

Attitude of Lecturers towards Student's Evaluation of Their Teaching Effectiveness in Nigerian Universities

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Abstract

This study was carried out to ascertain the attitude of lecturers in Nigerian universities towards students' evaluation of their teaching effectiveness. Descriptive survey was employed in carrying out the study. The population comprised all lecturers in three universities in south-south Nigeria. Stratified random sampling technique was used to draw a sample of five hundred and fifty lecturers out of which four hundred and ninety responded. A self designed questionnaire titled "lecturers attitude inventory" (LAI) was used for data collection. The instrument was divided into two sections. Section A comprised lecturers' personal data while section b was made up of twenty six (26) items designed to elicit lecturers' attitude towards students' evaluation of their teaching effectiveness. A reliability index of 0.85 was calculated through the test-retest method. Simple percentage was used to analyze the research questions while chi square statistics was used to analyze the hypotheses. The findings of the study showed that most of the lecturers have positive attitude towards students' evaluation of their teaching effectiveness. It was also found that gender, age and teaching experience made significant differences while professional status and discipline did not make significant differences in the attitude of lecturers towards students' evaluation of their teaching effectiveness. Recommendations were made based on the findings

Key words: Student evaluation, teaching effectiveness

Introduction

Student's evaluation of teaching effectiveness of their lecturers has for sometime attracted attention globally and has been made mandatory in most universities in North America and the United Kingdom. Formal student's evaluation of their lecturers as Barret in Machingambi and Wadesanyo (2011) noted began in the 15th century when students at the university of Bologna in Italy paid their lecturers according to their teaching abilities. Evaluation should be a necessary part of any program that has maintenance of some standards in mind. Considering that the educational system of any nation drives the other systems, one would agree that quality assurance in the educational system is the key to national development. Most African universities as Iyamu and Aduwa (2005) observed lack monitoring systems as graduate assistants they noted start teaching as soon as they are employed without understudying older lecturers and due to poor salary structures for lecturers, some of the younger lecturers are more likely to become business lecturers to make ends meet. Eble in Iyamu and Aduwa identified the benefits of student's evaluation of their lecturers teaching effectiveness to include:-

- Excellence in teaching can be recognized and rewarded.
- It provides a platform for participation between lecturers and students.
- Provision of the only direct and extensive information about faculty members teaching.
- Stimulating an institution to consider its own goals and values.
- Providing a platform for students' contribution in shaping the institutions educational goals.

This should also include helping the lecturers to improve on their job of preparing the students for the work force as lecturers are expected to guide students to a successful future (Fiorrello, 2012). In the United Kingdom, Eric Electronic Paper (2012) noted that a white paper published in June 2011 asked institutions to be more accountable to students on teaching. The universities are being asked to publish on line summary reports of students' survey of lecture courses which is believed to aid choices and stimulate competition among the academics. Though most lecturers in African universities have not accepted this evaluation (except those in Ghana and Kenya as noted by Isiaka (1999)), they recognize that it will definitely bring about positive changes in their instructional practices (Yusuf, Uthman & Agbonna, 2010, Machingambi & Wadesanyo, 2011). While the lecturers believe the use of the results for formative purposes will be beneficial, they strongly opposed the use for summative purposes.

A survey of studies on students' evaluation of their lecturers teaching effectiveness revealed that globally, lecturers feel it is necessary but do not agree on how and who should carry it out. Scriven (1995) however suggested that students are in a unique position to evaluate their own increased knowledge and comprehension as well as changed motivation towards the courses, they he added should easily know when schemes are covered and if test items cover all the materials of the course. Most people however believe that students may not be objective enough in evaluating their lecturers, Economic Notebook (2011) noted that

students may prefer lecturers who do not challenge them enough in terms of materials and activities. Most students these days are not ready to put in time into their studies and may see lecturers who insist on the right things being done as wicked. Again, there is a tendency for students to score lecturers high on courses they passed well not necessarily because of high quality of instruction (Orpen, 1980). Cohen (1983) also noted that lecturers with large classes have smaller chances of being rated high as compared to lecturers with smaller classes.

