

Attitudes of Fifth-Year Primary School Teachers towards Modern Assessment Methods and Their Effect on Academic Competency Achievement: Hassi R'Mel as a Model

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Abstract:

This study examined the relationship between fifth-year primary teachers' attitudes towards modern assessment methods and pupils' academic competency achievement in Arabic language activities in Hassi R'Mel, Algeria. A descriptive correlational-predictive design was used, with total enumeration of eighteen teachers and classes (470 pupils), a thirty-item attitude scale ($\alpha = .986$), and a documentary achievement form. Attitude scores correlated very strongly with class averages ($r = .980$, $p < .001$) and mastery rates ($r = .963$, $p < .001$), and significantly predicted achievement ($R^2 = .961$). Recently trained teachers scored higher than veterans. Results are discussed cautiously alongside comparable Algerian and international literature.

Keywords: Teacher attitudes, Modern assessment methods, Academic competency achievement, Competency-based approach, Primary education.

1. Introduction

Contemporary educational systems have progressively shifted from assessment centred on final outcomes towards assessment as a continuous component of teaching and learning. This shift is visible in Algeria's second-generation curricula, which adopted the competency-based approach for both instruction and evaluation, reframing assessment as a diagnostic tool accompanying the learner's development rather than a mere certifying device (Khemmad, 2023). Under this philosophy, error itself is reframed: rather than being treated purely as a fault to be penalised, a pupil's mistake becomes diagnostic information that should guide the teacher's subsequent instructional choices, and assessment becomes an integrated part of the teaching-learning cycle rather than an isolated, end-of-sequence event. Within this reform, the classroom teacher mediates between the prescribed philosophy and its daily translation into practice, making teachers' attitudes towards modern assessment methods a variable of central importance, since no curricular reform, however coherently designed on paper, can succeed without the psychological readiness of the practitioners who must implement it daily. An attitude is understood here as a relatively stable predisposition comprising a cognitive component (knowledge and understanding), an affective component (emotional acceptance or resistance), and a behavioural component (actual or intended practice), and it is this tripartite structure that organises both the theoretical framework and the measurement instrument developed for the present study.

The literature reveals inconsistency regarding these attitudes, both across educational levels and across national contexts. Bouras and Othmania (2025) reported an overall positive orientation towards formative assessment among Skikda primary teachers, with no significant differences by

qualification, subject, or rank, though variation emerged by experience; while Bekkaye and Gaci (2025) found formative assessment most favourably regarded but project-based assessment comparatively resisted, largely because of overcrowded classrooms and insufficient training, with continuous training the strongest predictor of positive attitude. Khalayfia and Gourdache (2020) found middle-school teachers cognitively aware of competency-based assessment principles yet inconsistent in applying them in daily practice, illustrating a gap between the cognitive and behavioural dimensions of attitude that the present study's own instrument is specifically designed to detect, and Mekhloufi and Lakhdar (2017) reported attitudes varying significantly by gender and seniority but not by qualification or training institution, a selective rather than uniform pattern of demographic differentiation that recurs throughout this body of research. Internationally, Letina, Škugor, and Tomaš (2025) documented a hybrid formative-summative pattern among 396 Croatian primary teachers, in which formative conceptions were widely endorsed in principle while summative practice remained prevalent, and Korkmaz, Özdemir, Toraman, and Toraman (2025), validating a large Turkish tendency scale (N = 1022) spanning primary through secondary levels, found male and more senior teachers less inclined towards alternative assessment than female and early-career colleagues, a demographic pattern directly relevant to the professional-profile differences reported in Section 5 of the present study.

A persistent gap remains across this literature: attitude-focused studies rarely measure achievement, and achievement-focused studies rarely measure attitude as a psychometric construct. Rahmouni (2017) examined competency-based evaluation methods and fifth-year pupils' achievement from the teachers' own perspective, but did not measure teachers' underlying psychological attitude towards those methods; Mekkaoui (2023) documented in detail the official Acquisition Assessment Examination and its accompanying analytical record card as newly introduced procedural tools in fifth-year Arabic language activities, without addressing teachers' attitudes towards them. Ferdinal and Isramirawati (2021) associated formative assessment with measurable achievement gains among Indonesian university students across successive instructional cycles, whereas Goertzen, Heeneman, and Schils (2025), in a considerably larger and more tightly controlled Dutch quasi-experiment (N = 976), found no significant achievement advantage for a teacher-community co-designed formative assessment programme once prior achievement gain was statistically controlled for — a methodological caution that is revisited when interpreting the present study's own findings in Section 5.

