

Original article

Comparison of teachers' attitude with high and low scores evaluation on the importance and use of student assessments

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Abstract

Introduction: The evaluation of teachers' performance that the students have been part of it, if done right and be accepted by board of science, can be effective in improving the quality of their educational activities. Study of causes which result in low attention ratio faculty student evaluation results can help to overcome existing shortcomings and prepare requirements for proper operation from provided results of this evaluation. The purpose of this study is to compare the views of teachers with high and low scores evaluation on the importance and use of student assessments.

Methods: This descriptive study investigates opinions of 184 members of board of science of the Medical Sciences faculty, Ahwaz JondiShapur. Two questionnaire surveys to collect data to evaluate student teachers (for the teachers to student evaluation) and evaluation by students (for the students to teaching and teachers) were used. The data in SPSS and paired t-test and Spearman correlation coefficients were analyzed.

Results: Results showed that comparing to the importance and use of student assessment results, average attitudes of teachers in the high group in significantly higher than teachers in lower group (3/69 vs. 2/84, 0/001 = p). Significant correlation was observed between average teacher's evaluation scores and teacher's attitude toward the importance and use of evaluation results of student (0/39 = r).

Conclusions: Teachers with high evaluation scores comparing to teachers with lower evaluation scores have more positive attitude in the student evaluation. May be getting a high score from students is the reason of the positive attitude of these teachers to student evaluation results.

Key words: Teacher's evaluation, Student's evaluation, Teacher's attitude, Ahwaz University of Medical Sciences

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Introduction

Using students' ideas for the evaluation of teachers, in universities and higher education centres began in 1927 and since then has expanded so much that now it is used as the main source for performance

evaluation of teachers in the entire academic centres around the world (1). The main purpose of evaluation is to help teachers to develop teaching and continuous quality improvement and learning activities; and help

managers make logical decisions about hiring and promotion of teachers (2). The vast majority of institutions of higher education use student assessment results in administrative decisions such as a period prolongation or promote faculty members and especially to provide feedback to teachers to improve teaching methods which they use. Despite all the advantages that feedback from student assessments can be sought, researches have shown that improving education is not satisfactory (3). It has been shown that the evaluation results of college teachers in different colleges have no effect on improving aspects of teaching and promotion of teaching dimensions (4). Spencer study results showed that only 23% of board of science members changed their methods based on student assessments and these changes are mostly superficial and changes were just in content, presentation style, and lecture notes. The low use of student assessment results in improving teaching most probably is due to mistrust and concerns about the use and usefulness of these results. (5) Ryan study results showed that the mandatory use of student assessment, results to a significant decline in faculty motivation and their job satisfaction, and also has led to lower standards, as well as the lack of seriousness of teaching to and learning from the students (6). Rich showed in a study that teachers, who oppose the student evaluation of the faculty, spent their time on research and, therefore, teaching and learning for their students is not very important (7). Jacobs conducted a study and found that the majority of teachers don't believe that students' evaluations of professors has a negative impact on their behaviours, but on the contrary believe that the use of students' assessment results is a necessity (8). In the recent 25 years, review and analysis of students' assessment results in academic centres, was one of the main areas of teaching research and in these area, studies to examine factors affecting teacher evaluation in academic departments has a high growth (9). Since the results of this evaluation is used in deciding the professional status of teachers, they should be objective and collected based on acceptable standards and concrete criteria

