



Exploring Teacher Fairness in the Classroom: A Systematic Literature Review in Educational Psychology

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Abstract:

Fairness in classroom assessment is a central issue in educational psychology because it shapes students' motivation, trust, and engagement in learning. In contemporary classrooms, fairness is influenced not only by transparent assessment procedures but also by teacher-student interactions, cultural sensitivity, and digital learning conditions. This study aims to synthesize recent evidence on how teacher fairness is conceptualized and enacted in classroom assessment. A systematic literature review guided by the PICo framework (Population, Interest, Context) and reported in accordance with the PRISMA guidelines was conducted using 15 peer-reviewed studies published between 2015 and 2025 and retrieved from major academic databases, including Google Scholar, ERIC, PsycINFO, JSTOR, Elsevier, Wiley, SAGE, Taylor & Francis, Springer Nature, PLOS, and Frontiers. The selected studies were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns, key dimensions, and contextual factors related to assessment fairness. The results show that teacher fairness consists of three interrelated dimensions: procedural, interpersonal, and distributive fairness. Procedural transparency and consistency are essential but insufficient without respectful interaction, constructive feedback, and equitable assessment outcomes. The review also identifies classroom assessment literacy and cultural sensitivity as key factors supporting fair assessment, especially in digital and post-pandemic learning environments. These findings contribute to educational psychology by offering an integrated understanding of fair classroom assessment and highlighting the need for continuous teacher professional development to promote inclusive, transparent, and responsive assessment practices.

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INTRODUCTION

Fairness in classroom assessment is essential to ensuring that all students are provided with equal opportunities to succeed academically. However, in practice, classroom assessment is often affected by inconsistencies, teacher biases, and differences in students' access to resources, which can undermine the intended fairness and equity of educational evaluation. As Hattie and Timperley (2007) argue, the concept of fairness in assessment extends beyond the technical aspects of measurement and scoring. It emphasizes the provision of transparent, equitable, and consistent opportunities for students to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and potential. A fair assessment system provides all students with the same opportunities, regardless of their background, learning styles, or socioeconomic status, to demonstrate their abilities. Such fairness is fundamental to fostering a positive learning environment that promotes student motivation and engagement (Gipps, 2017; McArthur, 2018). Recent studies have emphasized that fairness in classroom assessment is closely related to assessment literacy, feedback practices, and broader concerns regarding equity and social justice in education (Gipps, 2017; McArthur, 2018; DeLuca et al., 2018).

One of the core aspects of fairness in classroom assessment is procedural fairness. Hattie and Timperley (2007) suggest that fairness is achieved when assessment practices are consistent, transparent, and equitable. Procedural fairness ensures that all students are aware of assessment expectations and standards and have equal opportunities to meet them (Rasooli et al., 2022; Rezai, 2022). Nevertheless, procedural clarity alone does not guarantee students' perceptions of fairness; interpersonal interactions and the quality of feedback also play crucial roles in shaping how fairness is experienced. Procedural fairness also requires assessments to reflect what students have been taught and assessment methods to align with instructional goals. This alignment ensures that students' performance is judged on the basis of the material and skills they have been taught rather than on extraneous factors.

However, despite the importance of procedural fairness, interpersonal fairness is often overlooked (Rasooli et al., 2022; Wallace & Qin, 2021). According to Rasooli et al. (2022), teachers' perceptions of fairness are influenced by their interpersonal interactions with students. These interactions can significantly affect how students perceive the fairness of the assessment process. Teachers who engage respectfully with students, provide constructive feedback, and maintain a positive and empathetic attitude toward all students foster a sense of fairness. In contrast, personal biases, unintentional favoritism, or perceived inequalities in treatment can undermine students' sense of fairness, even when the assessment procedures themselves are objective.

Moreover, distributive fairness—the perceived fairness of assessment outcomes—plays a crucial role in how students experience classroom assessment. Distributive fairness refers to the extent to which assessment results are perceived as just and earned through individual effort and performance. Falavarjani and Mousavi (2024) highlight that differences between teachers' and students' perceptions of fairness in assessment outcomes often lead to disparities in student engagement and motivation. For instance, students who perceive their grades as unfairly assigned

or as not reflecting their actual performance may feel demotivated, leading to disengagement from both the assessment process and learning itself.

The quality of feedback is another key factor influencing students' perceptions of fairness. Brandmo and Gamlem (2025) suggest that high-quality feedback that is clear, specific, personalized, and constructive significantly improves students' understanding of their strengths and areas for improvement. This type of feedback fosters a sense of fairness because students feel that they have been given the tools needed to improve and succeed. In contrast, vague or generic feedback can leave students uncertain about how to improve their performance and can diminish their confidence in the fairness of the assessment process.

