

Online and Offline Assessment Methods in Higher Education: A Revisitation of EFL Teachers' Perceptions and Practices

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Abstract—Assessment is a key component of the educational spectrum and engages teachers in evaluating students' performance through various methods. During the Covid-19 pandemic, teachers employed various assessment methods through the online mode of teaching and learning; now, at the beginning of the end of the pandemic, teachers are back to practicing offline assessment methods. This study identifies English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers' perceptions of online versus offline assessment methods in higher education. Furthermore, it targets the best skill-wise assessment methods and constraints that teachers can use when applying EFL assessment methods in both online and offline learning modes. To achieve the study objectives, a descriptive-diagnostic approach was applied; the data were collected from 61 EFL teachers through a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The findings show that EFL teachers perceive assessment methods in the online mode of learning as being of a medium level of utility, whereas they perceive assessments in the offline mode of learning as being highly useful. Furthermore, statistically significant differences were found between the EFL teachers' perceptions of the utility of assessment methods in offline and online modes of learning; the teachers perceived assessments as being significantly more useful in the offline mode of learning. It was also found that the greatest constraints of EFL assessment methods in an online learning mode are issues of cheating and impersonation, insufficient exposure to information technology, and lack of awareness of assistive evaluation tools. In the offline learning mode, the greatest constraints of EFL assessment methods are a lack of awareness of assessment methods and classroom management. In light of these new findings, a set of recommendations is suggested for further research.

Index Terms—EFL, teachers' perceptions, assessment, online/offline learning, higher education

I. INTRODUCTION

Assessment measures the competence level of a learner in any educational setting, and English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers are no exception. In the EFL context, assessments measure the ability of a learner to use the target language. Language assessment is therefore important because it helps teachers decide how to approach the teaching and learning process (Oz & Atay, 2017). Inbar-Lourie (2017) has argued that the way language assessment is performed must be varied to encourage a more formative understanding. Teachers use various methods and practices to assess their learners' performance. The assessment methods commonly practiced in EFL classes include, but are not limited to, discussions, questions, assignments, presentations, quizzes, observation, portfolios, journals, projects, and peer assessment. The overuse of traditional assessment methods and the evaluation of micro-skills is a trending pattern in language teachers' practice. This was demonstrated in a series of studies by Frodden et al. (2004) which reported that teachers tend to employ quizzes as they are practical assessment tools. Similar results were found in López and Bernal (2009) and Cheng et al. (2004). These studies were conducted exclusively to investigate teachers' perceptions of language assessment in either offline or online modes of learning. The present study therefore aims to explore EFL teachers' perceptions and practice of online and offline assessment methods in higher education. It identifies EFL teachers' perceptions of online and offline assessment methods, and aims to determine the best skill-wise assessment methods while discovering the constraints that teachers face when applying EFL assessment methods in both online and offline learning modes. This study is intended to achieve the following objectives:

1. To identify EFL teachers' perceptions of online and offline assessment methods in higher education.

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2. To investigate any significant differences in EFL teachers' perceptions of online and offline assessment methods.
3. To determine the most widely-practiced EFL skill-wise online and offline assessment methods from the teachers' point of view.
4. To explore the constraints EFL teachers face when they apply online and offline assessment methods.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