Johnson (2012) after an online study of 1,883 students from ten universities in Europe however concluded that of all the techniques of evaluating lecturers' effectiveness, students' evaluation proved to be more effective at providing specific information for formative and summative purposes and should be an important part of teacher evaluation. Cohen (1983) also observed that students' judgment highly correlated with test scores. Jackson in Iyamu and Aduwa (2005) found that the perception of lecturers did not differ based on gender, location of school, academic attainment, teaching experience and teaching subject under both formative and summative purposes in selected American Universities while Idika, Joshua and Kritsonia (2006) in a study "Attitude of Academic Staff in Nigerian Tertiary Institutions towards Students' evaluation of Instruction", focused on higher institution in south east of Nigeria revealed that Nigerian academic staff displayed a significant positive attitude towards student evaluation of instruction though the attitude was more positive towards formative than summative purposes. They found that members of staff of Education and Arts showed more positive attitude than those in Science and that expressed attitude was significantly influenced by professional status and academic qualification. Members of staff of colleges of Education showed more positive attitude than their university counterparts. They stressed the need for student evaluation to be introduced in all tertiary institutions to enhance quality of teaching.

Statement of Problem

Quality control in the educational system is a must for national development as all other systems ride on the wings of the educational system. An educational system that lacks monitoring is prone to failure and will definitely go down with other systems. Students who are direct recipients of what the lecturer has to offer are in a unique position to evaluate what happens in the classroom. Problems of subjectivity of scores given by students notwithstanding, if psychometric properties of instruments given to students are correctly established, results of student evaluation of teaching effectiveness of their lecturers no doubt will be of immense benefit to the lecturers and all concerned.

The problem of this study therefore is to find out the attitude of university lecturers towards student's evaluation of their teaching effectiveness.

Research Question and Hypotheses.

To guide the study, the following research question and hypotheses were formulated:-

What is the general attitude of lecturers towards students' evaluation of their teaching effectiveness?

The attitude of lecturers towards students' evaluation of their teaching effectiveness does not differ significantly based on gender.

The attitude of lecturers towards students' evaluation of their teaching effectiveness does not differ significantly based on age.

Professional status of lecturers does not make any significant difference in their attitude towards students' evaluation of their teaching effectiveness.

Teaching experience does not make any significant difference on lecturers' attitude towards students' evaluation of their teaching effectiveness.

The attitude of lecturers towards students' evaluation of their teaching effectiveness does not differ significantly based on their discipline.

Method

The study adopted a descriptive survey method which involved all the lecturers in three universities in the south/south. Stratified random sampling technique was employed. to draw a sample of 550 lecturers out of which 490 lecturers responded. Sample was drawn from these universities as follows ; -male =227, female =263, young lecturers(below 45yrs) =231, old lecturers(46 and above) =231, professors =97, lecturer II to senior lecturers =262, assistant lecturers =131, those with below ten years of teaching experience =118, 11 to 20 yrs =145, 21 to 30 yrs =167, 31 and above =60, Edu =150, Sc = 79, Engr =70, Humanities =86, Social sciences =105,

"Lecturers Attitude Inventory"(LAI) which was self-developed was used for data collection. The LAI had two sections. Section A was on lecturers' personal data while B was made up of 26 items designed to elicit attitude of lecturers towards students' evaluation of their teaching effectiveness. Reliability of the instruments was established through the test-retest method and a reliability index of $r=0.85$ was calculated. The lecturers were

required to agree or disagree on how they feel towards students evaluating them. Simple percentage was used to analyze the research question while chi square statistics was used for the hypotheses.

Results

The result of the study was based on the analyses of the research question and hypotheses

Research question

What is the general attitude of lecturers towards student's evaluation of their teaching effectiveness?

