

A Study of the Applicability and Purpose of Students Evaluation of Lecturers in Colleges of Education in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT: *The National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) which is the supervisory agency for Colleges of Education in Nigeria in its current Minimum Standards provided an instrument for the evaluation of lecturers by students. This study raised five research questions and hypotheses to address some aspects of the applicability of the NCCE Instrument for Students Evaluation of Lecturers (ISEL). A mixed method approach was used and the sample comprised of 260 students and 48 lecturers from Colleges of Education in Nigeria. The instruments used were ISEL, Students Evaluation of Lecturers in Colleges of Education Questionnaire (SELCEQ) and pre evaluation briefing on ISEL (PREBISEL). Descriptive statistics, T test, χ^2 and one way ANCOVA were used to answer research questions and test hypotheses. Findings revealed that students and lecturers agreed that students can objectively evaluate their course lecturers and such evaluation will be useful. It was also established that lecturers whose students score higher marks in their courses receive higher students' evaluation rating than lecturers whose students score lower marks. Pre evaluation briefing had no significant effect on students' evaluation of their lecturers. It is recommended that Colleges should put ISEL to full use, and the NCCE should monitor its implementation and emphasize it in accreditation processes. The process of administration and reporting of ISEL should be developed and standardized with consideration for a mixed method approach.*

KEYWORDS: evaluation, high achievement courses, low achievement courses, pre-evaluation, briefing.

INTRODUCTION

One of the most important resources for student learning, teacher effectiveness and professional development is feedback and evaluation given by students (Ustunluoglu & Can, 2012). Evaluation may be defined as a process of delineating, obtaining and providing useful information for judging decision alternatives. Hence, if educational systems are unable to provide feedback to their teachers, not only do they fail teachers, in the end they also fail students. The purposes of evaluation are to improve teacher's skills and knowledge about teaching and to use the information obtained about a person's teaching skills for certification or in decisions concerning promotions.

Such evaluation may be done by commissioned experts, Colleague, students, or the teacher himself. The cheapest, fastest and commonest form is the self-evaluation aspect done by the colleagues, students or the teacher. The question therefore is who is responsible for evaluation? Lecturers may doubt this aspect of evaluation or join the debate, or oppose the idea of students' evaluation of their role on the grounds of validity and reliability.

The major questions raised include: Can students effectively and objectively rate their lecturers? What factors affect students' evaluation of lecturing? Can students' evaluation detect changes in teaching performance? Can students' evaluation be consistent between groups? Kember, Leung, and Kwan (2002) summed up the arguments against student evaluations especially for making personnel decisions on four view points; firstly, they are an inappropriate measure of teaching effectiveness since students lack the expertise and maturity to judge performance of lecturers; secondly, the instruments are biased and influenced by situational factors irrelevant to teaching; thirdly, they are quite harmful to academic quality and standards, fourthly, the instruments contain items that are considered subjective, vague, and ambiguous

The NCCE has contributed to the call for the evaluation of lecturers by the students by developing an instrument titled Instrument for Students Evaluation of Lecturers attached to its 2021 edition of the curriculum implementation framework for Nigeria Certificate in education (NCE). Although no guidelines, purpose or details were given, this study found it useful for teacher development and for this study. Therefore, this study examined the applicability and purpose of student's evaluation of lecturers in relation to implementation of the required instrument for the improvement of teaching and learning process in Colleges of Education in Nigeria. It looked into high and low achievement courses taught by lecturers, how students rate (evaluate) high and low achievement course lecturers, how objective and useful would the evaluation be and the role of briefing before the evaluation.

Research Questions. The following questions were raised for the study

- 1: What is the difference between the identified high and low achievement courses taught by the lecturers?
2. How do students rate (evaluate) high and low achievement course lecturers.
3. What is the opinion of students and lecturers on students' ability to objectively evaluate their course lecturers?
4. What is the opinion of students and lecturers on the usefulness of their course lecturers?
5. What is the effect of pre evaluation briefing on students' evaluation of their course lecturer?