Teachers' understanding and application of fairness in assessment are often shaped by their assessment literacy. Baniyadi et al. (2023) emphasize that teachers with high levels of assessment literacy are better equipped to design and implement assessments that are both fair and effective. Teachers who are well trained in assessment techniques are more likely to apply best practices when designing assessments that reflect the curriculum, ensure equity, and provide meaningful feedback. Furthermore, they are better able to recognize and address issues such as bias, which can distort assessment results. This highlights the importance of teachers' professional development in fostering a thorough understanding of fair assessment practices.

The cultural and social context plays a significant role in shaping fairness in classroom assessment. Asamoah et al. (2023) note that teachers' approaches to assessment are influenced by the cultural contexts in which they teach. In diverse classrooms, teachers who are sensitive to their students' cultural backgrounds can develop assessment practices that are inclusive and culturally responsive. For example, teachers who recognize and respect students' diverse learning styles and experiences can design assessments that provide all students with opportunities to succeed. Such cultural responsiveness is an essential element of fairness in assessment because it ensures that all students have opportunities to demonstrate their abilities in ways that are best suited to their individual strengths.

In addition to cultural influences, the use of technology in assessment has become an increasingly important factor in ensuring fairness. Azizi (2022) explores how fairness in online assessment can be affected by technological factors such as access to digital resources, digital literacy, and the quality of the online learning environment. Students who have limited access to technology or lack digital literacy may be disadvantaged when participating in online assessments. To address this issue, Azizi suggests that teachers should consider these technological factors when designing and implementing assessments in digital environments, thereby ensuring that all students have equal access to the tools and resources needed to succeed.

Collaboration among teachers is another crucial element in fostering fairness in assessment. Barman et al. (2022) argue that when teachers collaborate to develop assessment criteria and share best practices, they are more likely to ensure consistency and fairness across assessments. Collaborative discussions allow teachers to reflect on their assessment practices, share feedback, and identify areas for improvement. This collaborative approach helps ensure that assessment

decisions are not influenced by personal biases and that students are evaluated according to consistent and equitable standards across classrooms and subject areas.

In recent years, classroom assessment practices have undergone significant transformations because of the COVID-19 pandemic and the accelerated adoption of digital and hybrid learning environments. These changes have intensified longstanding concerns regarding educational justice, equity, and fairness, particularly as assessment increasingly relies on online platforms, automated feedback, and technology-mediated teacher–student interaction. As a result, fairness in classroom assessment is no longer limited to procedural consistency or grading accuracy but now also encompasses digital access, assessment literacy, cultural responsiveness, and emotional support.

This shift reflects a broader paradigm change in educational justice, in which fairness is understood not only as equal treatment but also as the provision of equitable opportunities that account for diverse learner contexts and technological conditions. Although earlier systematic literature reviews have addressed assessment fairness from conceptual or sociocultural perspectives, they largely predate or insufficiently engage with the post-pandemic assessment landscape, in which digital inequities and altered classroom dynamics play central roles. Consequently, an updated synthesis is necessary to capture how fairness in classroom assessment is currently conceptualized and enacted under these new conditions.

Several systematic literature reviews have examined fairness in classroom assessment from conceptual, psychometric, and sociocultural perspectives (e.g., Rasooli et al., 2018; Baniyadi et al., 2023). These reviews have made important contributions by identifying the core dimensions of assessment fairness and highlighting the roles of contextual and relational factors. However, most existing SLRs tend to focus either on theoretical conceptualizations or on isolated aspects of fairness, such as grading practices or feedback, without integrating recent changes in assessment contexts.

Specifically, earlier reviews rarely address how fairness in classroom assessment is being reshaped in the post-pandemic and digital-learning era, in which online and hybrid assessments introduce new challenges related to accessibility, technological literacy, and teacher–student interaction. In addition, previous SLRs have not sufficiently synthesized the interactions among classroom assessment literacy, cultural sensitivity, and student engagement within a coherent explanatory framework, particularly in secondary and high-school classroom settings.

To address these gaps, the present systematic literature review advances prior work in three key ways. First, it synthesizes recent empirical studies (2015–2025) that explicitly examine fairness in both face-to-face and digital assessment contexts. Second, it integrates the pedagogical, cultural, and technological dimensions of fairness rather than treating them as separate issues. Third, this review proposes a conceptual framework that links classroom assessment literacy, contextual sensitivity, and student engagement, thereby offering a more holistic understanding of how fairness is enacted in contemporary classroom assessment practices. Through this approach, the study extends existing SLRs and provides updated theoretical and practical insights relevant to current educational conditions.

METHOD

This study adopts a systematic literature review (SLR) approach to explore the application and understanding of fairness in classroom assessment within the context of educational psychology. The SLR approach is appropriate because it provides an organized and systematic means of identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing findings from a wide range of studies related to fairness in classroom assessment. This method enables a comprehensive understanding of the topic and helps identify gaps in the existing literature that warrant further research (Tranfield, Denyer, & Smart, 2003).