Table 1; Simple Percentage Presentation of Lecturers' Attitude towards Students' evaluation of their Teaching Effectiveness

Positive	Negative
321 (66%)	169 (34%)

Table 1 shows that 321 lecturers representing 66% of the sample have positive attitude towards students evaluation of their teaching effectiveness while 169 lecturers representing 34% have negative attitude..

Hypothesis one

The attitude of lecturers towards students' evaluation of the teaching effectiveness does not differ significantly based on gender.

Table 11; X^2 Statistics of Gender and Attitude of lecturers Towards Students' Evaluation of their Teaching Effectiveness.

Gender	Positive Attitude	Negative Attitude	total
male	171 (149)	56 (78)	227
female	150 (172)	113 (90)	263
total	321	169	490

$$X^2 \text{ cal}=18.1$$

$$X^2 \text{ crit}=3.84$$

$$df = 1$$

Table 11 shows X^2 calculated value of 18.1 to higher than the critical value of 3.84 at 0.05 level of significance and one degree of freedom. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected meaning that a significant difference exists in the attitude of lectures towards students' evaluation of their teaching effectiveness based on gender.

Hypothesis Two

The attitude of lecturers towards students' evaluation of their teaching effectiveness does not differ significantly based on age.

Table Three: X^2 Statistics of Age and Attitude of Lecturers towards Students' Evaluation of the Teaching Effectiveness

$$X^2 \text{ cal} = 10.41$$

$$X^2 \text{ crit} = 3.84$$

$$Df = 1$$

Result on Table III shows the calculated X^2 value of 10.41 to be higher than the table X^2 value of 3.84 at 0.05 level of significance and one degree of freedom. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected meaning that age makes a significant difference in the attitude of lecturers towards students' evaluation of their teaching effectiveness.

Age	Poitive attitude	Negative attitude	Total
Young	168 (151)	63 (80)	231
Old	153 (170)	106 (89)	259
Total	321	169	490

Hypothesis Three

Professional status of lecturers does not make any significant difference in their attitude towards students' evaluation of their teaching effectiveness.

Table IV: X^2 Statistics of Professional Status and Attitude of Lecturers towards Students' Evaluation of their Teaching Effectiveness

Professional Status	Positive Attitude	Negative Attitude	Total
Professor	68 (64)	29 (33)	97
Lec II – Snr Lec	160 (171)	102 (90)	262
Assistant Lec	93 (86)	38 (45)	131
Total	321	169	490

$$X^2 \text{ calc} = 4.64$$

$$X^2 \text{ crit} = 5.99$$

$$Df = 2$$

Result on Table IV shows a calculated X^2 value of 4.64 to be lower than the table value of 5.99 at 0.05 level of significance and two degrees of freedom. The null hypothesis is therefore accepted meaning that professional status does not make any significant difference in the attitude of lecturers towards students' evaluation of their teaching effectiveness.

Hypothesis Four

Teaching experience does not make any significant difference on lecturers' attitude towards students' evaluation of their teaching effectiveness.

Table V: X^2 statistics of Teaching Experience and Attitude of Lecturers towards Students' Evaluation of their Teaching Effectiveness.

Teaching experience	Positive Attitude	Negative Attitude	Total
0 – 10 years	58 (77)	60 (41)	118
11- 20 years	102 (95)	43 (49)	145
21 – 30years	110 (109)	47 (58)	167
31 and above	41 (39)	19 (21)	60
Total	321	169	490

$$X^2 \text{ Calc} = 11.42$$

$$X^2 \text{ crit} = 7.82$$

$$Df = 3$$

Result of Table 5 shows a calculated X^2 value of 11.42 to be higher than the table value of 7.82 at 0.05 level of significance and three degrees of freedom. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected meaning that teaching experience makes a significant difference in the attitude of lecturers towards students' evaluation of their teaching effectiveness.

Hypothesis Five

The attitude of lecturers towards students' evaluation of their teaching effectiveness does not differ significantly based on their discipline.