Hypotheses: The following null hypotheses were formulated for the study

1. There is no significant difference between the selected scores of high and low achievement courses taught by the lecturers.
2. There is no significant difference between students rating of high and low achievement course lecturers.
3. Students and lecturers are significantly independent on the opinion that students can objectively evaluate their course lecturers.

4. Students and Lecturers are significantly independent on the opinion that student's evaluation will be useful.
5. There is no significant difference between the evaluation of lecturers by students in high and low achievement courses when controlled for briefing.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Stroebe (2016), the administration of students' evaluations on their lecturers is quite an old practice and has been used to inform lecturers about the effectiveness of their teaching as observed by students. Chikazinga (2019) observed that student evaluations of lecturers dated back to the 15th Century at the University of Bologna in Italy when lecturers were being remunerated according to their teaching capabilities based on students' evaluations. There is another school of thought which advocates that informal student evaluations started around 1960s by enterprising college students. Since then, they are widely applied by almost all Universities of the world as source of information for the evaluation of teaching performance of their lecturers.

The use of student evaluations to evaluate lecturers' performance has attracted pronounced attention with regard to their reliability and validity (Laursen, Hassi, Kogan, Hunter, & Weston, 2011). Traditionally, Universities and Colleges evaluate teaching performance of lectures using various methods, such as classroom observation, student assessment, student pass rate, self-rating, peer rating, parents rating, and other secondary means (Richardson, 2005). Students evaluation of teaching, though involved in controversy, has gained widespread popularity globally as a basic means of assessing teaching in Universities and Colleges (Chikazinga, 2019). There are other several methods to evaluate teaching effectiveness, for example online questionnaires, peer review, class observation, and student-drop out (Slade & McConville, 2006). University lecturers had also been evaluated using multiple data sources such as portfolios, walk throughs, peer assessment, self-assessment, and senior teacher assessments (Stronge, 2006).

Samaian and Noor (2012) used an instrument which comprise of four sections (a) planning and preparation, (b) Delivery Techniques, (c) Assessment, and, (d) Students-Lecturer Relation to rate lecturers in a semester about their teaching performance. The study concluded that the students' comments did correlate with their overall assessment on lecturer's performance and an excellent lecturer ability to deliver lecture effectively play significant role as compared to other performance criteria

Despite the fact that some Colleges and Universities place importance on student evaluations of teaching, it is well established that students who receive higher grades rate Professors more favourably (Cohen, 1981; Feldman, 1976; Goldberg and Callahan, 1991). This is of some concern, because colleges evaluate Faculty members on these evaluations and because research indicates that students use such evaluations when they are selecting courses (Wilhelm, 2004). It is believed that students may simply like easy courses and punish those that they perceive as difficult by giving low evaluations. In a survey of college students about why they gave poor teaching evaluations, 8% of students reported giving low evaluations for revenge. In the same survey, being

unfair in grading or hard grading was the second most common reason given for poor evaluations, behind only poor teaching style or methods (Boysen, 2008; Clayson, 2004; Clayson et al., 2006). Ustunluoglu and Can (2012) investigated the consistency of the ratings of teachers by two groups over a two-year period. The participants consisted of 1028 Preparatory Program students, 99 teachers, 4 trainers and 4 Preparatory Program coordinators in the first year study, and 1211 Preparatory Program students, 99 teachers, nine coordinators in the second year. A Pearson's correlation addressed the relationship and the study suggests that data collected from students is a valid evaluation tool in evaluation of the teachers.

Chen and Hoshower (2003) investigated the importance of student evaluations, and found that students can offer meaningful feedback when they believe and see that their input is being valued. Iguodala, Okonufua, Adejumo, and Okunlola (2020) reported the evaluation of the performance of the lecturers by the students in 2016. This exercise was followed up in 2017. In the survey, 5,340 questionnaires were administered to 192 Students. The maximum mean score of any lecturer from the exercise was 150 and the minimum mean score, 30. . While many of the students acknowledged the friendly and sometimes fatherly disposition some other students perceived some of the lecturers as too harsh, intimidating and insulting.

