance of work and the degree of individual attention to job impact		
Creativity and self-efficacy of a person to explain education and change it		
Teachers' self-confidence in order to take responsibility beyond the classroom		
The importance of the culture governing subjects and educational evaluation	Cultural factors	

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Effectiveness and influence of the group of colleagues and friends in line with career improvement		
The degree of attention to the atmosphere of cooperation and cooperation for the design of curriculum evaluation		
The level of attention to research and critical culture among teachers		
The amount of attention to creating professional learning communities in the field of curriculum evaluation	Professional factors	
The attention of the education organization to hold courses related to curriculum evaluation		
Appreciation of active teachers in the field of related festivals		
Making the link between curriculum and classroom assessment concepts		
Creating a professional view of education and professionalization of education		

The construct of teachers' curriculum assessment literacy does not emerge in isolation; rather, it is shaped within contextual conditions that exert influence upon it. Thus, elucidating the contexts that give rise to this educational sphere within schools necessitates a comprehensive understanding of the contextual factors that bear significance upon it. The category of contextual conditions, as illustrated in Table 4, encompasses contextual factors that are delineated into three distinct sections: psychological factors pertaining to the teacher and their circumstances, cultural factors alongside cultural indicators present within educational institutions, and social contexts, in addition to professional factors that pertain to the pedagogical mission of the educator, which is subsequently exemplified by the assertions of participants:

For instance, educator (8) articulated: *"I constitute one of those individuals who possess a keen interest in the intricate details of the curriculum I deliver, and to acquire such details, I engage with various resources, including teacher's guides, professional development journals, workshops, and so forth. In my perspective, if an individual exhibits a genuine interest in these topics, they will actively pursue the acquisition of knowledge and initiate a learning process."*

Alternatively, educator (3) asserted: "*The educational framework ought to convene scientific conferences and specialized forums dedicated to the curriculum and its intricacies, thereby assuming responsibility for the orchestration of such gatherings."*

5-Intervening factors (facilitators)

The mediating conditions or facilitators comprise structural elements that enhance the phenomenon and strategic approaches (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). In Table 5, as per the viewpoints

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of the participants, the elements that contribute to the enhancement of assessment and evaluation literacy concerning the teachers' curriculum have been presented.

Table 5. Intervening factors that facilitate literacy assessment and evaluation of the curriculum of primary school teachers

Instances of participants' statements (open code)	Axial code	Selective code
Holding in-service and knowledge-raising courses about curriculum evaluation	Attention to the professional development of teachers in the field of curriculum evaluation	Facilitating intervening factors
Dealing with individual research and research approaches by teachers		
Teachers' attention to the necessity of planning and continuity in achieving career goals and professional training		
Attention to courses related to curriculum evaluation and curriculum approaches in the teacher training course		
Paying attention to research-based internships and evaluation models in the curriculum of Farhangian University and Teacher Training, Article 28		
A survey of teachers about conducting in-service courses	Educational needs assessment	
Prioritizing the classroom and teachers' demands in curriculum evaluation		
Communicating between the professional needs of teachers and the real conditions of the work environment		
Instilling a sense of value and usefulness to teachers through surveys and valuing their professional activities		
Establishing laws to support efficient teachers at the policy level	Support and provision	
Supporting teachers in the school structure and supporting them		
Valuing the expertise related to education and curriculum in the organizational promotion of teachers		
Providing the necessary facilities and necessary supports in the direction of core research in the curriculum		

The proficiency in assessment and evaluation literacy among primary school educators is contingent upon a multitude of factors and remains susceptible to their influence. Participants articulated that the presence of certain determinants could enhance this competency within educators; notably, they identified three critical domains necessitating attention regarding the training and professional development of teachers: Curriculum formulation and its development, the assessment of educational needs pertaining to curricula, and the identification of teachers' requirements in the realm of curriculum design as well as support mechanisms. Participants asserted that educators must engage in curriculum design while simultaneously augmenting their professional literacy. Below are illustrative examples derived from the participants' remarks:

Teacher (7), who is concurrently an instructor at Farhangian University, articulated: *"I firmly believe that educators ought to be well-versed in research methodologies and self-development strategies, meaning they must possess the capacity to fulfill their individual needs; subsequently, the role of the educational institution and*

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administration is to provide support. It is imperative that the school and its leadership foster collaborative efforts aimed at this endeavor and furnish the requisite mechanisms and resources, ranging from technological systems and equipment to essential materials and content."