The review process was also guided by the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines to ensure transparency and rigor in the identification, screening, and selection of relevant studies. In this study, PRISMA was applied through four main stages: identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and inclusion. During the identification stage, records were retrieved from multiple academic databases using predetermined keywords. During the screening stage, duplicate and irrelevant records were removed on the basis of their titles and abstracts. The remaining full-text articles were then assessed for eligibility using predefined inclusion, exclusion, and quality-assessment criteria. Finally, studies that met all criteria were included in the thematic synthesis. The use of PRISMA helped document the literature-selection process systematically and reduced potential bias in determining the final studies included in the review.

The study follows the PICO framework (Population, Interest, Context) to guide the literature search. The population under investigation consists of both teachers and students in formal educational settings, particularly at the secondary and high-school levels. The study is interested in understanding and exploring fairness in classroom assessment from both teachers' and students' perspectives. Although the literature search included studies addressing both teachers' and students' perspectives, the final synthesis was limited to studies that reported teachers' perceptions of fairness in classroom assessment. This focus was due to the greater availability and methodological consistency of teacher-centered studies, which allowed for a coherent thematic analysis. The research examines teachers' perceptions of fairness in assessment, the assessment practices that teachers deem fair, and the factors influencing teachers' fair assessment decisions. These factors include cultural, social, and psychological influences that shape teachers' and students' perceptions and practices regarding fairness in the classroom. The context of this study focuses on classroom environments, particularly formative and summative assessments conducted by teachers in secondary and high-school settings (Baker & Reynolds, 2019; Rasooli, DeLuca, & Rasekh, 2022).

The literature search was conducted using several prominent academic databases, including Google Scholar, ERIC (Education Resources Information Center), PsycINFO, JSTOR, Elsevier, Wiley, SAGE, Taylor & Francis, Springer Nature, PLOS, and Frontiers. Relevant search terms included "teacher fairness," "classroom assessment," "educational psychology," "teacher perceptions of fairness," and "cultural influences on assessment" (Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Falavarjani & Mousavi,

2024). These keywords were selected to encompass a broad range of articles addressing fairness in classroom assessment from multiple perspectives.

To ensure the relevance and quality of the studies included in this review, specific inclusion and exclusion criteria were established and applied during the literature-screening process. The inclusion criteria required that articles: (1) were published in peer-reviewed journals; (2) were published between 2015 and 2025; (3) were available in English or Indonesian; (4) were accessible in full text; and (5) explicitly examined variables related to fairness in classroom assessment. These variables included teacher fairness, classroom assessment fairness, procedural fairness, interpersonal fairness, distributive fairness, teachers' or students' perceptions of fairness, assessment literacy, feedback practices, cultural sensitivity, technological conditions in assessment, and student engagement or trust in assessment practices. The exclusion criteria included articles that: (1) were not published in peer-reviewed journals; (2) were published outside the 2015–2025 period; (3) were not available in full text; (4) were not written in English or Indonesian; and (5) did not specifically examine variables related to fairness in classroom assessment. Articles that discussed general educational assessment without addressing fairness-related variables, studies that focused only on standardized testing without a classroom-assessment context, and articles that mentioned fairness only superficially without analytical discussion were also excluded (Baniasadi, Roohani, & Tabatabaei, 2023).

To ensure the methodological rigor and credibility of the reviewed studies, a quality-assessment process was conducted before the final inclusion of articles in this systematic literature review. Each full-text article was evaluated using predefined quality criteria adapted from established systematic-review guidelines. These criteria included the clarity of the research objectives, the appropriateness of the research design, the transparency of the data-collection and analysis procedures, and relevance to the focus on fairness in classroom assessment.

Studies were screened to determine whether they provided sufficient methodological detail, demonstrated logical alignment among their research questions, methods, and findings, and offered meaningful empirical or theoretical contributions. Articles that lacked methodological transparency, relied primarily on anecdotal evidence, or addressed assessment fairness only tangentially were excluded at this stage. Only studies that met the minimum quality threshold across these criteria were considered methodologically sound and eligible for inclusion in the final synthesis.

The articles that met the inclusion criteria were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify key themes related to the application and understanding of fairness in classroom assessment. The thematic analysis was conducted in several stages, including repeated readings of the selected studies, the initial coding of relevant findings, the grouping of similar codes into broader categories, and the development of themes representing recurring patterns across the reviewed literature. The emerging themes were then compared across studies to identify similarities, differences, and relationships among the procedural, interpersonal, distributive, cultural, and technological dimensions of fairness. This method allowed the identification of patterns and key insights across the literature, enabling a deeper understanding of how fairness is applied in classroom assessment practices and the factors that influence these practices. Through this process, the study aimed to

provide a comprehensive overview of fairness in classroom assessment from the perspective of educational psychology and to identify opportunities for improving assessment practices in educational settings (Brandmo & Gamlem, 2025).

The search process identified a total of 1,353 records across the various databases. After the inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied, 1,070 records were screened. Of these, 620 reports were sought for retrieval, and 45 reports were assessed for eligibility. Ultimately, 15 new studies were included in the review. The following table summarizes the number of articles obtained from each database.