EFL teachers' assessment practices are a common subject of discussion among English language teaching (ELT) practitioners. Teachers employ various assessment-related methods and practices in their classrooms. The Covid-19 situation forced teachers to employ a variety of new assessment methods, and now, at the beginning of the end of the pandemic, teachers have returned to practicing offline assessment methods in their classrooms. Al-Samiri (2021) in the context of the Covid-19 situation in Saudi Arabia, reports that "in a brief timeframe, the whole country began the transition to remote learning platforms, whether it was broadcast on particular channels or shared online ventures like Telegram, Zoom, Teams, WebEx, and Blackboard" (p. 148). Bailey et al. (2015) asserted that shifting assessment from an offline mode to an online one is difficult because "the temptation or commonly used approach is to mirror face-to-face strategies and practices" (p. 112). In an online mode of learning, the term 'online formative assessment' is defined as an assessment in which students use online tools to assess themselves (Yilmaz et al., 2020). Yoestara et al. (2020) explored how prospective English teachers felt about using online assessment methods. However, the perception of these instructors was based on their knowledge, not on how it was used in the classroom. The current study fills an important research gap: very few studies have been conducted on teachers' perceptions of online and offline assessment practices. It is essential to identify teachers' views on online formative assessments in order to find ways to make necessary and additional improvements (Remmi & Hashim, 2021). In the context of ESL and EFL tertiary-level classrooms, many studies have been conducted to understand teachers' assessment practices (Cheng et al., 2004; Cheng & Wang, 2007; Cumming, 2001). In the same context, Brookhart and Durkin (2003) were of the opinion that extending research on classroom-based assessment to the university context is of vital importance as fair assessment practices can enhance learners' motivation. Sikka et al. (2007) investigated teachers' beliefs and their use of assessments. The findings marked a need for inclusion and use of various assessment practices in faculty professional development programs. Zhang and Burry-Stock (2003) investigated the assessment procedures of 297 instructors across a range of subject areas and teaching levels, as well as how they perceived the relationship between teaching experience and measuring training. The findings of this study revealed an increase in the variety of objective-type questions used in classroom assessments along with a rising concern for assessment quality due to its association with high performance levels. There were also differences in teachers' assessment practices in relation to content areas. Sahinkarakas (2012) explored the role of teaching experience in teachers' opinions of language assessment. In this study, Sahinkarakas asked language instructors with different levels of teaching experience to define 'language assessment' using a metaphor. Then, she examined the metaphors and categorized them into themes. Four main themes were revealed: assessment as 1) a formative tool, 2) a summative tool, 3) something agitating, and 4) a sign of self-efficacy. Mertler (1998) conducted a study to explore teachers' assessment practices in the state of Ohio and see whether they used traditional or alternative types of assessment in their classrooms. Six hundred and twenty-five K-12 teachers from various grade levels and with different levels of experience participated in the study. The findings show that teachers' assessment procedures vary significantly depending on their level of experience and their backgrounds at different educational levels. These findings highlight the importance of addressing the real assessment procedures and knowledge requirements of instructors at the various grade levels. Shim (2009) used questionnaires and interviews to examine teachers' opinions and regular tasks with regard to classroom-based English language assessment. The results of the study indicate that teachers did not put some of the assessment methods into practice, despite being aware of these assessment methods. In addition, assessment was affected by other factors that the teachers had no control over, like classroom size, student strength, heavy teaching loads, issues relating to the central administrative office of the education system, and a lack of funds for foreign language teaching. Muñoz et al. (2012) studied 62 Colombian teachers' beliefs about student assessments; the findings reveal a gap in the perceptions and practices of the teachers which must be bridged through teacher training programs. The present study, however, was carried out with the aim of identifying and diagnosing EFL teachers' perceptions and practice of online and offline assessment methods in higher education. To achieve the objectives of the current study, the following research questions were framed.

Research Questions

1. What are EFL teachers' perceptions of online and offline assessment methods in higher education?
2. Is there any significant difference between EFL teachers' perceptions of assessment methods in online and offline modes of learning?
3. What are the most practiced online and offline assessment methods in skill-wise terms from the teachers' points of view?
4. What constraints do EFL teachers face when applying online and offline assessments methods?

III. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

The current study investigates and diagnoses EFL teachers' perceptions and practices of online and offline assessment methods in higher education. The researchers applied a descriptive-diagnostic approach.

B. Population and Sample of the Study

The study was applied to EFL teachers at Najran University, Saudi Arabia. The population of the study included (N= 85) male and female teachers at the College of Languages and Translation, Preparatory Year Deanship, Applied College who teach English as a foreign language for several purposes, including English for special purposes, general English and English for academic purposes. The EFL teachers held Bachelor's, Master's degrees, and doctorate degrees. They came from different backgrounds and were of different nationalities: Saudi Arabian, Jordanian, Indian, Pakistani, Sudanese, Yemeni, Cameroonian, and Egyptian. In addition, their levels of teaching experience (measured in years) varied.

The researchers administered the study instrument to all EFL teachers at Najran University (N= 85) in the 2021–2022 academic year. The electronic link to the instrument (the questionnaire) was shared with the study population through mail and WhatsApp. The link remained available for two weeks. The collected responses reached N=61, or 71.8% of the study population. Table 1 shows the distribution of the study sample according to gender and years of teaching experience.