Piason and Maxwell (2021) studied the impact of student evaluations on teaching and learning effectiveness at Chinhoyi University. He adopted descriptive research design using a sample of sixty-seven students undertaking E-Business course. The research employed stratified sampling approach and data was gathered using semi-structured and unstructured questionnaires. Findings of the study confirmed that the adoption of student evaluations on lecturers had no significant impact in terms of improvement in teaching and learning. Therefore, the study recommends that the University should use multiple methods of evaluating lecturers' teaching. Secondly, evaluation of lecturers should be conducted during the semester and not left at the end of it, in order to have positive impact on teaching and learning.

Yusuf, Ajidagba, Agbona and Olumorin (2010) investigated the perceived effect of students' evaluation of teaching on university teachers' instructional practices in Nigeria. 326 respondents were randomly drawn from three Nigerian Universities. A 20- item questionnaire Lecturers Response to Students Evaluations of Teaching (LRSET), was used to generate data. Four research questions investigating the perception of lecturers on the effects of students' evaluation of teaching on instructional practices were answered. The result showed that although lecturers generally do not accept students' evaluation of their teaching, they perceived that the students' evaluation of teaching would bring about positive changes in their instructional practices. They recommended that students' evaluation of classroom teaching should be introduced, made mandatory and conducted regularly in the Nigerian Universities .

Ozcan's (2013) study was conducted to discover what students' reasons are while evaluating the lecture and teaching. Results revealed that students with higher Grade Point Averages (GPAs) tend to evaluate lecture and teachers more favourably. Finally, significance was discovered between students' views in terms of newly-established Universities and developing Universities,

classroom size, their grades and students' GPAs. This suggests that pre evaluation briefing or exposition of students to the need and purpose of the evaluation will enhance better evaluation. Many Universities in Nigeria have devised various means of improving the performance of their students with a view to improving their productivity and performance in the world of work after graduation. Among this is the students' evaluation of their lecturers' teaching effectiveness and efficiency. Students' evaluation refers to a periodic evaluation of teachers. It involves a systematic gathering and analysis of information, on the basis of which decisions are taken regarding the effectiveness and efficiency of the teacher.

The NCCE has gone a step further in the improvement by developing an instrument titled instrument for students evaluation of lecturers. Although no guidelines , purpose or details was given, this study found it useful for teacher development and for this study. The instrument contains introductory statement, general information, rating on 5 point scale of 28 items, request for things liked about the lecturer, things disliked about the lecturer and general grading. Gardener and Milton (2002) asserted that, from the available literature, the question of whether or not lecturers should be evaluated is not the issue, rather, the question is largely who should do it, for what purpose, and by what means. It is on this interest that this study is based and to examine the applicability of students evaluation of lecturers instructional practices in Nigerian Colleges of Education.

METHODOLOGY

Design

A mixed method was used. Survey and Quasi experimental designs were applied. Two groups(treatment and control) were randomly selected. The treated group received pre evaluation briefing while the control did not receive briefing. The research also involved instrument development and adaptation, data collections, data analysis and report writing. It involved seeking opinion of lecturers and students of 4 Colleges using questionnaires and interactive sessions.

Population and Sample.

The study population is made up of staff and students of the Colleges of Education (COE) in Nigeria who are at NCE3 level. Consent of the lecturers and students were sought (volunteers) in view of the nature of the study. Samples were drawn from four northwestern cluster of COEs in Nigeria and the choice of the COES was based on the sensitivity of the volunteers to the objectives of the research and the personality of the researchers. Two course lecturers were selected from each of the four COEs from where samples were drawn. The course lecturers were those with higher and lower percent pass rate.

Courses with higher pass rate were tagged high achievement courses and courses with lower pass rate were tagged low achievement courses. 40 students were randomly selected from each COE to evaluate two lecturers that taught the identified high and low achievement courses. Also 60 students were randomly assigned to two groups in one of the COEs for the experimental study. One group received briefing and the other did not. They also assessed both high and low achievement course lecturers. The sample consists of 260 students and 48 lecturers.