Table 1.

Database

Database	Number of Articles Retrieved
Google Scholar	400
ERIC	150
PsycINFO	110
JSTOR	95
Elsevier	80
Wiley	60
SAGE	55
Taylor & Francis	50
Springer Nature	45
PLOS	30
Frontiers	20

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study employed a systematic literature review (SLR) approach to explore fairness in classroom assessment by teachers. The study-selection process followed the PRISMA stages described in the Method section. The literature-search process began with the identification of 1,353 relevant articles from databases such as Google Scholar, ERIC, PsycINFO, JSTOR, Elsevier, Wiley, SAGE, Taylor & Francis, Springer Nature, PLOS, and Frontiers. After the inclusion and exclusion criteria were applied, 45 articles were further evaluated. From this evaluation process, 15

articles were selected for analysis. These articles encompassed various studies relevant to fairness in classroom assessment, with a particular focus on teachers' and students' perceptions at the secondary-school level.

Figure 1.
PRISMA PICO Diagram

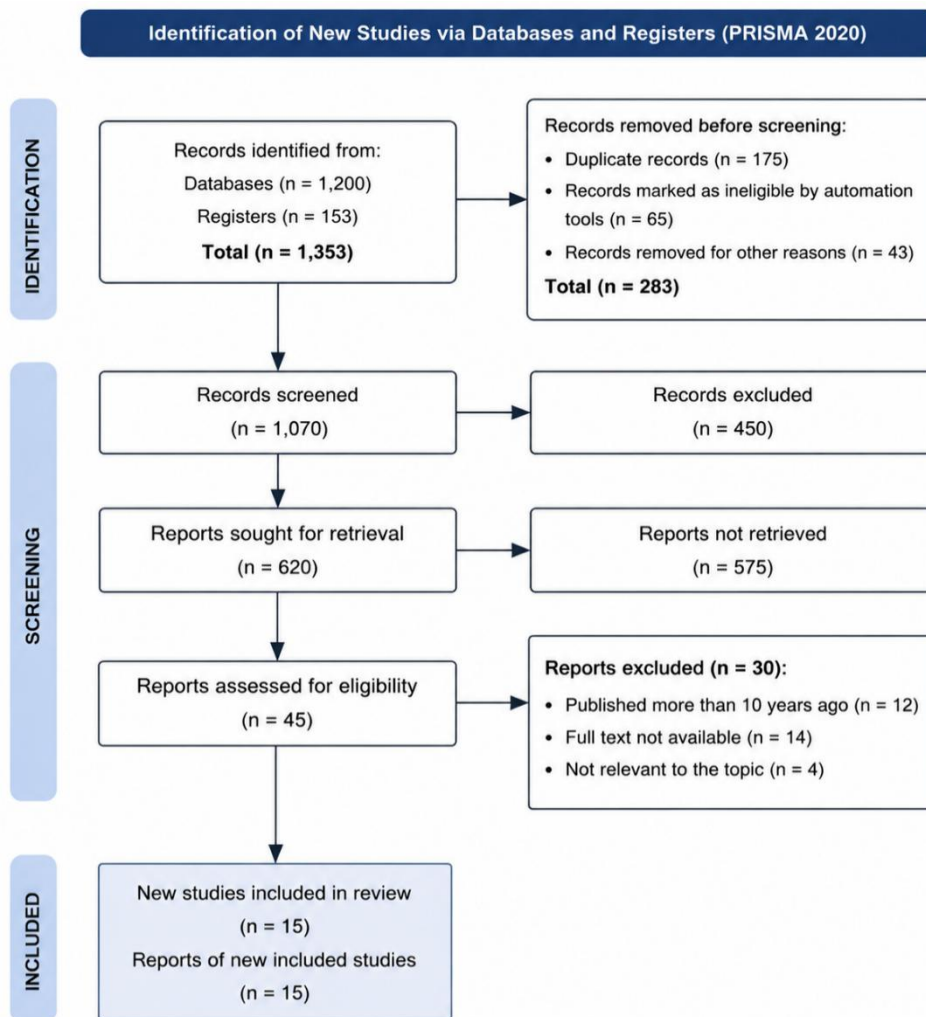


Table 2.
Summary of Studies Included in the SLR

No	Author(s)	Year	Title	Method	Key Findings
1	Rasooli, A., DeLuca, C., & Zandi, H.	2022	<i>Teachers' Conceptions of Fairness in Classroom</i>	Qualitative case study	Teachers' perceptions of fairness involve procedural, interpersonal, and distributive aspects