TABLE 1
STATISTICS OF THE STUDY SAMPLE

Category		Freq.	%
Gender	Male	34	55.7
	Female	27	44.3
	Total	61	100.0
Years of experience	1-5	22	36.1
	6-10	21	34.4
	Above 10	18	29.5
	Total	61	100.0

Participation in the study was completely voluntary. Consent was acquired at the beginning of the electronic questionnaire. The population were asked to confirm that their participation was voluntary, and that their completion of the questionnaire entailed that they had agreed to participate in the study. Furthermore, they were assured that the data would be treated with the highest level of confidentiality and used only for academic purposes related to the current study.

C. Study Instrument

The study instrument included a closed-item questionnaire. This was developed based on a review of the relevant literature. It covered the assessment methods used to assess students' EFL learning in offline and online modes of learning. Ten assessment methods were included (discussion, questioning, observation, presentation, journals, quizzes, portfolios, peer assessment, projects and assignments). Moreover, the questionnaire included other sections on the most widely-used EFL skill-wise assessment methods in both online and offline learning modes.

D. Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 12 EFL teachers from among those who had completed the questionnaire. Each participant was asked at the end of the closed-item questionnaire whether they were willing to participate in an interview. The interview questions targeted two main points: constraints on the application of EFL assessment methods in online and offline classrooms and suggestions for overcoming those constraints. The interviewees who had volunteered for interviews were contacted immediately after the completion of the closed-item questionnaire. After arranging the details of the date, time and place of the interviews, the male interviewees (N= 9) were met in-person in their offices whereas interviews with the female participants (N=3) were conducted by telephone. The interview questions were pre-prepared and validated; however, the interviewees were given some liberty to ask questions and elaborate on their answers wherever possible. Each interview lasted ten minutes, on average. The interviews were recorded and transcribed.

E. Validity and Reliability

The questionnaire and the semi-structured interview responses were verified by measuring face validity through a panel of judges (N= 6). The judges checked whether the instruments could measure what they were intended to. Furthermore, they checked issues related to wording and language. The judges approved the initial versions of the instruments, and their suggestions concerning amendments, rearrangements, and the merging and rewriting of some items were considered. The reliability of the questionnaire was calculated after administering it to a pilot sample (N= 20). Cronbach's alpha was then calculated: a value of 0.87 was achieved. Accordingly, the instrument was considered valid and appropriate to the objectives of the study.

F. Statistical Processing

A number of tests were used to analyze the collected data. The data for the first research question *What are EFL teachers' perceptions of online and offline assessment methods in higher education?* was computed using means, standard deviations and ranks. The second research question *Is there any significant difference between EFL teachers' perceptions of assessment methods in online and offline modes of learning?* was answered using a paired-samples t-test. The third research question *What are the most practiced online and offline assessment methods in skill-wise terms from the teachers' points of view?* was answered using frequencies and percentages. The fourth question *What constraints do EFL teachers face when applying online and offline assessments methods?* was answered using content analysis. The respondents' answers to the interview questions were studied and categorized according to some emerging themes. Finally, a grading system was used to grade the five-point Likert scale as follows: 1–1.80 = very low, 1.80–2.60 = low, 2.60–3.40 = medium, 3.40–4.20 = high, 4.20–5 = very high.

IV. RESULTS

A. Results for the First Research Question: What Are EFL Teachers' Perceptions of Online and Offline Assessment Methods in Higher Education?

Table 2 shows the means, standard deviations and ranks of EFL teachers' responses on using online or offline assessment methods in higher education.