This study addresses that gap by asking: what is the relationship between fifth-year primary teachers' attitudes towards modern assessment methods and their pupils' academic competency achievement in Arabic language activities, in Hassi R'Mel? Sub-questions concern (1) the level of teacher attitudes, (2) the level of pupil achievement, (3) the correlation between them, (4) the predictive value of attitude for achievement, and (5) differences in attitude by teachers' professional profile. Three hypotheses are tested: H1, attitude correlates positively with achievement; H2, attitude significantly predicts achievement; H3, no attitude differences exist by professional profile. The study's significance lies in linking a teacher-level psychological variable directly to a pupil-level outcome, offering Algerian decision-makers an evidence base for prioritising continuous training in modern assessment.

2. Conceptual framework

2.1. Attitudes: concept and dimensions

An attitude is a relatively enduring predisposition to respond favourably or unfavourably towards an object, person, or practice, comprising cognitive, affective, and behavioural dimensions that jointly structured the attitude scale developed for this study. The cognitive dimension refers to the teacher's

knowledge and conceptual clarity regarding a given assessment method; the affective dimension refers to the emotional comfort or discomfort the teacher associates with it; and the behavioural dimension refers to the teacher's expressed readiness to apply it, and the consistency with which it is actually implemented in the classroom. Brown, Hui, Yu, and Kennedy (2011) proposed an influential tripartite model of teachers' conceptions of assessment, ranging from an external-control orientation, in which assessment is viewed principally as a mechanism of accountability, to a developmental orientation, in which assessment is viewed as a means of supporting pupils' individual learning, with a third, largely dismissive orientation regarding assessment as irrelevant to genuine learning. This model is adopted here as an interpretive lens for understanding why individual teachers, exposed to the same official reform, may nonetheless hold markedly different attitude profiles depending on which underlying conception predominates in their professional belief system.

2.2. Modern assessment methods in second-generation curricula

Modern assessment methods are distinguished from traditional summative assessment by their concern with the process, not merely the product, of learning. Chenna (2018), in a documentary analysis of official curricular texts, identified evaluation tests, evaluation grids, and standardised criteria and indicators as the principal tools formally embedded in second-generation curricula, and Ghraissa and Aouarib (2021) similarly emphasised the shift towards authentic assessment methods capable of capturing procedural and attitudinal, and not merely declarative, learning outcomes. In Algerian primary education specifically, this philosophy is embodied in the officially mandated Acquisition Assessment Examination and its accompanying analytical record card, through which the teacher documents the specific competencies mastered, partially mastered, or not yet mastered by each pupil (Mekkaoui, 2023), though Katfi (n.d.) cautioned that the conventional practice of recording only the aggregate mark, while neglecting partial, competency-specific indicators, undermines the diagnostic value that this instrument was originally designed to provide.

2.3. Academic competency achievement and the theoretical link with attitude

Under the competency-based approach, academic achievement is not reduced to a single numerical grade but is instead understood as the demonstrated capacity of the pupil to mobilise acquired knowledge and skills in order to resolve authentic tasks (Makhloufi, 2022). Consistent with this conception and with the official instruments in use within the Algerian primary system, the present study operationalises academic competency achievement through two complementary, class-level indicators: the class average grade obtained in the Acquisition Assessment Examination, and the proportion of pupils classified at the mastery level, as opposed to in the process of mastery or not yet mastered. Theoretically, a teacher's attitude is expected to translate into classroom assessment practice, which in turn shapes pupil achievement through more frequent, targeted, and constructive feedback; this study tests the observable endpoints of that chain — attitude and achievement — rather than the intervening classroom practice itself, a distinction that becomes particularly important when interpreting the present study's findings alongside Goertzen et al.'s (2025) null experimental result, discussed in Section 5.