			<i>Assessment: An Empirical Study</i>		influenced by school culture.
2	Falavarjani, S. R., & Mousavi, S. A.	2024	<i>Rethinking fairness in classroom assessment</i>	Theoretical/literature review	Teachers and students differ in their perceptions of fairness, particularly regarding feedback and grading.
3	Baniasadi, H., Roohani, A., & Tabatabaei, O.	2023	<i>Fairness in Classroom Assessment: A Systematic Review</i>	Systematic review	Fairness is context-dependent; sociocultural and relational factors must be considered in classroom assessment.
4	Herman, J. L., Cook, L. L., & Zapata-Rivera, D.	2023	<i>Fairness in Educational Assessment and the Next Edition of the Standards: Concluding Commentary</i>	Conceptual/editorial article	The article prompts reflection and discussion on assumptions and conceptualizations of fairness in contemporary assessment.
5	Brandmo, C., & Gamlem, S. M.	2025	<i>Students' perceptions and outcome of teacher feedback: a systematic review</i>	Systematic review	High-quality, concrete, and personalized feedback improves student achievement and perceptions of fairness.
6	Asamoah, D., Gao, X., & Kyei, L.	2023	<i>Towards developing classroom assessment literacy: Exploring teachers' approaches to assessment across cultures</i>	Mixed-methods study	The study explored teachers' approaches to assessment across cultural contexts. The results indicate that classroom assessment literacy (CAL) is influenced by cultural factors, professional experience, and national education policies. Teachers with high CAL are better able to balance formative and summative assessments

					and apply principles of equity in student feedback and assessment.
7	Anyichie, A. C., Hsiao, C. Y., & Alvarado, J.	2023	<i>Exploring Teacher Practices for Enhancing Student Engagement in Culturally Diverse Classrooms</i>	Qualitative case study	The study examined how teachers in multicultural settings develop teaching practices to enhance student engagement. The results indicate that teachers who are sensitive to cultural diversity use inclusive strategies such as collaborative learning, cultural reflection, and empathetic communication. These approaches contribute to a stronger sense of fairness and more active participation among students from diverse backgrounds.
8	Rezai, A.	2022	<i>Fairness in classroom assessment: development and validation of a questionnaire</i>	Quantitative survey	The study developed and validated a 30-item questionnaire to assess fairness in classroom assessment. The instrument demonstrated strong construct validity and reliability and identified key dimensions such as transparency, consistency, and inclusivity in assessment practices.
9	Barman, L., Carlsson, M., & Lindberg, V.	2022	<i>Safeguarding fairness in assessments—How teachers develop joint practices</i>	Narrative-in-action research approach	The study demonstrates how assessment practices change when performance criteria are developed collaboratively. The findings highlight the importance of joint discussions among teachers in ensuring fairness and consistency in assessment

					practices.
10	Valentine, K., Martineau, J. A., & Newton, P.	2023	<i>Fairness in Assessment: Identifying a Complex Adaptive System</i>	Constant-comparison method	The study explores how assessment leaders conceptualize fairness in assessment. It identifies fairness as a multidimensional construct operating at environmental, system, and individual levels. The authors propose viewing fairness as a complex adaptive system and emphasize the importance of interactions among components rather than linear causality.
11	Wallace, M. P., & Qin, C. Y.	2021	<i>Language classroom assessment fairness: Perceptions from students</i>	Quantitative study	Students reported that test administration was procedurally and interactionally fair, but they were neutral regarding distributive justice. Perceptions of interactional and distributive justice predicted overall fairness judgments of the language program.
12	Wallace, M. P., & Weng Ng, J. J.	2022	<i>Fairness of Classroom Assessment Approach: Perceptions from EFL Students and Teachers</i>	Survey	Both teachers and students rated criterion-referenced assessment as the fairest approach, individual-referenced assessment as relatively fair, and norm-referenced assessment as the least fair.
13	Safa, M. A., & Nasiri, B.	2025	<i>Fairness in language classroom assessment practices: what do EFL teachers underscore?</i>	Quantitative study	EFL teachers were aware of principles of fairness in classroom assessment, including transparency, consistency, and interaction, and indicated that teaching-context variables did not

					significantly influence their perceptions of fairness.
14	Anderson, K. J., Godbold, E., & Brown, G. T. L.	2025	<i>Clarifying and expanding equity in assessment by considering three orientations: Fairness, inclusion and justice</i>	Conceptual/theoretical study	The study reviews three justice orientations—fairness-oriented, inclusion-focused, and justice-driven—and discusses their implications for contemporary assessment.
15	Azizi, Z.	2022	<i>Fairness in assessment practices in online education: Iranian University English teachers' perceptions</i>	Qualitative study	Emotions, interpersonal behavior, and communication influence perceptions of fairness in online assessment.

Dynamics of Fairness in Classroom Assessment

Previous research consistently conceptualizes fairness in classroom assessment as a multidimensional construct encompassing procedural, interpersonal, and distributive dimensions (Rasooli et al., 2022; Baniasadi et al., 2023; Gipps, 2017). The findings of this systematic literature review likewise indicate that fairness in classroom assessment is a multidimensional and interconnected construct rather than a set of isolated principles. Across the reviewed studies, fairness is consistently conceptualized through procedural, interpersonal, and distributive dimensions that interact dynamically within classroom contexts. Procedural fairness, including transparency in criteria and consistency in assessment practices, is widely recognized as a foundational requirement. However, cross-study comparisons indicate that procedural clarity alone does not guarantee students' perceptions of fairness unless it is accompanied by meaningful interpersonal engagement and equitable outcomes.