TABLE 2
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS OF EFL TEACHERS' RESPONSES ON USING ASSESSMENT METHODS ONLINE AND OFFLINE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Mode of learning	Item	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Rank	Level
Online	I find <u>discussion</u> useful and easy to implement.	61	2.93	1.209	9	Medium
Offline			4.36	.484	5	Very high
Online	I find <u>questioning</u> useful and easy to implement.	61	3.43	1.087	4	High
Offline			4.44	.592	1	Very high
Online	I find <u>assignments</u> useful and easy to implement.	61	3.31	1.232	6	Medium
Offline			4.33	.724	6	Very high
Online	I find <u>presentation</u> useful and easy to implement.	61	3.67	1.028	2	High
Offline			4.07	.873	8	High
Online	I find <u>quizzes</u> useful and easy to implement.	61	3.72	1.019	1	High
Offline			4.38	.582	4	Very high
Online	I find <u>observation</u> useful and easy to implement.	61	2.60	1.359	10	Medium
Offline			4.43	.499	2	Very high
Online	I find <u>portfolios</u> useful and easy to implement.	61	3.10	1.012	7	Medium
Offline			4.05	.384	9	High
Online	I find <u>journals</u> useful and easy to implement.	61	3.57	1.040	3	High
Offline			3.57	.884	10	High
Online	I find <u>projects</u> useful and easy to implement.	61	3.08	1.201	8	Medium
Offline			4.08	.822	7	High
Online	I find <u>peer assessment</u> useful and easy to implement.	61	3.34	1.413	5	Medium
Offline			4.30	.782	5	Very high
Online	Total	61	3.28	.819		Medium
Offline			4.20	.429		High

Table 2 shows that EFL teachers' perceptions of the utility of assessment methods in the online mode of learning were, on average, at a 'medium' level ($M=3.28$, $SD=0.819$). Participants' responses varied from 'medium' to 'high' and were not homogenous, as indicated by the relatively high standard deviations. The utility of quizzes and presentations was perceived as 'high' ($M = 3.72$, 3.67 , $SD = 1.019$, 1.028 , respectively). However, EFL teachers perceived the utility of observation and discussion as 'medium' when assessing their students online ($M = 2.93$, 2.60 , $SD = 1.209$, 1.359 , respectively).

Table 2 shows that EFL teachers' perceived the utility of assessment methods in the offline mode of learning as 'high' ($M = 4.20$, $SD = 0.429$). These results indicate that EFL teachers find offline assessment methods to be more useful than online assessment methods. The participants' responses varied from 'high' to 'very high' and were homogenous, as indicated by the low standard deviations. Questioning and observation were perceived as the most useful assessment methods, with a 'very high' response on average ($M = 4.44$, 4.43 , $SD = 0.592$, 0.499 , respectively). However, portfolios and journals were perceived by EFL teachers as the least useful method of assessing their students offline ($M = 4.05$, 3.57 , $SD = .384$, $.884$, respectively).

B. Results for the Second Research Question: Is There Any Significant Difference Between EFL Teachers' Perceptions of Assessment Methods in Online and Offline Modes of Learning?

Table 3 depicts the results of the paired samples t-test to check for any significant differences between the EFL teachers' perceptions of using assessment methods in online and offline modes of learning.

TABLE 3
PAIRED SAMPLES T-TEST STATISTICS

Pair	Mean	N	Std. deviation	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Online	3.28	61	.819	-10.622-	60	.000
Offline	4.20	61	.429			

As Table 3 shows, there were statistically significant differences between the EFL teachers' perceptions of the utility of assessment methods in online and offline modes of learning: the study sample's responses were significantly in favor of the utility of assessments in the offline learning mode. These results can be attributed to the EFL teachers' relatively lower level of experience in the online mode of learning: because of its novelty, they were not familiar with it, and had not received enough exposure to online learning tools. They therefore encountered difficulties when using them. A complete transfer to teaching and learning online was urgently necessary due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and therefore neither teachers nor students were fully ready for the experiment.

C. Results for the Third Research Question: What Are the Most Practiced Online and Offline Assessment Methods in Skill-Wise Terms From the Teachers' Points of View?

The researchers extracted the frequencies and percentages of the study sample's responses on EFL assessment methods, which were based on the four skills of the English language (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) in both online and offline modes of learning. Table 4 shows the results.