3. Literature review

3.1. Attitudes towards modern and competency-based assessment

Beyond the studies already introduced in Section 1, Belkhodja and Bouazid (2025), using a mixed-methods design with 35 secondary teachers in Sétif, found that formative assessment practice was

associated with more participatory, learner-centred instruction and with reduced assessment-related stress for both teachers and pupils, reinforcing the behavioural pathway proposed in Section 2.3, whereby attitude is expected to exert its effect on achievement principally through its translation into actual classroom practice rather than through cognitive understanding or affective acceptance alone.

3.2. Algerian regional studies on implementation challenges

A substantial regional literature documents the practical, rather than purely attitudinal, obstacles that Algerian teachers encounter when implementing competency-based assessment, and this literature is directly relevant to interpreting the present study's own findings on professional-profile differences and training. Rajah and Ouachich (2017), surveying 120 first- and second-year primary teachers in western Béjaïa Province, identified two broad categories of obstacles: those attributable to teachers themselves, including insufficient initial and continuous training and limited academic qualification, and those attributable to the assessment practice itself, including constructing evaluation grids and measuring learning outcomes across cognitive and psychomotor domains. Rial (2017), studying 45 teachers in Boumerdès Province, similarly found that teachers frequently could not construct a systematic and purposeful assessment plan and tended, in practice, to revert to term and annual examinations alone, neglecting continuous formative assessment despite nominally positive attitudes — a pattern of practical reversion to summative habits that recurs throughout this regional literature. With specific reference to Arabic language teaching, Jelouli and Arif (2016) questioned whether persistent pupil underachievement should be attributed to instructional objectives, curricular content, teaching method, instructional media, or the assessment tools themselves, concluding that competency-based assessment brought genuine, if incompletely realised, innovation to language evaluation practice. Sandouk and Aoun (2023), evaluating the second-generation Arabic language textbook for first-year primary pupils from 59 teachers' perspectives in Djelfa Province, found it acceptable in graphical design and evaluation dimension but only average in content and language quality, with no significant gender-based differences in teachers' evaluative judgments. More recently, Hentit and Laoubi (2025), in several primary schools of Jijel Province, examined the extent to which teachers actually practise four core assessment mechanisms — oral questioning, observation, learner activities, and written tests — providing an empirically grounded, practice-level counterpart to the present study's attitude-level focus. At a broader national level, Raqiq Bara (2026), surveying 370 teachers across primary, middle, and secondary stages with 290 valid responses, found that traditional assessment methods remain the most widespread despite a growing teacher preference for continuous, technology-integrated assessment, with class overcrowding, limited training, and administrative bureaucracy identified as the principal obstacles to reform; Al-Sharha (2026), focusing on authentic assessment of the four Arabic language skills, recommended systematic teacher training in constructing authentic assessment tools, a recommendation directly consonant with those advanced in Section 6.

3.3. Assessment and achievement, and synthesis

As introduced in Section 1, Rahmouni (2017) and Ferdinal and Isramirawati (2021) linked assessment practice, rather than teacher attitude, to pupil achievement, while Goertzen, Heeneman, and Schils (2025), with a considerably larger and more rigorously controlled design, found no significant achievement effect for a co-designed formative assessment programme once prior gain was controlled for — a finding that usefully tempers any presumption that a positive association between assessment-related variables and achievement is automatically confirmed by rigorous, large-sample designs. Table 1 synthesises this literature and situates the present study's specific contribution.

Table 1: Summary of key studies reviewed and the research gap

Study	Focus	Sample / method	Achievement link?
Bouras & Othmania (2025)	Attitudes towards formative assessment	59 teachers, scale	No
Bekkaye & Gaci (2025)	Attitudes, four assessment types	80 teachers	No
Mekhloufi & Lakhdar (2017)	Attitudes towards CBA assessment	115 teachers	No
Korkmaz et al. (2025)	Tendency, alternative assessment	1022 teachers	No
Rajah & Ouachich (2017); Rial (2017)	Practical obstacles to CBA	120 / 45 teachers	No
Rahmouni (2017)	Evaluation methods & achievement	100 teachers	Partial
Ferdinal & Isramirawati (2021)	Formative assessment effect	79 students, quasi-exp.	Yes
Goertzen et al. (2025)	Co-designed FA programme effect	976 pupils, quasi-exp.	Yes (null)
Present study (2026)	Attitude AND achievement, linked directly	18 teachers/classes, census	Yes

Source: prepared by the author based on the reviewed literature, 2026.