Interpersonal fairness appears to be a critical determinant of perceived justice across diverse educational settings. Collectively, the studies demonstrate that respectful teacher-student interactions, empathetic communication, and high-quality feedback significantly shape how students interpret assessment practices. Rather than focusing solely on technical accuracy, the reviewed literature highlights that students' trust in assessment processes is strongly influenced by how feedback is delivered and how teachers respond to individual learning needs. This synthesis suggests that the interpersonal dimensions of

fairness function as a bridge between formal assessment procedures and students' lived classroom experiences.

Distributive fairness further complements procedural and interpersonal elements by shaping students' responses to assessment outcomes. Cross-study evidence indicates that perceptions of fairness are closely tied to whether assessment results are viewed as proportional to effort, achievement, and opportunity. When students perceive grading outcomes as misaligned with their performance or contextual circumstances, their motivation and engagement tend to decline. Taken together, these findings reinforce the notion that fairness in classroom assessment must be understood as an integrated system of processes, interactions, and outcomes.

This finding is consistent with Rasooli et al. (2022), who found that teachers' conceptions of fairness in classroom assessment involve procedural, interpersonal, and distributive dimensions shaped by school culture. Similarly, Wallace and Qin (2021) showed that students' perceptions of interactional and distributive justice significantly influence their overall judgments of assessment fairness. Rezai (2022) also emphasized transparency, consistency, and inclusivity as key indicators of fair classroom assessment. These previous studies support the present review's finding that fairness cannot be understood solely in terms of technical accuracy or equal treatment but must instead be viewed as a multidimensional practice involving clear procedures, respectful interaction, and equitable outcomes. From an educational psychology perspective, fairness in classroom assessment is crucial because students' perceptions of assessment fairness are closely related to motivation, emotional responses, trust in teachers, and engagement in learning activities (Rasooli et al., 2022; Wallace & Qin, 2021). When students perceive assessments as fair, transparent, and respectful, they are more likely to interpret assessment experiences positively, develop greater confidence in their learning abilities, and participate more actively in classroom activities (Rezai, 2022; Brandmo & Gamlem, 2025). Conversely, perceptions of bias, inconsistency, or insensitivity to individual differences may reduce students' motivation, increase negative achievement emotions, and weaken their trust in the educational process (McArthur, 2018; Wallace & Qin, 2021). Therefore, fairness in assessment is not only an ethical and procedural concern but also a psychological factor that shapes how students think, feel, and behave in classroom settings. This perspective explains why fairness should be viewed as central to educational psychology, as it supports students' sense of belonging, perceived competence, and trust in the learning environment, all of which are essential for effective learning and academic development (Rasooli et al., 2022; Ryan & Deci, 2020).

The Influence of Classroom Assessment Literacy on Perceptions of Fairness

Classroom assessment literacy has been widely recognized as a key enabling factor for teachers to implement fair and equitable assessment practices (Asamoah et al., 2023; DeLuca et al., 2018; Popham, 2017). Another prominent theme across the reviewed studies is the role of classroom assessment literacy in enabling fair assessment practices. Teachers with higher levels of assessment literacy demonstrate a greater capacity to design assessments aligned with learning objectives, apply transparent criteria, and balance formative and summative approaches. The cross-study synthesis reveals that

assessment literacy mediates the relationship between policy-level expectations and classroom-level implementation, allowing teachers to adapt assessment practices to diverse learner profiles while maintaining accountability. In contrast, limited assessment literacy is associated with an overreliance on summative grading and reduced responsiveness to student diversity, which may exacerbate perceptions of unfairness.

This interpretation is supported by Asamoah et al. (2023), who reported that classroom assessment literacy is influenced by cultural factors, professional experience, and national education policies. Their study indicates that teachers with stronger assessment literacy are better able to balance formative and summative assessments and provide equitable feedback to students. In line with this finding, Baniyadi et al. (2023) argued that fairness in classroom assessment is context-dependent and should be understood by considering sociocultural and relational factors. Therefore, the present review extends previous findings by showing that assessment literacy functions not only as a technical competence but also as a professional capacity that enables teachers to make fair and context-sensitive assessment decisions.

Dynamics of Fairness in Online and Post-Pandemic Assessment

In digital and post-pandemic learning environments, assessment fairness is increasingly influenced by access to technology, digital competence, and the quality of online communication (Williamson et al., 2020; Azizi, 2022). This evolution highlights the pressing need to understand fairness not only in traditional classroom settings but also under digital and hybrid learning conditions, as disparities in access to technology and online engagement can amplify inequities and affect students' psychological engagement and motivation. The reviewed literature also highlights the growing significance of digital and post-pandemic assessment contexts in reshaping considerations of fairness. Across studies conducted in online and hybrid learning environments, fairness is increasingly associated with technological access, digital literacy, and the quality of technology-mediated interaction. Although digital assessment offers flexibility and scalability, cross-study comparisons indicate that unequal access to devices and connectivity, as well as differences in digital competence, can undermine equitable assessment opportunities. These findings suggest that fairness in contemporary classroom assessment requires expanded criteria that incorporate technological conditions alongside traditional dimensions of fairness.

