Lecturers' Perception On Teaching Evaluation: Selection Of Research Instruments

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ABSTRACT

Evaluations are used as a key measure of teaching quality by many higher learning institutions in lecturer performance processes. They can also be used by lecturers to inform reflections on teaching, and thus contribute to the development and enhancement of teaching, courses and student learning. However, there are limited studies have been done that focus on how lecturer perceive on teaching evaluation by students. Normally, questionnaire was used to conduct the study in a quantitative approach. In this paper, a summary of three questionnaires is layout showing the validity and reliability of its significant based on the content of these instruments. Other aspects such as the amount of items required in the questionnaire, the length of questionnaire, and the questionnaireresponse rates are also presented. By ensuring the quality of teaching and learning, this paper is intended to add up to the literature giving the best selection of research instruments of lecturer's perception on teaching evaluation, that best suits the criteria of the research instruments selected for this study.

Keywords: research instrument, teaching evaluation, questionnaire, survey tools

INTRODUCTION

There are number of methods or approaches used to evaluate teachers, learners and lecturers on their teaching instruction. Jackson (1998) had identified several different approaches to lecturer evaluation such as student evaluation, classroom observation, students' rating, student achievement, peer-rating, self-rating, teacher interview, parents' rating, competency tests, and indirect measures. The most famous and most frequently used is the student evaluation. Recent studies have indicated that formal student evaluation systems have been part of the higher education setting for decades and have prompted extensive discussion in the literature about their value and usefulness for teachers and learners (Smock & Crooks, 1973; McKeachie, 1990; Beran & Rokosh, 2009; Aleamoni, 1987; Nasser & Fresko; 2002, Arthur, 2009). Other research also says that student evaluation has been regularly used to improve teaching instruction, enhance the professional growth of the lecturer (Joshua, 1999).

Much discussion with regard to the implementation of student evaluation has focused on issues such as the usefulness of student feedback in improving the quality of instruction, teaching effectiveness and efficiency (Yusuf *et al.*, 2010; Harun *et al.*, 2011). However, the lecturers' opinion and perception on the student evaluation was neither enquired nordiscussed formally and this lead to a study to discover the lecturers' perception.

Most lecturers have conducted a student evaluation at some stage during their teaching careers. In order to look at the lecturers' perspective, previous studies apply both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Generally, a research instrument is used as a survey tool in the quantitative approach. Previously, there are a number of research instruments available with lots of different intentions and different objectives of the study. The purpose of this paper is to review the current literature of three research instruments used previously in studies that focus on how lecturer perceive on teaching evaluation by students. The study review its significant based on the content of these instruments includes the validity and reliability of the research instruments, the questionnaire length and response rate, and also the number of items required in the questionnaire.

The next sections of this paper are outlined as follows: The first section explores the existing research

instruments available in the literature. Next section presents the criteria selection of a research instruments. The final section summarizes the selection of a research instruments based on the criteria provided and presents recommendation for proposed research instrument.

THE EXISTING RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

The following subsections discuss the three questionnaires that previously used in this type of studies. Each of the questionnaires contains the demographic section of the responders and it varies with each other based on research questions. These questionnaires were used in the higher learning institutions but in different research sites. Questionnaire 1 was used in the African region, where as Questionnaire 2 was distributed in New Zealand. Finally, the Questionnaire 3 was sent out in Malaysia.

Questionnaire 1: Lecturers Response to Student Evaluation of Teaching (LRSET)

This LRSETresearch instrument or questionnaire had been developed by Iyamu and Aduwa-Oglebaen (2005). It is a two-page questionnaire and contained of 20 items to test the hypotheses. The first 10 items were on the general need for student evaluation; the next 5 items were on formative purposes; and the last 5 items were on summative purposes on student evaluation. The questionnaire had a four-point Likert scale items based on a scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree and were weighted 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. These items were listed in the Table 1.