No study identified combines an individually scored attitude measure with an official, class-level achievement indicator; this configuration constitutes the present study's original contribution, tempered by Goertzen et al.'s (2025) larger-scale null result.

4. Methodology

4.1. Design and population

Given that the research questions require measuring a naturally occurring relationship between two variables, together with an assessment of the predictive value of one for the other, a descriptive correlational-predictive design was adopted, with no experimental manipulation or intervention introduced; both variables were measured as they naturally existed within the population at the time of data collection. The population comprised all fifth-year primary teachers and classes in Hassi

R'Mel's six primary schools during the 2025-2026 academic year. Because this population was small and fully accessible, total enumeration was adopted rather than a sampling procedure, and the group studied is accordingly referred to as the study population rather than a sample, since no subset was drawn for the purpose of generalising to a larger population through statistical inference. The population consisted of eighteen teachers and their corresponding eighteen classes, comprising 470 pupils in total (Table 2). Data collection took place between December 2025 and 13 June 2026, coinciding with the periodic administration windows of the official Acquisition Assessment Examination.

Table 2: Distribution of the study population by school

School	Classes	Pupils	%
Model School of Boulail	4	103	21.9%
Bachir El Ibrahimi School	4	111	23.6%
Mubarak El Mili School	4	106	22.6%
Latrache Slimane School	2	45	9.6%
Chouireb Kaddour School	2	56	11.9%
Ben Taouati Larache School	2	49	10.4%
Total	18	470	100%

Source: prepared by the author based on official school records, Hassi R'Mel, 2026.

4.2. Instruments and psychometric properties

Two instruments were used: a thirty-item Likert attitude scale (three ten-item subscales: cognitive, affective, behavioural; seven reverse-scored items; range 30-150), and a documentary form recording each class's Acquisition Assessment Examination results (pupil counts per mastery level, class average, highest/lowest scores) extracted from official records by school principals. Reliability, computed on the eighteen respondents, is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Internal consistency reliability of the attitude scale

Subscale	N items	Cronbach's alpha
Cognitive	10	.961
Affective	10	.961
Behavioural	10	.946
Total scale	30	.986

Source: prepared by the author based on SPSS output, 2026.

Content validity followed the tripartite structure in Section 2.1, consistent with scales previously used by Bouras and Othmania (2025) and Mekhloufi and Lakhdar (2017); a formal expert-panel judgment was not conducted, which is acknowledged as a limitation.

4.3. Ethics and statistical procedures

Verbal informed consent was obtained from teachers, and authorisation to consult records from each school's principal; class-level codes protected pupils' identities, and no pupil was individually identified. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, simple linear regression, an independent-samples t-test, and one-way ANOVA.

5. Results and discussion

5.1. Descriptive results

Table 4: Descriptive statistics for attitude and achievement (N = 18)

Variable	M	SD	Min	Max
Cognitive (10-50)	40.28	6.66	30	47
Affective (10-50)	36.00	7.90	23	45
Behavioural (10-50)	36.67	6.47	27	44
Total attitude (30-150)	112.94	20.91	80	136
Class average (/20)	13.45	1.85	10.85	16.00
Mastery rate (%)	42.25	19.02	16.1	71.4

Source: prepared by the author based on SPSS output, 2026.

The mean total attitude score (75.3% of maximum) indicates a generally high level, consistent with Bouras and Othmania (2025), Mekhloufi and Lakhdar (2017), and Korkmaz et al. (2025), and contrasting with the more instruction-bound culture reported nationally by Raqiq Bara (2026). The class average was 13.45/20, with 40.2% of pupils at mastery level.

5.2. Correlation and regression (H1, H2)

Table 5: Pearson correlations between attitude and achievement (N = 18)

Attitude variable	r (average)	p	r (mastery)	p
Cognitive	.966	<.001	.942	<.001
Affective	.972	<.001	.961	<.001
Behavioural	.986	<.001	.969	<.001
Total attitude	.980	<.001	.963	<.001

Source: prepared by the author based on SPSS output, 2026.

