

INSTRUMENT FOR STUDENTS EVALUATION OF LECTURERS IN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN NIGERIA: A STUDY OF ITS APPLICABILITY

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Abstract

Evaluation is a very important aspect of lecturing and had been done more by the lecturers with little or no input from the students. The National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) which is the supervisory agency for Colleges of Education in Nigeria in its 2020 edition of the Minimum Standards provided an instrument for the evaluation of lecturers by students. Using a mixed method approach, the study raised four research questions and hypotheses to address some aspects of the applicability of the NCCE Instrument for Students Evaluation of Lecturers (ISEL). The population comprised of lecturers and students of colleges of education in Nigeria and a sample of 260 students and 48 lecturers were randomly sampled for survey design and 30 of the students were randomly selected into control and experimental groups. Three 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 lecturers whose students score higher marks in their courses receive higher students' evaluation rating than lecturers whose students score lower marks and Pre evaluation briefing had no significant effect on students' evaluation of their lecturers. It is recommended that 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 achieving courses; pre evaluation; briefing; students evaluation of lecturers.

1.0 Introduction

To a teacher or lecturer, the purposes of evaluation are to improve teachers' 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? The National Policy on Education (2016) requires that teachers should be provided with intellectual and professional background adequate for their assignment and to make them adaptable to any changing situation not only in the age of their country, but in the wider world. One of such intellectual and professional background that teachers need to examine and adapt is assessment of lecturers by the students.

The increasing number of Institutions using Student Evaluation of Teaching has caused a growing controversy in the literature. Studies on the use of students' ratings for evaluating teacher effectiveness have mostly questioned students as valid judges of teaching effectiveness, revealing positive and negative effects of ratings. This has caused a growing controversy in the literature, as student evaluations of teaching play a vital role in the promotion and tenure process

Maxwell (2021) and Samaian and Noor (2012) posited that student evaluations of teaching fulfils these objectives in higher education. (a)enhancing teaching quality (b)providing information for performance appraisals systems, for instance tenure or promotional decisions,

(c) providing evidence of institutional accountability. (d) providing information and feedback to management regarding performance of teaching in order to reflect and make essential improvements in future. (e) developing professional practice (f) holding universities and lecturers to account, which inevitably leads to improved performance. (g) diagnosing tool to assess teaching effectiveness.

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

Many Universities and Tertiary institutions 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. In particular, 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 (ISEL) which is attached to its 2021 edition of the curriculum implementation framework for NCE.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The NCCE has gone a step further in the improvement of teaching and learning in the College of Education sector by developing an instrument for students' evaluation of lecturers. No guidelines, purpose or details were provided. 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.

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. Some of the major questions raised by Okegbile (2001) 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?

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 students' 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.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The following objectives guided the study:

The following are the objectives of the study

1. To determine how students rate (evaluate) high and low achievement course lecturers
2. Determine if ISEL is made available for students to evaluate their course lecturer.
3. Determine if students can evaluate their course lecturers objectively whether they passed or failed the course.
4. Determine if there is the effect of pre evaluation briefing on students' evaluation of their course lecturer.

1.4 Research Questions

The following questions were raise for the study:

1. How do students rate (evaluate) high and low achievement course lecturers.
2. How available are ISEL for use by students to evaluate their course lecturers.
3. What is the opinion of students and lecturers on the objectivity of students' evaluation of their course lecturers whether they passed or failed.
4. What is the effect of pre evaluation briefing on students' evaluation of their course lecturer.

1.5 Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated for the study:

1. There is no significant difference between students rating of high and low achievement course lecturers.

2. Students and Lecturers opinion are significantly independent on students' use of ISEL
3. There is no significant association between students and lecturers opinion that students can evaluate their course lecturers objectively whether they passed or failed.
4. There is no significant difference between the evaluation of lecturers by students in high and low achievement courses when controlled for briefing.

2.0 Literature Review

The use of student evaluations to evaluate lecturers' performance has attracted pronounced attention with regard to their reliability and validity (Kogan, 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). 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).

Out of these, student's evaluation of teaching, though involved in controversy, has gained widespread popularity globally as a basic means of assessing teaching in Universities and Colleges (Chazinga, 2019). They remain the most frequently used tools in the higher education in order to measure how well courses are being taught, despite problems regarding their validity (Samaian and Noor, 2012). Validity and reliability are the ability and accuracy of student ratings to measure competence of teaching. Nowadays, student evaluations are considered the most, if not the only influential measure of teaching effectiveness. 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, & 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. Mean statistic was used to analyze the data generated. 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

Orpen (1980) assessed the extent to which student evaluations of lecturers are accurate indicators of quality of instruction (teacher effectiveness). 128 students taking a multisection course in Mathematics evaluated the performance of their particular lecturers. Initial tests indicated no difference among the students taking the different sections (same content) in either aptitude or expected performance. Hence, the fact that significantly positive correlations were obtained between average student performance and average student evaluations of their lecturers across the various sections suggests that student evaluations of this kind can be used as a measure of instructional effectiveness under appropriate conditions

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.