Table 1: LRSET Questionnaire items

No.	Items
1	Students should evaluate their lecturers.
2	Maturity of university students qualifies them to evaluate their lecturers.
3	Students possess good value-judgment to evaluate their lecturers.
4	Lecturers will be more prepared for their teaching if they know that their students will evaluate them.
5	Lecturers will be more punctual to class if they know that their students will evaluate them.
6	Lecturer-student relationships will be improved if they know that their students will evaluate them.
7	Lecturers will be more dedicated to their job.
8	Lecturers will be more disciplined generally.
9	Feedback on student evaluation helps lecturers to improve on their teaching.
10	Lecturers will be more innovative in their teaching.
11	Lecturers will be more transparent to the students.
12	Results of student evaluation are needed to improve classroom instruction
13	Results of student evaluation are used to improve students' learning.

14	Results of student evaluation can be used to assess the professional needs of lecturers.
15	Student evaluation reports allow for self-reflection.
16	Results of student evaluation are needed for administrative decisions.
17	Student evaluation results are used for promotion of lecturers.
18	Such results are needed for salary increase for lecturers.
19	Student evaluation results are needed to select the best teachers for award in the faculty.
20	There is the need for student evaluation of lecturers yearly.

This questionnaire has been implemented at four institution of higher education, namely University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria (Iyamu & Aduwa-Oglebaen, 2005), Cross River University of Technology, Nigeria (Idaka, Joshua, & Kritsonis, 2006), University of Ilorin, Nigeria (Yusuf *et al.*, 2010), and Walter Sisulu University, Republic of South Africa (Machingambi & Wadesango, 2011). It had been tested and improved with a Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient of 0.61 by Iyamu and Aduwa-Oglebaen (2005), and also 0.63 by Idaka, Joshua, and Kritsonis (2006).

In addition, according to Yusuf *et al.* (2010), this questionnaire instrument had also been improved and content validated by three lecturers from University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria. The test-retest procedure was used twice to determine the reliability of the instrument to university lecturers. The scores were analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficient and this yielded a coefficient of internal consistency of 0.59. The instrument was also vetted by three experts in educational research, measurement and evaluation, and psychology for face and content validities from Cross River University of Technology, Nigeria (Idaka, Joshua, & Kritsonis, 2006).

Questionnaire 2: Teachers' Perception on Student Evaluation Survey

Deaker *et al.* (2010) have developed a twelve-page survey so called Teachers' Perception on Student Evaluation Survey. This survey consists of 37 items (with sub items included) using a five-point Likert scale and each of them contains the comments box. The items of this survey were listed in Table 2. The first three items were using a Yes/No answer and the last two items were open-ended questions. The survey explored the current practicesin the first five items and the rest of the items explored the perceptions of the data and influence on practice.

Table 2: Teachers' Perception on Student Evaluation survey items

No.	Items
1	Have you ever run student evaluations using the centralized system of evaluation?
2	Please identify why you use student evaluations: • To get feedback on my students' learning experiences • To provide feedback to my students • To report on quality matters to relevant internal and external bodies • Because it is required by my school/institution

- For my own professional development
- For my promotion application
- For my salary review application
- To help with course refinement/development

3   Do you ever communicate with students about their feedback from student evaluations?

4   When you receive the results from your student evaluations do you:

- Actively look for feedback about teaching and assessment?
- Seek assistance with interpreting the results (e.g. colleagues/Head of School/Organizational Research Officer/EDC/mentor etc)? Discuss the results with colleagues/teaching team?
- Compare the data with previous evaluations?
- Provide students with feedback on the results?
- Read the open question comments made by the students?
- Spend time going over the data and responses?

5   Do you show your students you have taken account of their feedback from the evaluations through:

- School communication channels such as notice boards, Moodle, email lists, etc
- Course refinements/improvements
- Informal discussion with students
- The course outline

6   To what extent do your reasons for using student evaluations influence your teaching decisions?

7   To what extent does Otago Polytechnic's use of student evaluation data influence your teaching decisions?

8   My course design refinements are influenced by student evaluation results:

9   My willingness to try new teaching approaches is constrained by the possible negative effects on my student evaluations:

10   Do you personally consider it worthwhile to gather student evaluation data about teaching and courses?

11   How effective is your Institution's centralized evaluation system in gathering meaningful student evaluation data for you?

12   If you were able to decide on the future of student evaluation at your Institution, what would be your decision and why?

