

Association of students' feedback on improving the teaching practices of the Faculty

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TITLE: Association of students' feedback on improving the teaching practices of the Faculty.

Abstract

Introduction

Teacher's grading through students has become an essential part of accountability in higher education. One of the most commonly used method to evaluate teachers' performance is through students' feedback. We did a longitudinal study at Khyber Medical University to analyze the students' feedback on teachers' performance and to determine the impact of this evaluation.

Objective

To determine the significance of students' feedback on improving teachers' performance.

Methodology

The students' feedback on teachers' performance was analyzed for 38 faculty members from 2011 to 2014 including feedbacks from four semesters. The means and standard deviation were used to determine the trend in the overall performance of the teachers. The one-sample t-test was used to determine the significance of these trends in the teachers' performance.

Results

The analysis showed an overall improvement in the performance of teachers analyzed for the three out of four semesters while there was a slight decline in the fourth semester from

89.9±5.0 to 86.6±6.1, at 95% confidence level. However the dip does not cross over the benchmark of 70 percent set by the Quality Enhancement Cell of the University.

Conclusion

The teachers' evaluation processes have shown a positive impact in their overall performance and are effective mechanism for keeping the teachers and students to work for the collective objective towards their learning. The reasons for the slight decline in the Fourth semester have remained unearthed in the current study and need to be explored through qualitative studies.

Key Words: Student Feedback Questionnaire (SFQ), Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC), Teaching practices, Faculty, Medical, University, Pakistan

Introduction

Teachers Evaluation survey is one of the feedback mechanisms devised to improve the system of imparting education in a class room setting. Teacher's grading through students has become an essential part of accountability in higher education. Over the past years, comparatively standard procedures for teacher evaluation have progressed, including the four main types: student, peer, self and administrative evaluation. One of the most frequently used, and still one of the most debatable, is student ratings.¹ Some researchers criticize the use of student ratings for feedback on faculty's performance, explaining that students are not capable to judge whether an instructor effectively knows the subject matter or not.²

Student feedback for teaching are often prejudiced by aspects viewed by some researchers as inappropriate to teaching-learning processes, and as a result rationality estimates may easily be perplexed and difficult to understand.³ Others have challenged this argument by describing that the effect of many of these indicators on student grading of instruction is genuine and not biasing.⁴ Focusing on faculty, the question becomes what factors affect their attitudes towards students' ratings of instruction? Student ratings have been shown to be positively correlated with student learning and achievement, i.e. students rate most highly those instructors from whom they have learned the most.⁵

One of the motives for having student feedback questionnaire is that it is an open requirement, or felt by university administrations to be an implicit compulsion. In technologically advanced countries, the universities are supposed to use the course Evaluation survey to assess their programs⁶. Keeping in view the advance trends and

demands of education and to inculcate the skills and outcome oriented delivery in the class, more focused is given to improve the quality teaching in a classroom by a teacher. To achieve the goal Feedback by the students for their instructor teaching is in practice worldwide.

The Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan established Quality Enhancement Cell (QEC) in Public and Private sector universities under the umbrella of Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) Pakistan. The QEC was established in Khyber Medical University (KMU) in 2009-2010⁷. The Quality Enhancement Cell conducts Teachers Evaluation Survey from the students to get their feedback regarding teaching and class delivery of their course Instructor for that specific period (Semester) on a prescribed Performa.

These evaluation reports are shared with the faculty members. Keeping in view the focus on this survey and its regular conduct at the end of each semester, it is matter of interest that how much this exercise is significant for the faculty members, either they find it helpful for their role as a teacher, or any modification is required in the process. Moreover, we also wanted to evaluate the association of teachers' evaluation survey with students' feedback.

2 Methodology

This study was carried out at Khyber Medical University (KMU), Peshawar, Pakistan by the Quality Enhancement Cell of the KMU. The study was based on students' feedback questionnaire on teachers' performance. Permission was obtained from the University Ethics Board to use the Students Feedback Questionnaire database, from 2011-2014, for purposes of evaluating the impact of students' feedback.

We sampled the feedback on faculty members from the Seven Institutes of the University. There are two semesters of six months each, in a year at the KMU Programmes. All the students are required to provide feedback on their teachers' performance at the end of each semester. We included those teachers in the sample for whom a minimum of four student evaluations were available. The sample included permanent and visiting faculty members. There were 38 faculty members who fulfilled the criteria to be included in this study.