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 lecturer's instructional practices in Nigerian Colleges of Education.

3.0 Methodology

A. Research Design

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.

B. Sample and Sampling Technique

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. The researcher established that selected high achievement courses had mean score of 57.06 and standard deviation of 12.87 while selected low achievement courses had mean score of 42.58 and standard deviation of 12.85. 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. Hence the sample consists of 260 students and 48 lecturers.

C. 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 students 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.

4.0 Results/Findings

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, Chi square method was used for hypotheses 2 and 3 while one way ANCOVA was used to resolve hypothesis 4.

Table1: Difference between students evaluation of high and low achievement course lecturers

	N	Mean	Std	T	df	Sig.	(2-tailed)
				Deviation			
All isel of high achieving lecturers	160	82.8875	9.04008	14.466	159	.000	
All isel of low achieving lecturers	160	66.0188	14.56992				

From table 1, 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 there examinations were rated higher by their students. Also the 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 student's course evaluation rating than lecturers whose students score lower marks.

Table 2: Students' and lecturers opinion on Students' Evaluation of Lecturers in Colleges of Education Questionnaire.

Items	Students No(%)		Lecturers No(%)		Df	χ^2	Sig	Disagreed
	Agreed	Disagreed	Agreed	Disagreed				
1.Students use ISEL to evaluate their lecturers	24(60)	16(40)	12(30)	28(70)	3	9.944	.019	
2.Student can evaluate their course lecturers objectively whether they passed or failed the course	24(60)	16(40)	18(45)	22(55)	3	3.949	.267	

From table 3, item1 above, 60% of the students agreed that students use ISEL to evaluate lecturers while 40% disagreed. 30% of the lecturers agreed while 70% disagreed. That is, more students agreed that they use ISEL while most of the lecturers disagreed that students use ISEL. There is no adequate reason to assert that students use ISEL to evaluate their lecturers. Results from the table shows a significant χ^2 at 5% level since $\chi^2(3) = 9.944$, $p = .019$. Thus the null hypothesis is rejected. The lecturers and students opinion are not independent. That is there is an association between opinions of lecturers and students on the use of ISEL by students.

From table 3, item2 above the 60% of the students agreed that students can evaluate their course lecturers whether they passed or failed while 40% disagreed. 45% of the lecturers agreed while 55% disagreed.. There are therefore no enough evidences to assert that students can or cannot evaluate their course lecturers whether they passed or failed

The table reveals further that $\chi^2 = 3.949$ is not significant since $\chi^2(3) = 3.949$, $p = .267$ Hence the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore there is no significant association between students and lecturers opinion that students can evaluate their course lecturers objectively whether they passed or failed. Their opinions are independent.

Table 4: Summary of Tests of Between-Subjects Effects Dependent Variable: with briefing rating.

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Contrast	389.603	1	389.603	3.315	.080	.109
Error	3173.321	27	117.530			

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

5.0 Discussion of Results

The sampled high and low achievement courses and their course lecturers were appropriate for the study as sampled.. The mean differences between students 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 students incompetence, lecturers incompetence, faulty instruments and difficulty level of the course contents. However, ratings could be due to obvious status of lecturers performance in teaching and learning enhancement which already classified them into high and low achievement score facilitators. The findings of Cohen, 1981; Feldman, 1976; Goldberg and Callahan, 1991 agree with the position of the finding.

Historically the administration of students evaluation of their lecturers is an old practice (stroebe, 2016; chikazinge, 2011), however in the Colleges it was recently introduced and this

study revealed that despite the provision of ISEL in the Minimum Standards, there is no adequate evidence to ascertain that students use ISEL to evaluate their lecturers.

Students and lecturers opinion that students can objectively evaluate their course lecturers is in line with studies of Chazinga,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..

Findings also revealed that there are no enough evidences to assert that students can or cannot evaluate their course lecturers whether they passed or failed. Moreover, there is no significant association between students and lecturers opinion. Studies by Ozcan's (2013), Cohen, (1981); Feldman, (1976); Goldberg and Callahan, (1991) found that higher GPA students evaluate lecturers more favourably.

Having controlled for briefing in the one way ANCOVA, there was 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.

6.0 Recommendations

The process of administration and reporting of ISEL should be developed and standardized by the NCCE and relevant college based committee so that issues such as who administers, purpose, instrumentation, confidentiality, briefing and the like will be addressed.

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.

Incentives, awards, or special promotion would go a long way in enhancing the impacts of ISEL reports.

ISEL is a document of the NCCE, hence the need for the NCCE to monitor its implementation and emphasize it in its accreditation processes.

7.0 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. There are no adequate reasons to assert that students use ISEL to evaluate their lecturers. Similarly, there are no enough evidences to assert that students evaluate their course lecturers objectively whether they passed or failed. Also, pre evaluation briefing has no significant effect on students' evaluation of their lecturers. It could therefore be concluded that despite the limitation of students' 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 would be useful if administered and implemented. It should therefore be carried out and reported.

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