6- Intervening (limiting) factors

Based on the experiences shared by the participants, several organizational and human elements were identified as constraints on the learning of literacy, as well as the assessment and evaluation of the curricula employed by elementary educators. These elements hinder the efficacy of programs aligned with research objectives. The findings related to this aspect are delineated in Table 6.

Table 6. Factors limiting the literacy of primary school teachers' assessment and evaluation curriculum

Instances of participants' statements (open code)	Axial code	Selective code
Teachers' unwillingness to learn professionally	Individual barriers	Literacy challenges of measuring and evaluating teachers' curriculum
Low mastery of teachers regarding content knowledge and evaluation		
Weakness of teachers' scientific foundation in using the world's scientific materials in the field of curriculum evaluation		
Low experience of teachers and lack of familiarity with the mechanism of educational system and curriculum evaluation		
The desire for low teacher development and burnout		
Teachers' lack of mastery of educational expertise and critical activities		
Selection and recruitment of human resources with a weak scientific and specialized foundation	Structural barriers	
Resistance to change and departure from everyday work by teachers		
Weakness in using strategies to increase motivation for professional growth by the organization		
Ambiguity and confusion of teachers in their role due to high workload		
Assessing the performance of the organization's training groups in teaching details related to curriculum evaluation		
Top-down decision-making and teachers' lack of participation in this process		
Inadequacy of allocated budgets for holding festivals and encouraging teachers to increase awareness in the field of curriculum	Economic barriers	
The inappropriateness of the payment system and the lack of separation of teachers in terms of professionalism and knowledge		
The lack of teachers' income and their employment in side activities not related to the professional activity of teaching		
Lack of suitable and high-quality educational equipment to inform teachers		

The findings derived from the interviews indicate that the impediments and difficulties associated with teaching literacy, as well as the assessment and evaluation of the curriculum implemented by

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elementary school educators, can be classified into three primary categories: individual obstacles (this category encompasses the personal challenges that educators encounter throughout their professional journey and in the pursuit of literacy within the curriculum), structural (this category pertains to the challenges associated with administrative and organizational processes), and economic (this category addresses the challenges linked to budgetary constraints and economic structures); subsequently, illustrative examples of the participants' assertions will be elucidated:

The educator (9) asserts: *"Having accumulated 15 years of professional experience, I have ceased to pursue advancement and promotion. At the inception of my teaching career, I exhibited a strong desire for upward mobility, yet now, after nearly 15 years, my interest in advancement has diminished significantly due to the prevailing system and organization failing to recognize such advancements, and when promotion occurs, it appears to be predicated on interpersonal relationships rather than meritocratic principles."*

7- Consequences

The ramifications of the existing state of the literacy assessment and evaluation model concerning the curriculum of primary school educators are characterized by "Teachers' inadequate comprehension of the curriculum and their inability to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the curriculum"; this inadequacy results in educators grappling with challenges in understanding and appraising written curricula. These ramifications lay the groundwork for curricula falling short of their intended objectives, necessitating particular attention.

Paradigm model emerging from data

In the subsequent sections, a paradigm model representing the current framework of literacy assessment and evaluation concerning educators' curricula will be delineated through a thorough examination of the findings.