Previous studies also confirm that digital and online assessment contexts create new challenges for fairness. Azizi (2022) found that teachers' perceptions of fairness in online assessment are strongly influenced by emotions, interpersonal behavior, and communication. This suggests that fairness in digital assessment is not limited to access to technology but also involves how teachers communicate expectations, provide feedback, and respond to students' difficulties in online learning environments. In addition, Brandmo and Gamlem (2025) emphasized that high-quality, concrete, and personalized feedback improves students' perceptions of fairness and their learning outcomes. These studies strengthen the present review's argument that fairness in post-pandemic assessment requires attention to both technological access and the quality of teacher-student interaction.

Cultural and Contextual Dimensions of Fairness

Cultural and contextual factors further influence how fairness is conceptualized and enacted across educational settings. Previous studies show that fairness in classroom assessment is interpreted through culturally embedded norms related to authority, communication, and student participation (Asamoah et al., 2023; Anyichie et al., 2023; Falavarjani & Mousavi, 2024). Rather than relying on universal assessment models, effective fairness practices appear to depend on teachers' cultural sensitivity and contextual awareness. In relation to the Indonesian educational context, these findings imply that fairness must account for centralized curricula, hierarchical teacher-student relationships, and socioeconomic disparities. The cross-study synthesis therefore underscores the importance of culturally responsive assessment practices in translating fairness principles into meaningful classroom applications.

When these international findings are situated within the Indonesian educational context, fairness in classroom assessment becomes a particularly complex and salient issue. Indonesian classrooms are characterized by centralized curricula, high-stakes national assessments, and relatively hierarchical teacher-student relationships, which may shape how fairness is perceived and enacted in practice. Although studies conducted in Western and other international contexts emphasize student voice, feedback dialogue, and assessment transparency, their application in Indonesia requires contextual adaptation rather than direct transfer. In Indonesia, teachers often face large class sizes, students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, and varying levels of access to digital infrastructure, especially in post-pandemic learning environments. These conditions intensify the importance of classroom assessment literacy, as teachers must balance policy compliance with sensitivity to students' contextual constraints. International findings on procedural, interpersonal, and distributive fairness therefore highlight not only best practices but also potential tensions between standardized assessment demands and equitable classroom implementation in Indonesian schools. Consequently, fairness in the Indonesian context should be understood as a situated practice that integrates global assessment principles with local cultural norms, institutional expectations, and resource realities.

Integrative Synthesis and Implications

Overall, the integrated findings of this review indicate that fairness in classroom assessment is a dynamic and evolving practice shaped by the interaction among procedural clarity, interpersonal engagement, distributive justice, assessment literacy, technological conditions, and cultural context. By synthesizing evidence across diverse studies, this discussion moves beyond a study-by-study summary and offers a holistic understanding of how fairness is enacted in contemporary classroom assessment practices.

Proposed Conceptual Framework of Fair Classroom Assessment

Based on the integrative synthesis of the 15 reviewed studies, this systematic literature review proposes a conceptual framework to explain how fairness in classroom

assessment is constructed and experienced in contemporary educational contexts. The framework positions classroom assessment literacy as a foundational component that enables teachers to design transparent, valid, and equitable assessment practices. Teachers with strong assessment literacy are better equipped to align assessment objectives with instructional goals, apply clear criteria, and provide meaningful feedback.

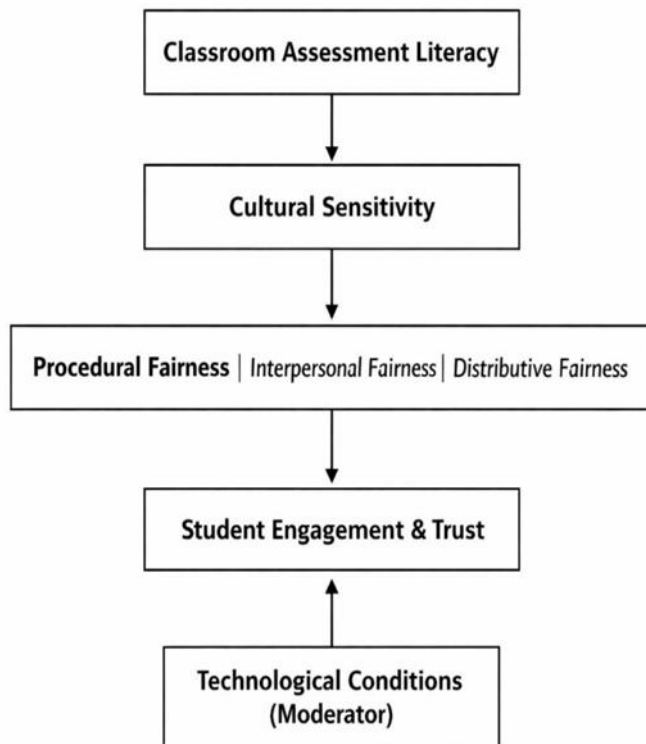
Classroom assessment literacy interacts closely with cultural sensitivity, which shapes how teachers interpret and respond to students' diverse sociocultural backgrounds, learning needs, and contextual constraints. Cultural sensitivity allows teachers to adapt assessment practices in ways that promote inclusivity and equity rather than uniformity. Together, assessment literacy and cultural sensitivity influence the enactment of procedural, interpersonal, and distributive fairness in classroom assessment.