Table VI: X^2 Statistics of Discipline and Attitude of Lecturers towards Students' Evaluation of their Teaching Effectiveness

Discipline	Positive Attitude	Negative Attitude	Total
Edu	94 (98)	56 (51)	150
Sc	50 (56)	29 (27)	79
Eng	45 (46)	25 (24)	70
Human	63 (56)	23 (30)	86
Sos	69 (69)	36 (36)	105
Total	321	169	490

$$X^2 \text{ Calc} = 3.98$$

$$X^2 \text{ Crit} = 9.49$$

$$Df = 4$$

Result on Table VI shows a calculated X^2 value of 3.98 to be lower than the table value of 9.49 at 0.05 level of significance and four degrees of freedom. The null hypothesis is therefore accepted meaning that discipline does not make any significant difference in attitude of lecturers towards students' evaluation of their teaching effectiveness.

Discussion

The result of the analysis of the research question showed that 321 lecturers representing 66% have positive attitude towards students' evaluation of their teaching effectiveness while 169 lecturers representing 34% have negative attitude. This result agrees with the findings of Idiaka et al who also found that Nigerian lecturers have positive attitude towards students' evaluation of their teaching effectiveness. Though Yusuf et al 2010 and Machingambi and Wadesanyo 2011 observed that most lecturers in Africa have not accepted it. This could probably be due to the fact that lecturers know it can help professionalism but there is the fear that if not properly used, students can use it to witch-hunt lecturers who insist on doing things properly.

On hypothesis one, results showed a significant difference exists between the male and female lecturers in their attitude towards students evaluation of their teaching effectiveness. This however does not agree with the finding of Jackson in Iyamu and Aduwa (2005) who found no significant difference in the perception of lecturers towards students' evaluation of instruction. This is probably because more and more students are just after the certificate and are not ready to work hard, thus some lecturers feel that putting the power to evaluate lecturers into the hands of students will make the students to score down lecturers that insist on hard work.

Results of hypothesis two revealed no significant difference in the attitude of lecturers towards students' evaluation of their teaching effectiveness based on age. This agrees with the finding of Jackson in Iyamu and Aduwa (2005) who also found no significant difference based on age.

On hypothesis three, professional status was found not to make any significant difference in the attitude of lecturers towards students' evaluation of their teaching effectiveness. This agrees with the work of Jackson in Iyamu and Aduwa 2005 but disagrees with the findings of Idiaka et al who found professional status to significantly influence lecturers' attitude towards student evaluation of instruction.

Result on hypothesis four showed a significant difference to exist in the attitude of lecturers towards students' evaluation of their teaching effectiveness based on teaching experience. This however does not agree with the finding of Jackson in Iyamu and Aduwa who found teaching experience not to make any significant difference in lecturers attitude.

Results on hypothesis five showed discipline did not make any significant difference in the attitude of lecturers towards student evaluation of teaching effectiveness. Idiaka et al however found that lecturers from arts and education faculties had more positive attitude than their science counterparts towards students' evaluation of their teaching effectiveness but Jackson in Iyamu and Aduwa found no significant difference.

Conclusion

The result of this study revealed that most of the lecturers in Nigeria have positive attitude towards students' evaluation of their teaching effectiveness. It was found that gender, age and teaching experience made significant differences in the attitude of lecturers towards students' evaluation of their teaching effectiveness while professional status and discipline did not make any significant difference. Lecturers in universities in Nigeria and Africa as a whole should embrace student evaluation of lecturers' teaching effectiveness if quality is to be assured in the educational system.

Recommendation

The following recommendations have been put forward.

1. Students' evaluation of lecturers' teaching effectiveness should be an important aspect of the educational system in Nigerian universities.
2. Result of Student evaluation of lecturers' teaching effectiveness should be used for both formative and summative purposes.
3. Instruments used for student evaluation of lecturers' teaching effectiveness should be carefully developed to ensure their psychometric properties.
4. All class members should be used in lecturer evaluation to get a more objective result.
5. Other methods of teacher evaluation should be included especially for summative purposes.

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