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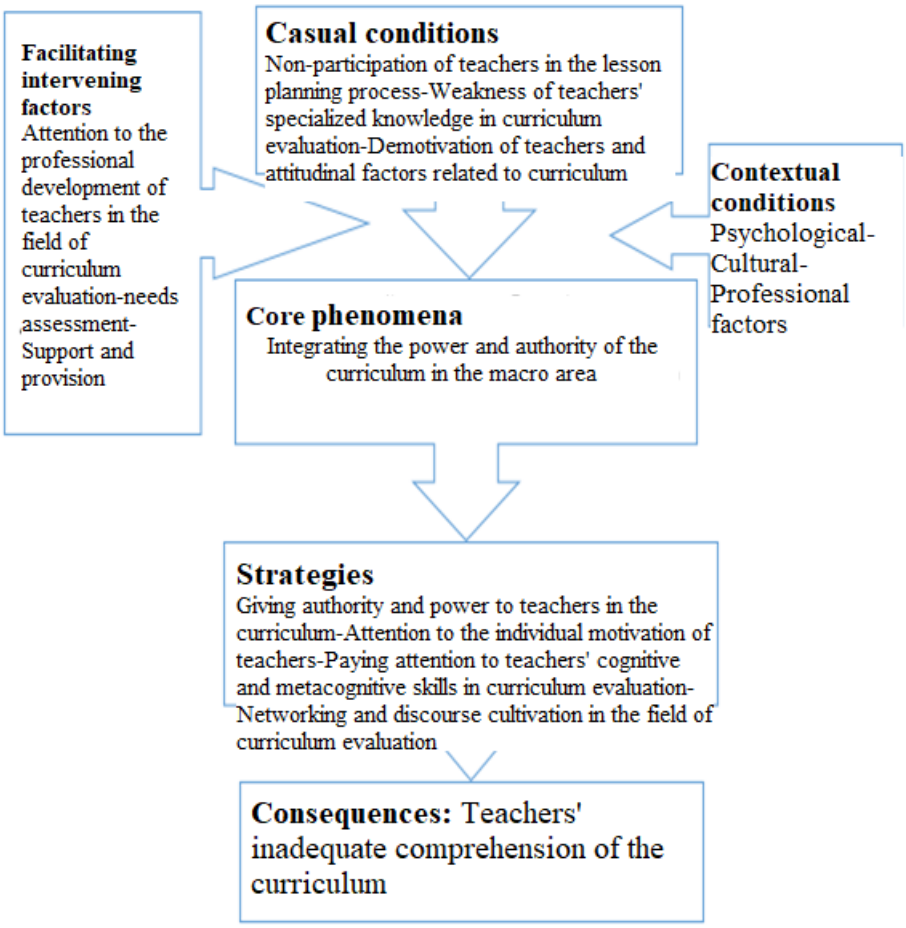


Figure 1. The current model of teaching literacy, measuring and evaluating the curriculum of elementary school teachers

Discussion

The educator occupies a crucial position in the overall efficacy of the educational framework and specifically the curriculum by interlinking and synthesizing the various components of that curriculum (Yamtim & Wongwanich, 2014). The proficiency of educators in lesson planning and its foundational principles holds a significant status within the realm of education. Within the domain of program design, the integral elements of a curriculum are examined, while in the sphere of curriculum planning, the methodologies for applying and executing these elements necessitate that educators possess familiarity with pertinent concepts for ensuring the curriculum's success (Fathi Vajargah, 2013). The curriculum literacy of educators lays the groundwork for enhanced execution of curricula by the educator. Hence, this research undertook an examination of the

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prevailing state of educators' literacy concerning curriculum assessment and evaluation to uncover the latent dimensions of this variable.

In accordance with the research methodology, which is predicated on theoretical frameworks, the data was utilized, and the outcomes were delineated in Strauss and Corbin model. The findings indicated that the central conditions of this investigation were derived in relation to the primary research issue surrounding the centralization of curriculum authority within the macro context and the insufficient focus on the professional development of educators. This phenomenon, as inferred from open coding, pertains to centralism and a centralized educational system, resulting in the exclusion of educators from involvement in the curriculum, relegating them to mere implementers of the curriculum, while concurrently, the professional development of these educators has been rendered marginal. This dimension encompasses themes such as the lack of emphasis on the empowerment of educators within the curriculum domain, the centralization of curriculum design, and the quantification of education. Fostering attention to divergent structures in the design of curricula within educational institutions, along with the concept of a school-centered curriculum, facilitates avenues for educator participation. The findings from this segment of the research are congruent with the conclusions drawn by Mendoza et al. (2022), Datu et al. (2021), and Zhao et al. (2017).

Causal factors that directly contribute to the focal category of curriculum assessment and evaluation literacy, as depicted in Table 2, comprise several principal categories, including; the lack of teacher involvement in the planning process, the inadequacy of teachers' specialized knowledge regarding the curriculum process, and the motivational deficiencies of educators alongside attitudinal factors linked to the curriculum. In other words, educators frequently lack the requisite knowledge for effective curriculum design, while educational structures do not facilitate or encourage educators' participation in the curriculum design process. It can be asserted that enhancing educators' literacy in curriculum assessment and evaluation necessitates a consideration of numerous indicators and components that cultivate an environment conducive to educator dynamism and engagement. The findings from this segment of the research align with the findings of Land et al. (2015) and Fino et al. (2022).