These dimensions of fairness, in turn, play a central role in shaping student engagement, motivation, and trust in the assessment process. When students perceive assessment practices as transparent, respectful, and equitable, they are more likely to engage actively in learning and view assessment outcomes as legitimate. In post-pandemic and digital learning environments, technological conditions, such as access to digital resources, platform usability, and digital communication, function as contextual factors that can either strengthen or undermine the relationship between fairness and student engagement.

This conceptual framework advances previous systematic reviews by integrating pedagogical competence, cultural responsiveness, and learner engagement into a unified model of assessment fairness. Rather than treating fairness as a static or purely procedural concept, the framework emphasizes its dynamic and context-dependent nature, offering a holistic perspective that is particularly relevant to diverse and digitally mediated classroom settings. To provide a systematic overview of the studies included in this review, Table 2 summarizes the key characteristics of the 15 selected articles, including authorship, year of publication, research methods, and principal findings related to fairness in classroom assessment.

Figure 2.

Conceptual Framework of Fair Classroom Assessment Based on the Synthesis of Reviewed Studies



CONCLUSION

Overall, the findings from the 15 studies indicate that fairness in classroom assessment is a multidimensional concept that includes procedural, interpersonal, and distributive fairness and is influenced by cultural, social, and teacher-professionalism factors. Assessment fairness is determined not only by rules or evaluation instruments but also by the quality of feedback, empathetic communication, and teachers' assessment literacy in balancing formative and summative assessments. Furthermore, fairness is contextual and must be tailored to the characteristics of learners and learning environments, whether face-to-face or online. Therefore, the implementation of fair assessment requires the integration of technical competence, ethical reflection, and social sensitivity to ensure that the evaluation process genuinely supports inclusive, transparent, and equitable learning for all students.

Although this study provides valuable insights into fairness in classroom assessment, several limitations should be considered. First, the inclusion of only studies published in English or Indonesian may have excluded relevant literature published in other languages, potentially limiting the diversity of the perspectives represented. Second, the reliance on secondary data from existing studies means that the analysis depends on the quality and scope of the reviewed literature. As such, new or unpublished research may not have been included. Third, although the review focused on studies from the past 10 years, the rapidly evolving educational landscape, particularly in digital learning environments, may mean that some findings could become outdated as technological

advances continue to reshape assessment practices. Finally, this study did not include studies focused on specific geographical contexts or educational systems, which may limit the applicability of the findings to different cultural or educational settings. Future research could address these limitations by including a wider range of studies across various contexts and languages to enhance the generalizability and depth of the findings on fairness in assessment.

Based on the systematic review of the 15 studies analyzed, future research should examine the dynamics of fairness in classroom assessment more deeply by considering a wider range of sociocultural contexts, particularly the Indonesian educational environment, which has cultural characteristics, school structures, and interaction patterns that differ from those examined in international research. Future research should also develop and test instruments for measuring fairness that are appropriate to the local context so that the principles of procedural, interpersonal, and distributive justice can be measured more accurately and appropriately. Furthermore, longitudinal studies and classroom action research are highly recommended to understand how teachers' fairness practices and perceptions change over time, particularly after teachers have undergone assessment-literacy training or experienced changes in institutional policies. Further research should also focus on technology-based assessment, given the increasing use of online learning, which may present new challenges related to bias, accessibility, and digital communication. Thus, future research is expected not only to broaden the theoretical understanding of assessment fairness but also to offer practical solutions that can be implemented to improve the quality of assessment so that it is fair, inclusive, and responsive to learners' needs.

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Author Contribution Statement

Hazatrinigrum Kusumawati contributed to the conceptualization of the study, the development of the research framework, the systematic literature search, data screening, data analysis, and the preparation of the original manuscript draft. Hazatrinigrum Kusumawati also managed the organization of the data and the synthesis of the reviewed studies.

Farida Kurniawati contributed to the supervision of the research process, methodological guidance, critical review of the manuscript, and substantive revisions to improve the theoretical and analytical quality of the study. Farida Kurniawati also provided academic feedback throughout the research process.

Both authors read and approved the final version of the manuscript and agreed to be accountable for the content of the work.

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