TABLE 4
SKILL-WISE ASSESSMENT METHODS IN ONLINE AND OFFLINE LEARNING MODES

Skill	Online								Offline							
	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing	Listening	Speaking	Reading	Writing
Assessment	Frq.	%	Frq.	%	Frq.	%	Frq.	%	Frq.	%	Frq.	%	Frq.	%	Frq.	%
Discussion	34	0.56	39	0.64	23	0.38	14	0.23	36	0.59	45	0.74	49	0.80	31	0.51
Questioning	35	0.57	42	0.69	35	0.57	22	0.36	41	0.67	38	0.62	46	0.75	37	0.61
Assignments	29	0.48	23	0.38	28	0.46	42	0.69	23	0.38	19	0.31	30	0.49	38	0.62
Presentation	19	0.31	35	0.57	22	0.36	29	0.48	23	0.38	30	0.49	26	0.43	22	0.36
Quizzes	42	0.69	29	0.48	39	0.64	39	0.64	39	0.64	35	0.57	39	0.64	41	0.67
Observation	22	0.36	20	0.33	24	0.39	10	0.16	35	0.57	32	0.52	29	0.48	27	0.44
Portfolios	16	0.26	23	0.38	7	0.11	17	0.28	13	0.21	13	0.21	29	0.48	35	0.57
Journals	15	0.25	13	0.21	12	0.20	17	0.28	9	0.15	12	0.20	16	0.26	29	0.48
Projects	13	0.21	13	0.21	20	0.33	24	0.39	13	0.21	20	0.33	20	0.33	32	0.52
Peer assessment	18	0.30	23	0.38	18	0.30	17	0.28	23	0.38	29	0.48	33	0.54	35	0.57

Table 4 shows that the most commonly used assessment methods in online classrooms were quizzes for listening (69%) and reading skills (64%), questioning for speaking skills (69%), and assignments for writing skills (69%). The least commonly used online assessment methods were projects for listening skills (21%), journals and projects for speaking skills (21%), portfolios for reading skills (11%) and discussion for writing skills (23%). Table 4 also shows that the most commonly used assessment methods in offline classrooms were questioning for listening and reading skills (67%), discussion for speaking (74%) and reading skills (74%) and quizzes for writing skills (67%). The least commonly used offline assessment methods were projects for listening skills (21%), journals for speaking (20%) and reading skills (26%) and presentations for writing skills (36%).

These results indicate that the methods used by EFL teachers to assess each of the four skills were dependent on the mode of learning. The results in Table 4 suggest that the respondents chose assessment methods for each skill according to whether they were operating in an online or offline mode of learning, which may be due to the effect of their level of experience in teaching in online or offline modes.

D. Results of the Fourth Research Question: What Constraints Do EFL Teachers Face When Applying Online and Offline Assessments Methods?

One of the main aims of this research was to gather information from teachers in a more direct way through semi-structured interviews. The interviews were recorded, transcribed and their content analyzed. As Nartey (2013) stated, content analysis is "a key methodological apparatus that enables researchers to understand the process and character of social life and to arrive at a meaning, and it facilitates the understanding of the types, characteristics, and organizational aspects of documents as social products in their own right as well as what they claim" (p. 122). In the process of content analysis, the researchers analyzed the transcripts carefully and classified themes and responses into certain categories.

The study sample's responses to questions about the constraints that EFL teachers face when applying assessment methods online and offline were gathered and their content analyzed. The main topics were highlighted and then classified under main themes. The results of the analysis reveal several constraints when applying assessment methods in the EFL context. Table 5 illustrates the constraints according to the mode of learning.

TABLE 5
CONSTRAINTS OF EFL ASSESSMENT METHODS IN ONLINE AND OFFLINE LEARNING MODES ACCORDING TO THEIR OCCURRENCES

	Online	Offline
Constraints of EFL assessment methods	Issue of cheating and impersonation	Lack of language assessment knowledge
	Information technology exposure	Classroom management
	Lack of awareness of assistive evaluation tools	Ensuring validity and reliability of assessment methods
	Seriousness toward learning	Anxiety
	Absence of non-verbal communication	Intrinsic/extrinsic motivation
	Evaluation of subjective type of questions	
	Reluctance	
	Demotivation	
	Classroom management	

As Table 5 shows, the greatest constraints on EFL assessment methods in an online learning mode identified by the interviewees were issues of cheating and impersonation, information technology exposure, lack of awareness of assistive evaluation tools, the seriousness of learners' attitude toward learning, the absence of non-verbal communication, the evaluation of subjective questions, reluctance, demotivation, and classroom management.

The constraints in an online learning mode are provided by the interviewees in the following excerpts:

(T1) Students take exams without any surveillance, so this gives them lots of opportunities for cheating and impersonation and thus the results will not reflect their real performance.

(T2) We have many issues, including IT issues, lack of exposure, and students not being serious.