to be accepted by teachers. Despite the research in this field, some researchers believe that most studies are flawed due to data heterogeneity (10). A review of studies shows that, despite disagreements on student evaluation use, managers and officials of institutions of higher education worldwide, accepted student assessment as a reliable source for the various decisions of its results making (11,12). But some professors and members of faculty board, look at student assessment results with suspicion and believe such assessing impede their freedom of action in education, will put them in a place lower than students position, lead to reduced motivation and lack of seriousness by professors, decrease in students performance, and eventually will result in decline in the quality of education at university level (15-13). Despite numerous studies conducted in various areas about student evaluation, so far few studies conducted about the teachers in the faculty themselves and their positive or a negative attitude towards student assessment and it is not clear why some teachers agree with students assessment and others disagree. Clarifying the teachers' reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with the assessment of student may be helpful for its use in process improvement and optimization of results in this process, because without the support and cooperation of teachers, student evaluation will not be effective considering the importance of student evaluation. Based on existing researches, the role of these evaluations in continuous improvement process of successful teaching-learning, has been reported to be critical (16). Review and analysis of teachers' views towards this process and to obtain variables that can affect various aspects of the process, can make them more transparent and its application would be very useful. Therefore, this study examined with the approach to the teachers point of views about the evaluation of student. The main research questions are: 1 - Is the attitude towards the importance and application of student evaluation different for teachers with high and low evaluation scores? 2 -Is there any correlation between teacher evaluation scores and their point of view about the

importance and application of student assessment approaches? This study compares the views of teachers with high and low evaluation scores about student evaluations conducted at the University of Medical Sciences, Ahvaz JundiShapur.

Materials and Methods

In this cross-sectional study, students and faculty members of Jondishapour University of Medical Sciences are the study population during 2009-2010 school years. Study sample included on-clinical faculty members that were evaluated once every year through questionnaires. The data gathered from two questionnaire surveys of teachers to student evaluation and students to teacher evaluation. The first questionnaire that was used to evaluate teachers was comprised of 25 questions based on 5-point Likert scale from completely agree (score 5) to totally disagree (score 1). The questionnaire includes five categories of questions (Question 24-1) and was a general question. Five categories of questions included: student assessment objectives (questions 6-1), teachers point of view about the importance of student evaluation (Question 10-7), the content of teacher evaluation questionnaire by student (questions 15-11), the negative aspects of student assessment (Questions 21-16), and uses of student assessment (questions 24-22). Question No. 25 was about the overall agreement with the student evaluation. At a meeting attended by five experts and scholars, the content was assessed and its validity was confirmed. The reliability was assessed using internal consistency and calculating Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.82. The second questionnaire, a questionnaire comprising 15 questions, five-item evaluation by students from very poor to excellent with a grading scale of one to five sessions by the Office of University Evaluation completed by students at the end of the term and then summed, the mean total questionnaire calculated to a score as rated by students of teacher evaluated and teacher evaluation were recorded. Validity and reliability of this questionnaire had been approved previously

by the researchers. Data for this study were obtained from data from the two questionnaires. Attach a paper-based questionnaire survey of teachers to justify and explain the purpose of the study was sent to different schools of all non-clinical professors. And the second questionnaire was teacher evaluation by students, and students were provided by the Centre for University Studies and the results of the evaluation score of teacher and student as the student comments was received from the Office of University Evaluation Centre.

Average grades for all courses that the professor was teaching in the semester change to a grade evaluation by students as a single score and the score of the evaluation, is obtained from the Evaluation Office of University Centre, and put beside the views of the professors in the questionnaires assessment which grading scale of it was one to five as a professor point of view in the student evaluation, recorded into computers and formed data banks. Teacher evaluation scores change between minimum one and maximum range of fifth which was the most points. To group teachers into two categories with high and low evaluation score, Chang method was used. (1). According to this data, based on teacher evaluation scores by the students, teachers were divided into two categories. Teachers with evaluation scores equal to or higher than 4 as the high score group (group of teachers who received high evaluation scores from students) and teachers whose evaluation scores were lower than 4 and considered as low group. Then the opinion of low and high scored teachers about questions of the significance of the results of a questionnaire survey of teachers (question 10-7) and application (questions 24-22) overall agreement with the results of teacher evaluation by students and student evaluation (Question No. 25) to determine the mean and standard deviation were studied. To review the results of the survey questionnaire which was prepared based on Likert scale, the mean for each of the questionnaire of high and low scored teachers was divided into three levels: the opposite, no idea and agree. Below