13   Do you have any other comments to make about student evaluation of teaching/courses?

This survey was implemented at three institution of higher education in New Zealand namely University of Otago (UO), University of Waikato (WU) and Otago Polytechnics (OP). According to the Stein *et al.* (2012), the survey

had gone through a pilot study to 45 staff from respected institutions as mentioned above and number of changes was made from their feedback until the survey ended up with the final version. However, there is no evidence stated that the questionnaire has been analyzed and validated showing the reliability of the survey.

Questionnaire 3: Lecturers' Perception on Student Evaluation

This three-page questionnaire was developed by Harun *et al.* (2011) and consists of 54 itemswith 5 point of Likert scale, 1 being totally disagree to 5 being totally agree, and the last two items were open-ended questions. These items as listed in Table 3 and were alienated into eight clusters; a) Academic staff appraisal in general (7 items), b) The lecture method (4 items), c) What students expect from a lecture or lecturer (5 items), d) Student ratings in general (12 items), e) Negative aspects of present format (8 items), f) The summary report (6 items), g) The 'written-in' comments (6 items), and h) Positive aspects of present format (6 items).

Table 3: Lecturers' Perception on Student Evaluation survey items

No.	Items
1	The performance of academic staff should be appraised in a more regular and systematic way.
2	Any appraisal system which focused on monitoring individual performance with the aim of improving efficiency would be welcomed.
3	Staff appraisal involves the recognition that an individual is doing an important and worthwhile job.
4	The aim of any system of staff appraisal must be for the improvement of their performance.
5	Consultation and training resources should be provided for lecturers seeking to improve their teaching.
6	Good teaching is central to the maintenance of academic standards.
7	Evaluation of teaching must be broadened to include measurements other than student ratings of lectures.
8	The lecture method is an efficient way of transmitting factual information.
9	Lecturers encourage students to think for themselves.
10	Little active learning occurs during most lectures.
11	Students learn more from reviewing their notes than from making them.
12	Students expect all lecturers to be able to lecture well.
13	Students think the lecturer should provide "all you need to know for passing the exams".
14	The lecturer should make the subject interesting for the students to enjoy attending
15	Students are most impressed by the lecturer who can present the main

points in ways which are easy to grasp.

16	Students are unimpressed by the lecturer who merely reads from notes.
17	Students have the right to make judgments about the quality of teaching.
18	Student ratings have a useful place as a form of consumer control.
19	Student ratings are influenced more by the lecturer than by the subject.
20	The lecture content has little effect on the student ratings.
21	Student ratings are greatly influenced by the personal 'charisma' of the lecturer.
22	Student ratings are more applicable for the younger, less – experienced members of staff.
23	Student ratings can provide information on only the most trivial aspects of teaching.
24	I am in favour of student evaluation of teaching, provided it is offered as a service which I can use if I wish.
25	Student ratings can provide useful feedback to lecturers about their teaching.
26	Students are not competent to make value judgments about quality of the subject and/or the lecturer.
27	There are important aspects of teaching which cannot be assessed by simply rating statements on a '1…5' scale.
28	Using student ratings as a measure of teaching effectiveness can be as misleading as using 'best-seller' lists as a measure of literary excellence.
29	The fact that students were able to respond anonymously encouraged silly and amusing responses.
30	The time spent filling in the student evaluation forms could have been used for other, more important, purposes.
31	It is unrealistic to make value judgments based on such small samples of student opinion.
32	Students' opinions can be unfairly biased by a 'few extremists'.
33	Over frequent use of these student evaluation forms is counterproductive.
34	The processing of the completed student evaluation forms took too long.
35	The issue and collection of the student evaluation forms caused a major upheaval.
36	Not all the statements on the student evaluation form applied to my lectures.
37	The summary report identified some problem areas.