The literacy of teachers regarding curriculum assessment and evaluation is shaped by a multitude of factors; thus, both individual and environmental elements serve as the foundational components

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of teachers' curriculum assessment and evaluation literacy. An examination of the participants' responses in the study revealed that dimensions such as psychological factors pertinent to the teacher, cultural influences associated with the teacher, and social environmental conditions, alongside professional factors, are deemed essential to the foundation of teachers' curriculum assessment and evaluation literacy. The outcomes derived from this segment of the research are congruent with the findings reported by Pianta et al. (2022), Zhao et al. (2017), and Mira Leal et al. (2013).

As articulated by the participants, while the literacy concerning curriculum assessment and evaluation among teachers is a product of causal factors and is subject to contextual influences, it is imperative to acknowledge the significance of human agency and active participation. The strategies identified by the participants aimed at enhancing the literacy of assessment and evaluation within the context of the schools encompass four primary approaches: empowering teachers within the curriculum framework, acknowledging the individual motivational factors of teachers in their professional endeavors, emphasizing the cognitive and metacognitive skills of teachers in lesson planning, and fostering networking and discourse-oriented opportunities within the curriculum domain. In essence, there is a pronounced emphasis on school-centered curriculum development, taking into account the organizational structure of schools during curriculum planning, providing requisite incentives for teacher involvement in curriculum design, focusing on the cognitive capabilities and metacognitive awareness of educators, and establishing mechanisms for the proliferation of such capabilities, as well as mechanisms that facilitate networking and collaboration among teachers within educational institutions. The findings of this section of the research align with the studies conducted by Zhao et al. (2017), Land et al. (2015) and Fino et al. (2022).

The evaluation of the interviews and feedback provided by the research participants, in conjunction with the analysis of the contextual landscape of the schools, indicated that factors such as prioritizing the professional development of educators in lesson planning, conducting assessments of educational needs, and establishing supportive environments contribute to the enhancement of assessment literacy among teachers. Furthermore, dimensions such as individual impediments, structural challenges, and deficiencies in budgetary and economic resources were identified as

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barriers to teachers' engagement in curriculum design, thereby obstructing the literacy of teachers' assessment and evaluation practices concerning the curriculum. The findings from this segment of the research are aligned with the studies conducted by Datu et al. (2021) and Land et al. (2015). The ramifications stemming from the prevailing condition of the literacy model pertaining to the assessment and evaluation of the primary school teachers' curriculum manifest as "an inadequate comprehension of the curriculum by educators and a consequent inability to conduct a holistic evaluation of the educational paradigm"; this predicament engenders challenges for teachers in the execution and delivery of the prescribed written curricula. Such ramifications underpin the failure of curricula to achieve their intended objectives, a circumstance that warrants particular scrutiny.

The formulation and planning of curriculum represent one of the pivotal dimensions influencing the operational activities within educational institutions, effectively delineating the strategic framework of the education system. Leading educational and training frameworks are increasingly seeking approaches to curriculum planning that are centered on the school context; however, the existing school curricula are inadequately aligned with the specific demands of the educational environment and the collaborative engagement of both learners and educators, a factor of notable significance within our national context.

Although the literacy of teachers in planning may appear to diverge from anticipated standards, it is imperative that initiatives, however modest, are undertaken to enhance the efficacy of the educational system and facilitate the development of localized curricula, thereby alleviating the current excessive focus on standardized school curricula. In the realm of devising school-based curricula, the initial priority must be the professional development of teachers in the domains of literacy and curriculum evaluation. Upon reviewing the extant research landscape and its various dimensions, it is not an overstatement to assert that, within our nation, the literacy of teachers regarding curriculum evaluation has largely been overlooked. In the endeavor to institutionalize curriculum literacy among educators, the preliminary step involves discerning the current state of teachers' curriculum literacy alongside its defining indicators. Consequently, this research aims to elucidate the existing model of teachers' performance evaluation literacy. It is anticipated that this inquiry represents a modest advancement toward the enhancement of the curricula within the education system of Iran.

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Data availability statement

The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article/supplementary material, further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author.

Ethics statement

The studies involving human participants were reviewed and approved by ethics committee of Islamic Azad University.

Author contributions

All authors contributed to the study conception and design, material preparation, data collection and analysis. All authors contributed to the article and approved the submitted version.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

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