average 2/49 as opposed idea, to average 2/50 to 3/49 as no idea option and the average and higher than 3/50 was considered as agree (1). Data were analyzed using SPSS-15 software. For summarizing data and descriptive statistics including mean and standard deviation for the mean difference between high and low groups of teachers paired t test, and Spearman correlation coefficient was used to determine the relationship; in this paper only parts of the results of a study examining is taken. Eight questions were about the importance and application of evaluation (questions 10-7 and 24-22) and No. 25 also asked about the overall agreement with student assessment and the results to other questions are not discussed in this article.

Results

From total of 207 sent questionnaires, 184 questionnaires were completed and returned. So 89% of questionnaires were returned. Of these numbers 78 person (42.5%) were females and 106 (57.5%) were male. 184 faculty members, including 7 teacher (3.8%), 34 Associate Professor (18.5%), 61 Assistant (33.2%) and 82 trainer (44.5%) respectively.

The average low scored teachers group about Student evaluation was 2.84 ± 0.38 and high scored Group 3.69 ± 0.35 in ($p=0.001$). Mean, standard deviation and the mean difference between low and high scored groups about the importance and application of student's evaluation are shown in Table 1. Average range of low scored teachers opinions was from 2.41 to 3.43 and other group was 2.98 to 3.87, respectively. Considering the importance of student evaluation, in total the average of teacher's opinion in high scored group about titles listed in the questionnaire was significantly higher than the average of lower scored teachers. Most differences between teacher evaluation scores of low and high groups was in question, "I believe in the result of teachers evaluation by students" and the least difference between low and high scored teachers was in evaluation question, "the authorities accept the results of teacher

evaluation by students, "with values of 0/81 and 0/008, respectively. In Table 1 the results of t tests between mean high and low groups of teachers are also shown, almost in most cases there are significant differences between statistics numbers ($P=0.001$).

In connection with the use of student assessment results in a total average the high scored teachers in connection with the titles listed in the questionnaire was significantly higher than the average opinion of the lower scored teachers group, in this case the difference of scores was in the question "a useful source of feedback to the teacher" that comparing to other uses of evaluation results were lower (Table 1) which indicating relative agreement of teachers in this type of application of evaluation results (mean lower scored professors Group 3.17 and Top 3.78). Meanwhile, in the opinion of the relationship between low and high scored teachers there is a positive correlation, which is statistically significant ($0.37 = r$). In general agreement with the evaluation of teachers by students, between high and low scored teachers groups significant difference of 0/85 was observed (average of lower group of professors 2/84 and higher scored 3.69 and $P=0.001$). The remarkable thing about this issue was that, about 32% of the lower scored teachers group, in response to this question (the entire agreement with the evaluation of teachers by students) scored higher than 4, means had a positive attitude, and 14.9% of the other group scored less than 4 and so had not a positive attitude. Paired t test results were between average evaluation score of lower scored teachers and higher scored teacher shows that in all cases except the question of "the authorities accept the results of teacher evaluation by students," there are significant statistical differences between teacher evaluation scores ($P=0.001$). The highest correlation coefficient in the evaluation scores of professors in the entire agreement with the evaluation of student ($r=0.39$) and lowest in the "official accept the results of evaluation by students" ($r=0.08$) was observed (Table 1).

Discussion

Continuous improvement of quality of higher education requires the use of educational assessment. Quality of professors teaching in universities is the most important issues for feedback and analysis of educational issues and provides a comprehensive plan (17). Evaluation results of professors at

universities, is one of the main areas of educational research in recent years that has been mainly used in order to create a continuous feedback to faculty members to improve their training (18). Obviously, a necessary condition for change in how teachers teach is the acceptance of the student evaluation results, because without the cooperation and support of teachers, student

Table 1. Attitude regarding the student evaluation of teachers with high and low evaluation scores.

