PROTOTYPE FRAMEWORK: PROTOTYPES, PROTOTYPING AND PILOTING IN TERMS OF QUALITY INSURANCE

Muhammad Azeem
Punjab Education Assessment System (PEAS)
Education Department, Punjab, Lahore
PAKISTAN
knowledge_jhumra@yahoo.com

Dr Muhammad Bashir Gondal
Punjab Examination Commission (PEC),
Education Department, Punjab, Lahore
PAKISTAN.
bashiribd@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

There is always a great uncertainty as to whether a new concept, model, or design—products from industry and assessment tools from education, will actually do what is desired. The quality of product is based on prototype, prototyping and piloting. The idea of prototype, prototyping is being incorporated in the development of educational assessment tools. Prototype is something that is representative of a category of things; it is early sample, model, or design built to test a concept or process. It is an original type, or form of something serving as a typical example, basis, epitome, or standard for other things of the same category. A prototype—sample test or sample test item, is built to test the function—assessment of performance, abilities or proficiencies, of the newly developed assessment tool, before using the test in students' assessment project. Developing valid test is often expensive and can be time-consuming, especially when repeated several times. As an alternative, "rapid-prototyping" techniques are used for the initial prototypes, which implement part—test items related to different constructs or various parts of a product, but not all, of the complete test. Prototyping is a process of quickly putting a prototype in order to test various aspects and features of an assessment, and gather early user feedback. Prototyping is often treated as an integral part of the assessment tools development process, where it is believed to reduce project risk and cost. Initially often one or more prototypes are made; in this way problem or deficiencies in assessment tool can be corrected. This allows manufacturers—industrialists or assessment organizations to rapidly and inexpensively test the parts of the product/assessment that are most likely to have problems, solve those problems, and then develop the assessment tool. When the prototype is sufficiently refined and meets the standards—benchmarks or objectives, the product—test is ready for production. Before going to use test, piloting help to make sure all types of evidences of validity—construct validity, result interpretive validity and usability. These validity evidences may guide the teacher about consequences of test results. Thus notion of prototype and prototyping has changed and shifted the idea of traditional assessments towards valid and marketable assessment tools.

Key words: assessment, prototype, prototyping, performance, assessment tools