Regression confirmed attitude significantly predicted class average ($R^2 = .961$, $p < .001$) and mastery rate ($R^2 = .928$, $p < .001$; Figure 1). These coefficients ($r = .94-.99$) considerably exceed typical educational-psychology magnitudes (.30-.50), most plausibly reflecting the small, homogeneous population ($N = 18$) and shared-method variance rather than a stable population parameter — a caution reinforced by Goertzen et al.'s (2025) considerably larger null-result study. H1 and H2 are therefore supported within this population, but not claimed as generalisable.

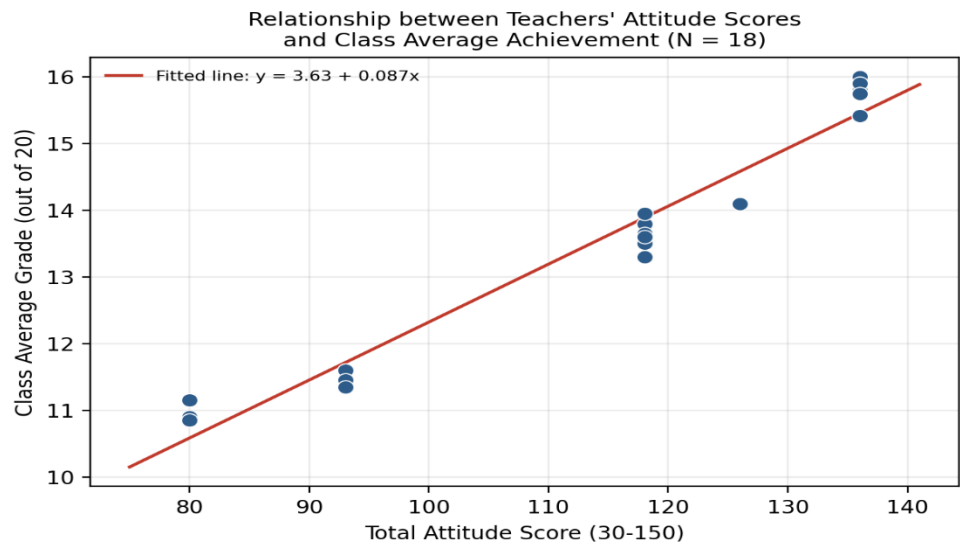


Figure 1: Relationship between teachers' total attitude scores and class average grades

Source: prepared by the author using Python (matplotlib) based on study data, 2026.

5.3. Group differences (H3)

Qualification, experience, and training were almost perfectly confounded within this population (e.g., all recently qualified teachers also reported < 5 years' experience and two trainings), so a single composite professional-profile variable (recently trained / intermediate / veteran) was used (Table 6).

Table 6: Attitude scores by composite professional-profile group

Professional profile	n	M attitude	SD
Recently trained	6	134.33	2.16
Intermediate	6	118.00	2.10
Veteran	6	86.50	3.62
ANOVA	—	F = 157.96	p < .001

Source: prepared by the author based on SPSS output, 2026.

ANOVA was significant ($F = 157.96$, $p < .001$); recently trained teachers scored highest. A gender t-test was also significant but fully redundant with profile group. H3 is rejected, with subgroup sizes ($n = 6$) below conventional power recommendations, so results are exploratory.

5.4. Hypothesis summary and discussion

Table 7: Summary of hypothesis-testing outcomes

Hypothesis	Result
H1: Attitude correlates positively with achievement	Supported
H2: Attitude significantly predicts achievement	Supported

H3: No attitude differences by profile	Rejected
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Source: prepared by the author, 2026.

These results extend Bekkaye and Gaci (2025), Bouras and Othmania (2025), and Letina et al. (2025), all of whom documented generally positive teacher dispositions towards modern and formative assessment, by linking attitude directly to an official, class-level achievement indicator rather than to self-reported practice alone. The behavioural dimension's strongest correlation with achievement ($r = .986$) supports the practice-mediated pathway proposed in Section 2.3, whereby attitude is expected to exert its effect on achievement principally through translation into actual classroom practice; this aligns with Ferdinal and Isramirawati (2021), who observed achievement gains associated with formative assessment application, and with Belkhodja and Bouazid (2025), who found Algerian secondary teachers' formative practice associated with more participatory instruction. It should nonetheless be tempered by Goertzen et al.'s (2025) null experimental result, obtained with a considerably larger and more rigorously controlled Dutch sample, which cautions against assuming that behavioural translation of positive attitude into practice automatically guarantees measurable achievement gain at scale.