*Significant at 0.05 level

	Low-scored teachers	High-scored teachers	Difference	r
Importance of students evaluation				
It is acceptable to me that students evaluate their teachers	2.77±1.20	3.58±1.08	-0.81	0.37**
It is acceptable to faculties that students evaluate their teaching	1.41±0.39	2.98±0.32	-0.57	0.33**
It is acceptable to students that students evaluate their teaching	3.06±0.38	3.30±0.43	-0.24	0.16*
It is acceptable to executives that students evaluate their teaching	3.43±0.39	3.43±0.40	0.008	-0.08
Students' evaluation is a useful source for teacher to get feedback on their teaching	3.17±0.37	3.87±0.38	-0.70	0.36**
Students' evaluation is a useful source for administrative executives based on which to appreciate their faculties' educational activities	2.60±0.37	3.45±0.38	-0.84	0.38**
Students' evaluation is a useful source for administrative executives based on which to decide on the promotion of their faculties	2.51±0.37	3.36±0.36	-0.85	0.37**
In general I agree with students' evaluation of their teachers	2.84±0.38	3.69±0.35	-0.85	0.39**

*Significant at 0.001 level

*Significant at 0.05 level

evaluation impact will be negligible. In this study, the views of teachers about the importance and use of student assessment results were evaluated.

Comparing evaluation scores of teachers with lower score with teachers with higher score about the importance and use of student evaluation showed that totally there are significant statistical differences between the views of teachers. And this amount is above average for high scored teachers group. This indicates a positive attitude toward the evaluation of student for teachers with high evaluation score. A study conducted at the International University in Taiwan in 1999 examined the views of high scored teachers with lower scored one and a statistically significant difference between these teachers

has been reported (1). The present study is consistent with the results. Results of another study in Nigeria in connection with the evaluation of student teachers also showed a positive attitude (19). In a study in 2009 which examined views of 357 people from Calgary University Professors showed that although over 50 percent of teachers agree with student assessment and its improving effect on quality of teaching in various aspects, but a significant percentage (50 percent) also have completely negative attitude towards it. In this study it has been reported that teachers concerns about the student evaluation of teachers, reflect their fear of using evaluation results in promotion and recruitment (20). Normally nowadays in medical sciences faculties it is used an evaluation questionnaire survey of students

about the effectiveness of teaching. After the statistical analysis, assessment results for any teacher that has been done by the students, will be reported to the teacher with frequency distribution, or mean. But in this process is not clear to what extent these results are accepted by the professors and teachers are convinced to the extent consistent with these results to change their teaching practices. In these cases also there is no advice to the Teachers in that how must face same issues in consecutive several terms. As we know the main point is not the evaluation itself, but it should be used as a means to promote quality jobs. However, evaluation is not something that can be imposed to professor or student, but in effect it is felt necessary to improve the overall work. What is now common in most universities is student evaluation. But since the application of these results in terms of evaluation of teachers is questionable for many reasons, it should be explored and find the reasons to make it applied. May provide a basis for evaluating teachers through a survey of student activities for managers to be unsatisfactory because of the ease, but the teachers are not satisfied since this evaluation is done just through a number of questions from the students, and hence are unwilling to believe the results of evaluation. Evaluation should create the appropriate atmosphere in the educational environment and encourage greater collaboration and make trust them to use the results of the evaluation which is a good platform to reform their educational activities provided.