Instrumentation

Three Instruments were used. The Instrument for Student Evaluation of Lecturers (ISEL) which was developed by NCCE was adapted. ISEL consists of 4 sections, that is, background information, rating of lecturers, things liked best about the lecturer and things disliked about the lecturer. The second is the pre evaluation briefing on ISEL (PREBISEL) which was developed for use. It consists of two sections: background information and; briefing items. The third was Students' Evaluation of Lecturers in Colleges of Education Questionnaire (SELCEQ). It consists of 3 sections: background information; 4 point scale on lecturers and students' opinion on students' evaluation of lecturers and; opinion on what should be the objectives of student's evaluation of lecturers. The SELCEQ and PREBISEL were content validated with test retest reliability coefficient of 0.78 and 0.82 respectively from the pilot testing procedure.

RESULTS

Data was coded and processed using the SPSS statistical package. The package ran descriptive and inferential statistics. T test analysis was used to resolve hypotheses 1 and 2, Chi square method was used for hypotheses 3 and 4 while one way ANCOVA was used to resolve hypothesis 5

Table 1: The difference between high and low achievement courses taught be lecturers

Las group has	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Haslas	Has 160	57.0688	12.86804	10.079	318	.000
	Las 160	42.5812	12.84522			

All high achievement courses identified has mean high achievement score (HAS) of 57.07 while low achievement courses has a mean low achievement score (LAS) of 42.58. This shows that HAS is higher than LAS as required for use in the study.

The table above shows that $t = 10.079$ $p = .000$ which is significant at 5% alpha level. $t(318) = 10.079$, $p < .05$. hence $p < .05$ and the null hypothesis are rejected and there is significant difference between the scores of high and low achievement course lecturers. This confirmed the usefulness of the data as high and low lecturer's achievement scores for the study.

Table2: Difference between student's evaluation of high and low achievement course lecturers

	N	Mean	Std Deviation	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
All ISEL of high achieving lecturers	160	82.8875	9.04008	14.466	159	.000
All ISEL of low achieving lecturers	160	66.0188	14.5699			

The mean rating of high and low achievement course lecturers are 82.887 and 66.019 respectively. Which shows that the lecturers whose students score higher marks in their examinations were rated higher by their students.

From the table above t is significant $t(159) = 14.750$, $p < .05$. therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected which reveals that there is a significant difference between students rating of high and low achievement course lecturers. That is, lecturers whose students score higher marks in their courses examination receive higher students' course evaluation rating than lecturers whose students score lower marks.

Table3: Students' and lecturer's opinion on Students' Evaluation of Lecturers in Colleges of Education Questionnaire

Items	Students No(%)		Lecturers No(%)		Df	χ^2	Sig
	Agreed	Disagreed	Agreed	Disagreed			
1.Students can objectively evaluate their lecturers	36(90)	4(10)	32(80)	8(20)	3	7.580	.056
2.Students evaluation of their course lecturers will be useful	35(87.5)	5(12.5)	38(95)	2(05)	3	13.754	.001

From table 3, item1 above, 90% of the students agreed that students can evaluate their lecturers while 10% disagreed. Also 80% of the lecturers agreed that students can objectively evaluate their lecturers while 20% disagreed. Both students and lecturers (85%) agreed that students can objectively evaluate their lecturers.

Result also shows a non-significant $\chi^2 = 7.580$ at 5% level of significance $\chi^2(3) = 7.580$, $p = .05$. With a marginal p value, the null hypothesis is therefore accepted and there is no significant association between students and lecturers on the opinion that students can evaluate their lecturers. From table 3, item2 above, 87.5% of the students agreed that students' evaluation of lecturers will be useful while 12.5% disagreed. 95% of the lecturers agreed that students' evaluation of lecturers will be useful while 5% disagreed. Both staff and students agreed that students' evaluation of lecturers will be useful.