The finding of markedly higher attitude scores among recently trained teachers, relative to veterans, diverges from Bouras and Othmania (2025), who reported no significant attitudinal differences by professional rank, yet aligns closely with Mekhloufi and Lakhdar (2017), who found significant differences by seniority among M'sila primary teachers, and with Korkmaz et al.'s (2025) large-scale Turkish finding that more senior teachers were less inclined to use alternative assessment than early-career colleagues. It also partially aligns with Bekkaye and Gaci (2025), who identified continuous training, rather than experience per se, as the principal predictor of positive attitude. Given the confounding documented in Section 5.3, the most parsimonious interpretation is that this reflects a training-related, rather than a purely experience-related, effect. Finally, read alongside Rajah and Ouachich (2017), Rial (2017), and Raziq Bara (2026), all of whom identified overcrowding, insufficient training, and administrative bureaucracy as persistent barriers to competency-based assessment reform, the present findings suggest that translating positive teacher attitude into sustained achievement gains at scale will likely require both the individual-level training emphasised in Section 6 and structural, school-level support of the kind piloted by Oeksuez, Buholzer, Hascher, Zulliger, Maskos, and Schulz (2026), whose recent professional development programme was designed specifically to enhance primary teachers' formative assessment literacy through structured peer- and self-assessment training.

6. Conclusion

This study set out to examine a relationship left largely unaddressed in the existing literature on teachers' attitudes towards modern assessment methods: the extent to which such attitudes are associated with an objective, officially recorded measure of pupils' academic competency achievement. Drawing on total enumeration of all eighteen fifth-year primary teachers and their corresponding classes (470 pupils) in Hassi R'Mel, the study found a strong, statistically significant positive association between teachers' attitudes and pupils' achievement within this population, with attitude significantly predicting both the class average grade and the mastery-level rate, and with significant differences by a confounded professional-profile variable favouring recently trained teachers over veterans.

On this basis, the following recommendations are proposed: (1) educational authorities should intensify continuous in-service training on modern assessment methods for veteran teachers, given their markedly lower attitude scores, following the training-oriented recommendations of Al-Sharha

(2026) and the structured professional development model recently piloted by Oeksuez et al. (2026); (2) given the strong association between the behavioural dimension of attitude and achievement, professional development should emphasise guided classroom coaching rather than theoretical exposure alone, addressing the practical implementation gap repeatedly documented by Rajah and Ouachich (2017), Rial (2017), and Raqiq Bara (2026); (3) future research should replicate these findings with a larger, more demographically diverse population in which qualification, experience, and training can be examined as statistically independent predictors with adequate subgroup power; (4) future studies could incorporate teachers' actual classroom assessment practice as a directly observed mediating variable between attitude and achievement, following the practice-level approach of Hentit and Laoubi (2025); and (5) a formal expert-panel validation of the attitude scale, together with test-retest reliability estimation, is recommended before any further use of the instrument.

Several limitations should be considered. The study population, though studied through total enumeration, remained small ($N = 18$), which restricts generalisability and likely inflated the unusually large correlation and regression coefficients reported in Section 5, as the considerably larger-sample, null-result study of Goertzen et al. (2025) illustrates. The near-total confounding among qualification, experience, training, and gender prevented isolating each variable's independent contribution, and several subgroup comparisons involved cell sizes below conventional recommendations for stable inferential testing. The achievement indicator was confined to a single subject and grade level, and formal expert-panel content validation of the attitude scale was not conducted prior to the present administration. Finally, the correlational-predictive design does not, in itself, establish causality; the theoretical chain whereby attitude operates through classroom practice remains plausible but untested, and would benefit from mediation analysis and direct classroom observation in future research employing a larger population. The author declares no conflict of interest, and the anonymised, class-level dataset supporting these findings is available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

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