"The data was collected through approved Proforma of Higher Education Commission (HEC) which is used in all the Universities of Pakistan (Table 1).

"Table 1: The questions included in the Student Feedback Questionnaire (SFQ).

10	Question
1	The instructor is prepared for each class
2	The instructor demonstrates knowledge of the subject
3	The instructor has completed the whole course
4	The instructor provides additional material apart from the text book

5	The instructor gives citations/examples regarding current situations with reference to Pakistani context.
6	The instructor communicates the subject matter effectively
7	The instructor shows respect towards students and encourages class participation
8	The instructor maintains an environment that is conducive/favorable to learning
9	The instructor arrives on time
10	The instructor leaves on time
11	The instructor is fair in examination
12	The instructor returns the graded scripts etc after examination in a reasonable amount of time
13	The instructor was available during the specified office hours and for after class consultations

“

Students completing the form had an option to mention their names 10 maintain” anonymity. A rubric scale devised by the HEC having five level of grading i.e. A,B,C,D,E, was used to assess the teachers in numerical scale of 1-5, with E reflected as 1. The QEC office analyzed the data and compiled the report for teachers to facilitate them in understanding feedback on their performance.

Distribution of Teachers Evaluation Survey into major Areas

All the thirteen (13) questions are categorized into the following four Areas (Attached Appendix). The instrument also had additional five questions from No. 14-18 but they were excluded for not being specific to teacher performance evaluation.

Table 2: Area wise division and weight given to Questions

Areas of Assessment	Questions Incorporated from the proforma	Max Weightage
Planning & Management	Q1,Q3,Q4,Q5	30
Communication Skills	Q2,Q6	20
Behavior	Q7,Q8,Q11,Q13	20
Time Management	Q9,Q10,Q12	30

Methodology adopted for results compilation for Teachers report: Marks are allotted to grades A.B.C.D.E as 5.4.3.2.1 respectively. Formula for calculations is as under: (The formula) should be pasted under it)

Score achieved by individual subject teachers is out of 65. The score achieved is converted in to percentage.

Methodology for University students' satisfaction score: The average percentage score of the teachers was calculated to ascertain the overall student satisfaction at the university level.

The questions were rearranged in four areas to ascertain the skills and weaknesses in the areas of Planning and management, Communication & Time Management skills and their behavior in conducting sessions. Method for calculation of the score gained under the specific areas of categories of teaching delivery is out of **100**.

The methodology of calculating the area wise scores is as under.

The formula for calculating area wise weight.

Total number of question Proforma No. 10 = **13**

Formula for Weight calculation:

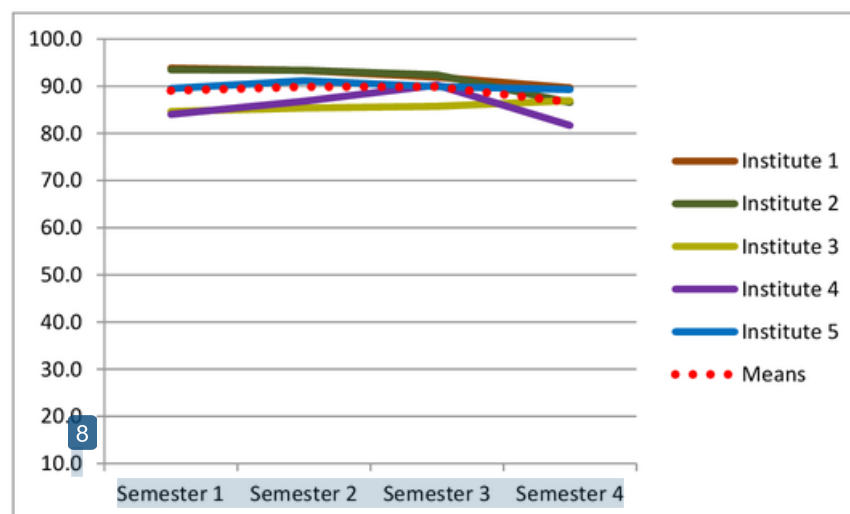
100/Total number of Questions (13) x number of question in the area E.g. $100/13 \times 4 = 31$ (The figures has been rounded)

The students' feedback on performance of teachers from the last four semesters was analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics. The means and standard deviations were measured in descriptive statistics. The one sample t-test was used to determine the statistical significance of students' feedback and its impact on faculty teaching practices. The one sample T test was used for same semester means, whereas the paired T test was applied for comparison of means between the semesters.