The table reveals a significant χ^2 value $p < .05$. $\chi^2 (3) = 13.754$, $p = .001$. The null hypothesis is rejected. Hence there is a significant association between students and lecturers opinion that students evaluation will be useful

Table4 : Tests of Between-Subjects Effects Dependent Variable: With Briefing Rating

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig	Partial Eta Square
Corrected Model	936.845 ^a	2	468.423	3.986	.030	.228
Intercept	762.199	1	762.199	6.485	.017	.194
Covcontrol	583.212	1	583.212	4.962	.034	.155
Group	389.603	1	389.603	3.315	.080	.109
Error	3173.321	27	117.530			
Total	164711.000	30				
Corrected Total	4110.167	29				

From the table above, $F(1, 27) = 3.315$, $p = 0.080$, $\eta^2 = 0.109$. p is not significant since $p > .05$. Hence the null hypothesis is accepted. There is no significant difference between the evaluation of lecturers by students in high and low achievement courses when controlled for briefing

DISCUSSIONS

Results on the data involving the sampled high and low achievement score courses and their course lecturers was appropriate for the study as findings revealed significant difference between the two groups. The result only served the purpose of confirming the usefulness of the data for the study. The mean differences between student's evaluation of high and low achievement course lecturers have been observed to be significant. Lecturers whose students scored higher were rated higher by their students than lecturers whose students scored lower marks. Kwam (2002) raised factors such as student's incompetence, lecturer's incompetence, faulty instruments and difficulty level of the course contents. However, ratings could be due to obvious status of lecturer's performance in teaching and learning enhancement which already classified them into high and low achievement score facilitator. The findings of Cohen, 1981; Feldman, 1976; Goldberg and Callahan, 1991 agree with the position of the finding.

Students and lecturer's opinion that students can objectively evaluate their course lecturers is in line with studies of Chikazinga (2019), Samaian and Noor (2012). However, kwan (2002) argued against such objectivity. Yusuf, Ajidagba, Agbona and Olumorin (2010) do not believe in the objectivity of students rating although they agreed that the process was worth it in a mixed method way. Findings of the study by Ustunluoglu and Can (2012) support the findings of this study by establishing the consistency of two groups of student rating of teachers.

Historically the administration of students' evaluation of their lecturers is an old practice (Stroebe, 2016; Chikazinge, 2011), this study however revealed that most of the students and lecturers agreed that students' evaluation of their course lecturers will be useful. Studies by Yusuf, Ajidagba, Agbona and Olumorin (2010) and Orpen (1980) alluded to the usefulness of student's

evaluation of classroom teaching while Piason and Maxwells (2021) work differs from the findings of this study with some caution on how teachers should be evaluated.

Having controlled for briefing in the one way ANCOVA, no significant difference between the evaluation of lecturers by students in high and low achievement courses. Ozcan (2013) observed the need for pre evaluation briefing for new institutions while Gardener and Milton (2002) raised more issues, that is, who should do the evaluation, what purpose, and by what means. Perhaps considering all these three and additional issues like pre briefing would be a point of harmony for all the various findings.

CONCLUSION

The study found out that lecturers whose students score higher marks in their courses receive higher students' evaluation rating than lecturers whose students score lower marks. Students and lecturers agreed that students can objectively evaluate their course lecturers and such evaluation will be useful for the improvement of learning. Also, pre evaluation briefing has no significant effect on students' evaluation of their lecturers. It could therefore be concluded that despite the limitation of student's evaluation skills, human imperfection and some other challenges raised in the literature, students and lecturers agreed that students' evaluation of their lecturer is possible and useful. It should therefore be carried out.

Recommendation

- 1.Colleges should build upon the optimism of students and lecturers on the applicability and usefulness of ISEL and ensure that it is put to full use.
- 2.In order to take care of challenges anticipated from the literature and the results of this study, a mixed method approach would be necessary to compliment the impact of the ISEL.
- 3.Incentives, awards, or special promotion would go a long way in enhancing the impacts of ISEL reports.
- 4.ISEL is a document of the NCCE, hence the need for the NCCE to monitor its implementation and emphasize it in its accreditation processes.

Future Research

Considering the evaluation of lecturers by students in Colleges of Education, the result and scope of this study revealed some gaps which could be filled by undertaking studies in the following areas:

1. Identifying College objectives of students' evaluation of lecturers
2. Standardizing the ISEL and development of manuals
3. Development of the implementation framework for evaluation of lecturers by students
4. Identifying other applicable approaches that will constitute a mix method for comprehensive evaluation of the lecturers.

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