(T3) You cannot observe the facial expressions of the students. It's difficult to correct practical writing mistakes. Also, the Internet is sometimes interrupted.

(T4) There is lack of face-to-face interaction. The students' target language is too poor. They cannot participate in discussion and questioning. They are reluctant to participate in learning.

(T5) Students' passive participation, late submissions, failure to complete assignments and interest levels are not up to the required standard.

(T6) There is a lack of training for new strategies and the use of technology for assessments.

According to Table 5, the greatest constraints of EFL assessment methods in an offline learning mode included lack of awareness of assessment methods, classroom management, ensuring the validity and reliability of assessments, and anxiety.

The constraints on EFL assessment methods in an offline learning mode are described by the interviewees in the following excerpts:

(T1) Well, there are numerous limitations or constraints, like: a) the passive participation of students; b) large class sizes; c) late or no submission of assignments; d) students' complaints being biased; e) the lack of a common rubric to assess students' performance; and f) students' inability to participate in peer assessment due to issues like shyness, motivation, et cetera.

(T2) Okay, students feel demotivated to participate in discussions. We cannot follow portfolio practice because students aren't serious.

(T3) There are many problems, such as: a) change in examination pattern; b) teachers themselves have to put a lot of effort into preparing and planning the assessments; c) a lack of training; d) the cost of investment; and e) a lack of assessment policy.

(T4) The tendencies for students to be absent, uninterested, unprepared or inactive in the lecture are a few hurdles.

(T5) There are many constraints like discipline, proctoring, maintaining justice, et cetera. Some assessment methods aren't applicable in my case, such as observations, portfolios and peer assessment.

(T6) Hesitation, anxiety, low confidence, lack of preparation: students are less interested in doing the assignments and quizzes, et cetera.

V. DISCUSSION

The results suggest that the EFL teachers on average perceived the utility of the assessment methods in the online mode of learning as 'medium'. The participants' responses varied from 'medium' to 'high' and were not homogenous as indicated by their relatively high standard deviations. This is in parallel with Abduh's (2021) finding that EFL teachers reported a neutral attitude toward online assessment methods. In addition, most of the teachers' statements of opinion about the strategies and procedures used in online assessment were favorable. However, the majority of the items pertaining to difficulties with online assessments received high or very high scores, which indicates that the teachers encountered significant constraints when evaluating students online. As for the assessment methods, quizzes and presentations were perceived as highly useful, while observation and discussion were considered least useful online assessment methods. EFL teachers' perceived offline assessment methods as highly useful, which supports the view that teachers feel comfortable and well-practiced when employing traditional assessment methods. These results indicate that EFL teachers perceive offline assessment methods to be more effective than online assessment methods. The responses varied from 'high' to 'very high', and their low standard deviations show that they were homogenous. Questioning and observation were the most commonly practiced assessment methods, with a 'very high' average