Results

The result showed an almost constant performance of the faculty members from all the institutes of the University There was a slight downfall in the performance of Teachers in the semester 4, shown in the figure below.

Table 3: Overall trend of the performance of Teachers



The downfall in the performance of teachers is significant ($p < 0.05$) with 95 % confidence interval. The table below shows the calculations of the t-test.

Table 4: One-Sample T-Test results

One-Sample Test							11			
	Test Value = 0						N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference					
					Lower	Upper				
Semester 1	101.438	37	.000	89.0816	87.302	90.861	38	89.082	5.4135	.8782
Semester 2	91.149	37	.000	89.8921	87.894	91.890	38	89.892	6.0794	.9862
Semester 3	106.307	37	.000	89.8684	88.156	91.581	38	89.868	5.2112	.8454
Semester 4	87.024	37	.000	86.6474	84.630	88.665	38	86.647	6.1377	.9957

Table 5: Paired Sample T-Test Results

Paired Samples Test									
		Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
					Lower	Upper			
Pair 1	Semester1 - Semester4	2.4342	6.8452	1.1104	.1842	4.6842	2.192	37	.035
Pair 2	Semester2 - Semester4	3.2447	8.0200	1.3010	.6086	5.8808	2.494	37	.017
Pair 3	Semester3 - Semester4	3.2211	7.6278	1.2374	.7138	5.7283	2.603	37	.013

Overall performance of the Teachers as per Students Evaluation was high with a mean of 88.9 ± 5.6 , from semester 1, 2 and 3 with a slight downfall found in semester 4 as shown in the table below. However, the performance scores are still above the standard of 70 percent, established by the QEC of the university. The student evaluation showed a significant ($p < 0.05$) downward trend in teachers' performance in the fourth semesters at 95% confidence interval.

The student evaluation also showed a significant ($p < 0.05$) downward trend in teachers' performance from each Institute at 95% confidence interval. There was a continuous downfall in the performance of teachers from two institutes of the university. These trends were shown in the tables and figures below. There was a continuous rise in the performance of teachers of Institute 03, whereas an inconsistency in the performance of teachers of Institute 04 and 05.

Discussion

The study was done to determine the association of students' evaluation on teachers' performance. The results showed a constant rise in the performance of teachers' in the first three semesters however there is a statistically significant descending trend in the fourth semester (Figure 1). One of the institutes (Institute 3) of the University showed a slight constant rise in the teachers' performance. Keeping in view the graph of this Institute it seems that more focus and attention has been given to the students' evaluation by the faculty members. Other reasons may include mentoring by the Director of that Institute or validating students' feedback. Rest of the faculty members belonging to other remaining four Institutes showed downfall trend for reasons beyond this study. As per the literature rating of the students can be beneficial if proper counseling of concerned teachers is to be practice .(8)

Overall teachers' performance is not improved and one of the reasons might be more awareness of the students of this Program through regular conduct of feedback survey and maximum expectation from the Teachers. Additionally, the performance of faculty members is already quite high, that is, above 86% in all semesters. Maintaining such high performance also requires continuous faculty development activities that are offered to the faculty by the university in form of workshops, certificate courses, and masters courses (Add IHPER reference here for the CHPE, CHP, MHPE, and MHR courses).

Is the counseling with the faculty members will be helpful or not because it is possible that some of faculty members dont pay attention to the feedback report or if counseling provided it was not provided in effective manner so it could have helped them for improvement in class teaching.⁽⁹⁾

One of the factors to improve faculty teaching skills is to engage in a faculty development programme. Literature shows that "at the entry level all the faculty members should possesses basic teaching skills and be oriented to the academic values, norms and expectation of the Intuitions"⁸. The faculty in this case may not have attended the faculty development programme, however this study could not explore the issue in detail.

In this study the data of faculty members of one university is evaluated because of domain of Quality Enhancement Cell evaluates the teachers of its own university as per the policy and for inclusion of data of other university proper collaboration and uniformity of policy is required.

The findings need to be explored in further universities to determine the impact of students' feedback on teachers' performance.

Conclusion

In this study it was investigated that students' feedback has an association with teachers' performance. An overall performance of faculty members showed slight downward trend in the performance of faculty members in the feedback of four semesters. However, the overall performance of faculty members was high (above 86% as compared to the standard set at 70%) and very slight downward trends appeared in the semester 4. It is suggested that the evaluation process should continue with further inputs through qualitative studies from students about the reason of minor deviation to address the weaknesses and identify the remediation.

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