The results show that teachers with high evaluation grades agreed more with the importance and use of student assessment results. So, take advantage of the feedback from these results need to improve conditions and provide the quality of their teaching. Researchers believe that the high scored teachers compared to low scored one, are desirable to student evaluation since they gained high marks from students, and they are more motivated to accept and use evaluation results in the reform of teaching methods. Despite the positive attitude of teachers to student evaluation, another group of

professors also criticized the conduct of this evaluation, the quality of their education with only survey of students' evaluation, they are against using the results of these evaluations to making decisions turned status or hiring as member of science board. Does this disagreement with this assessment of student for teachers have any relation to the score they gained from the students? Is different expectation of teachers from the scores that students will give to them, the reason they disagree with this concept of student evaluation? In connection with "the importance of student evaluation" three groups of the academic community involved. Professors (who are rated), students (who are assessed) and authorities (consumer of evaluation results). From the four questions in this connection in the questionnaire, equal mean and relatively high scores (3.43 ± 0.39) to question both teachers' evaluation by students," authorities accept the results" reflect the agreement of both group teachers. This is evidence that officials believe are most important for student evaluation. The results are consistent with Chang in Taiwan (1). Both professors in connection with the question, "Teachers accept the evaluation results by students " with giving a lower average of three score, announced their opposition to this type of evaluation of teachers and professors and believe that teachers give a little importance to the evaluation of student and have a negative attitude towards this type of evaluation. One of the interesting results is the mean scores of teachers in relation to the question "I accept the evaluation results of students about teachers" in the lower scored group (3.58 vs. 2.77). Researchers believe different reactions to the evaluation of student researchers or professors, associated with given high and low scores of the students. Receiving high evaluation scores lead to pleasure and satisfaction with the positive response from the teachers, and receiving a low score, possibly lead to lack of satisfaction (21). Results of a study in Zahedan showed getting higher scores from students lead to teachers willingness to do the students evaluation (22). Groups with high average teachers' use of student assessment results

"indicate a positive attitude towards this group of professors and students to promote the use and promotion of teachers. While low scored teachers groups showed their opposing on any use of student assessment with giving a relatively low score results. The scores of both groups to the question of the teachers 'evaluation is a source of useful feedback to teachers' comparing to two other questions that were related to use of evaluation results for enhance and promote the academic performance, is much higher, it means the results of student evaluation for applications it is more acceptable to teachers. These results are consistent with the study, Nasser (23).

Idaka with the survey of 600 faculty member ideas at the University of Nigeria showed that faculty attitudes toward student evaluation is more positive when they are done with the developmental goals (19). Barnett also reviewed comments from Mercer University with 697 faculty members, although the teachers did not agree with the evaluation, but they use the results of this evaluation, for changing their teaching practices (24). Results of a study in Canada showed that most teachers look at these evaluations as a valuable resource for feedback, and simply accept it as perfectly proper way, but they are concerned about the explanation of these results in their teaching quality and to make decisions about promotion and recruitment (20). In two studies, examining the views and experiences of teachers showed that use of student assessments results by teachers is the reason of dissatisfaction against student evaluation (25,26), giving feedback to the faculty of the student evaluation is to assess teaching skills, content, presentation and teaching performance and ultimately improve the quality of education. The feedback process should aim to be successful, and the results of this evaluation process to be accepted by teachers. Teachers need to be assured that these results are not going to be used unreasonable for the fate of their careers. In this case the professors will use evaluation results with the confidence for overcoming weaknesses and enhance their teaching skills and abilities. Undoubtedly, the problems of

student assessment and faculty satisfaction and trust can be an effective step in the optimal use of the results of such evaluation in the quality of teaching and teachers.

Other findings from this study showed significant correlation between teacher evaluation scores and their point of view about student assessment. This indicates the coordination of these two variables together, in a way that can be said, teacher's agreement with the importance and application of student evaluation is a reflection of student satisfaction from their educational performance. This finding is consistent with results of other studies (21). It seems that positive attitude towards the assessment of student underlie the positive feedback and thus provide good education to students and, ultimately, the students will give high evaluation scores.

Conclusion

Teacher with low and high scores have different point of view about the importance of evaluation and application of student assessment. Teachers with high evaluation score have more positive attitudes toward the importance and application of student evaluations. More clarification on the impact of positive or negative attitude toward the evaluation of student is suggested.

Refernces

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