response, while portfolios and journals were the least commonly practiced offline assessment methods. This is because the two methods have been recent developments in assessing students and have not been in practice especially in offline/in-class mode of teaching. Statistically significant differences were found between the EFL teachers' perceptions of the utility of offline and online assessment methods: the teachers were significantly more in favor of the offline mode of learning. These results can be attributed to the EFL teachers' relative lack of experience in the online mode of learning because of its novelty: they were not familiar with it and had not received enough exposure to it. The complete transition to online teaching and learning was urgently necessary due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and this did not give teachers and students time to prepare for the change. The most commonly used online methods of assessing the four main English language skills were quizzes for listening and reading skills, questioning for speaking skills, and assignments for writing skills, while the least commonly used online assessment methods were projects for listening skills, journals and projects for speaking skills, portfolios for reading skills, and discussions for writing skills. The results also reveal that the most commonly used offline methods of assessing the four main English language skills were questioning for listening and reading skills, discussions for speaking and reading skills, and quizzes for writing skills. The least used offline assessment methods were projects for listening skills, journals for speaking and reading skills, and presentation for writing skills. These results indicate that EFL teachers select methods of assessing the four main English language skills according to the mode of learning they are operating in. The results suggest that the respondents chose methods of assessing each skill according to the mode of learning; this was a result of their relative level of experience in offline and online modes of learning and exposure to online learning tools. The findings also reveal that the greatest constraints of EFL assessment methods in an online learning mode were considered by the participants to be cheating and impersonation. This is consistent with a Canadian study which investigated the attitudes of 412 faculty members to violations of academic integrity: just over half of the respondents felt it was getting worse and that their institutions' ineffective rules and actions were one of the reasons for this issue (MacLeod & Eaton, 2020). The findings of the current study are further supported by those of Baijnath and Singh (2019). They worked on a number of studies from over fourteen countries examining dishonest practices such as cheating in higher education, perceptions of these practices, and possible solutions to such phenomena. They concluded that cheating is a global academic problem and technology has become a major enabler of it. Therefore, universities should play a crucial role in efforts to counteract such malpractice. Academic dishonesty is an issue in traditional classrooms, but it gets worse when assessments are performed online. Lack of exposure to information technology was also described as a major constraint by the teachers in this study, in addition to issues relating to a lack of awareness of available assistive evaluation tools, the seriousness of learners' attitudes toward learning, the absence of non-verbal communication, difficulties in the evaluation of subjective questions, the demotivation of learners and classroom management. In the offline learning mode, the most cited constraints on EFL assessment methods included knowledge of language assessment. The findings support that assertion that "the major reason of the low level in language assessment knowledge of EFL teachers" can be the result of "the insufficiency of trainings" in teacher education, and therefore, their knowledge is inadequate (Ölmezer-Öztürk & Aydın, 2019, p. 373). The results of our study are also compatible with Jannati (2015), who found that teachers were familiar with the basic concepts of language assessment; however, despite having understanding of evaluation and assessment, they were unable to execute them to their classroom practices. Classroom management was also stated as a constraint, especially when the number of students in the classroom grows beyond a teacher's ability to control the class. As for ensuring the validity and reliability of assessments, our findings are supported by those of Aristizabal (2018), who analyzed the assessment-related beliefs and practices of English language teachers teaching at a language institute in Colombia. The analysis concluded that the participants were of the opinion that tests should have the basic qualities of validity and reliability, but reported that these qualities were not always reflected in practice. They also indicated that designing a test as a part of their training was useful for their professional development.

VI. CONCLUSION

This study aimed to identify and diagnose factors related to EFL teachers' perception of online and offline assessment practices: 1) EFL teachers' perceptions of online and offline assessment methods in higher education; 2) any significant differences between EFL teachers' perceptions of the utility of offline and online assessment methods; 3) the most commonly used EFL skill-wise online and offline assessment methods, from the teachers' points of view; and 4) the constraints faced by EFL teachers when applying assessment online and offline assessment methods. The results show that the EFL teachers' perceived the utility of assessment methods in the online mode of learning as 'medium' and the utility of assessment methods in the offline mode of learning as 'high'. Statistically significant differences were also found between the EFL teachers' perceptions of the utility of online and offline assessment methods: the teachers were significantly more in favor of the offline mode of learning. In addition, the findings reveal that the assessment methods most commonly used by the teachers in online classrooms were quizzes for listening and reading skills, questioning for speaking skills, and assignments for writing skills, while the least commonly-used online assessment methods were projects for listening skills, journals and projects for speaking skills, portfolios for reading skills, and discussion for writing skills. Furthermore, the findings reveal that the most commonly used assessment methods in offline classrooms were questioning for listening and reading skills, discussions for speaking and reading skills, and quizzes for writing skills, while the least commonly used offline assessment methods were projects for listening skills, journals for

speaking and reading skills, and presentations for writing skills. This study has some implications for EFL teachers who use online and offline assessment methods in their classrooms. Considering the findings, the researchers recommend the adoption of a multilayered approach to address the issues and constraints that were perceived by the teachers in this study when employing online and offline assessment methods:

- Raise awareness of ethics and academic honesty among learners to combat cheating and impersonation
- Train teachers to detect and prevent cheating in online and offline assessment contexts
- Hold faculty development workshops to boost teachers' competency in online and offline assessment practices
- Ensure state-of-the-art gadgets or tools are available and hold professional IT training programs for both teachers and students
- Enrich classroom atmosphere through various extrinsic and intrinsic techniques

The current study suggests the necessity of conducting further research in the EFL context to investigate the reasons for employing or not employing particular assessment methods in online and/or offline teaching contexts.

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