38	The summary report was difficult to understand.
39	The 'feedback' of information in the summary report was insufficient.
40	The summary report confirmed my own impressions.
41	The pattern of student responses is often inconsistent.
42	Some items on the evaluation form need to be revised.
43	The 'written-in' comments from students were helpful.
44	Students' comments often highlighted basic problems of communication of information from lecturer to students.
45	The 'written-in' comments from students were, for me, the best source of information.
46	Only the adverse 'written-in' comments were returned to the lecturer.
47	Students make very constructive suggestions as to how the teaching can be improved.
48	Lecturers need to pay attention to students' opinion.
49	I am basically satisfied with the evaluation form used for student evaluation.
50	I welcome the feedback of information from students.
51	The feedback from students has helped me to improve my teaching.
52	Constructive criticism by students can be most helpful.
53	The students' perception of a lecturer's performance is accurate.
54	Student ratings are a good measure of overall teaching performance.
55	What further comments do you have in relation to any of the questions above or any other aspects of the student evaluation of teaching?
56	The number of students who do the evaluation is very low. Any suggestion how to overcome this problem?

This questionnaire items were adapted andmodified from Su (1995) in Harun *et al.* (2011), to suit the objectives of their study.Upon fulfilling the reliability and validity requirement, this questionnaire has been tested the coefficient of reliability with Cronbach's alpha value of 0.828. Moreover, they mentioned that a total of 30 questionnaires were distributed amongst the lecturers for the pilot study. At current state, this questionnaire has only been tested to one university in Malaysia that is Universiti Kuala Lumpur (UniKL).

THE CRITERIA OF THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

Many institutions have well established systems of student evaluations with varying degrees of compulsion but are they a valuable method of feedback for lecturers, and does this feedback lead to improved teaching and therefore improved student learning? Therefore, the author currentlyis conducting a study on how lecturers' perceive on students evaluation in teaching. This case study took place at a public university in Malaysia and uses both

quantitative and qualitative approach.

In the quantitative method, the author used an established research instruments or questionnaire to conduct the survey. However, there are number of questionnaires existed in the literature for similar type of this particular study. Thus, selecting a good questionnaire requires several criteria to be considered. According to Malmgreen (2005), a research instrument must be assessed prior to use for both validity and reliability. An evidence of content validation studies and reported reliability statistics from published studies that have used the instrument are mostly required.

To demonstrate the validity of an existing research instrument, there are several different types ofmethod to be used. One of the accepted methods suggested by Rattray and Jones (2007) is using content validity (or face validity) which refers to "expert opinion concerning whether the scale items representthe proposed domains or concepts the questionnaire is intended to measure" (p.238). As suggested and recommended by Lynn (1986), the questionnaire need to be send for content validity to content experts – at least two and up to twenty – to review for relevance and clarity.

Secondly, an established research instrument requires demonstrating the reliability which refers to the repeatability,stability or internal consistency of a questionnaire (Jack &Clarke, 1998). According to Rattray and Jones (2007), one of the most common ways to demonstrate this uses the Cronbach's alpha statistic. It is a reliability test that measures the internal consistency and stability of the multi-item scales based on the correlation between variables (Tan, 2007). As stated by George and Mallery (2003), a value of Cronbach's alpha>0.7 is acceptable for the entire questionnaire. However, according to Nunnally (1978), an alpha coefficient of >0.60 is considered adequate for social science research.

Other items to be considered to adopt an existing research instrument are length of the questionnaire, questionnaire response rates, and number of items in the questionnaire. A study by Bogen (1996) concluded that a shorter the questionnaire (<3 pages), the more likely having a high response rate. In other words, the length of the questionnaire which can be seen by the respondents, might instruments with more items get lower returns (Heberlein & Baumgartner, 1978). According to QueryCAT (2013), the items should not be more than fifty questions on a questionnaire with an answering time no more than 15-20 minutes for a typical work environment.

CONCLUSION

Based on the criteria selection of a research instruments listed in the second section of this paper, the best research instrument that suits the needs and criteria in the research site is the LRSET. This questionnaire is a two-page survey having the shortest questionnaire listed above and has 20 itemto answer the research questions with approximately less than 10 minutes response rates (assuming people can go through a survey in about 3-4 questions per minute). LRSET also has been content validated by six experts from two universities, and it was demonstrated twice with a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.61 and another is 0.63. Therefore, LRSET is suitable and appropriate research instrument to be used for the type of study based on requirement meets of the criteria provided. It will be utilized in the implementation of this study, as well as considerations for other researchers with different research context.

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