ORIGINAL ARTICLE
Importance of student's feedback in teacher's evaluation system

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ABSTRACT

Background:

In medical education, evaluation of a teacher is important. Previously researches have been done to evaluate the effectiveness of a teacher using student's feedback. This study is being done to find if the University of Lahore students and teachers find giving feedback an important aspect in evaluating teachers.

Aim:

The purpose of the study is to investigate, if the student's feedback is an important tool in teacher's evaluation or not.

Materials and Methods:

Descriptive study was carried out in total 175 students. Students and teachers of University of Lahore were given a validated questionnaire to fill using 5-point Likert scale. Three batches of Bachelor of dental surgery students including 1st year, 2nd year and 3rd year students filled the questionnaire. Thirteen teachers taking feedback after Problem Based Learning were also given a questionnaire to fill. Descriptive analysis was done using SPSS.

Results:

The results obtained showed that 60%-80% of the students agreed that feedback is an important tool for evaluating teachers. Likewise, 60-70% of the teachers also agreed to the importance of feedback in faculty development.

Conclusion:

The results obtained showed that students and teachers found feedback an important tool for evaluating teachers. Therefore, student's feedback along with other tools and feedback sources for teacher evaluation can be used for teacher and student progress.

Key words: Students feedback, teacher evaluation

Introduction

Feedback is defined as a regulatory mechanism in which the learner's actions are fed back so that they can modify or improve their future actions accordingly (Ramani, Könings, Ginsburg, & Vleuten, n.d.) Feedback enhances both the performance and motivation as concluded by Ammons (1956) in his review of empirical evidence. (Cameron, 1983)

Evaluation lays the basis for imparting better teaching and learning process. In many institutes evaluation of a teacher is made mandatory (Chandler, 2015). In order to improve the quality of teaching it is considered a valuable and an inexpensive tool. (Lalvarmawi, Banik, & Devi, 2015)

Teacher evaluation by students through feedback is a practice growing throughout the world. It is one of the foundations for improving the teaching quality.(Ramsey, 2015).There are many sources for teacher evaluation but one of the sources being used commonly is the student's feedback.(Husain & Khan, 2016b). In 1980's, students' feedback was very rare in higher education, later it became an important element of the higher education.

Student feedback is being used to evaluate teachers in many institutes, however, it is still considered controversial by many academicians. (It, Its, Reflection, & Sahlemariam, 2002)

Feedback improves and increases learning which is the ultimate goal of any teacher evaluation system.(Robert & Price, n.d.). Although in many institutes feedback from students is strenuously collected but it is still not clear if it used to its full potential. There are varieties of ways in which student's views can be collected. It includes

1. Representative committees.
2. Qualitative studies.
3. Informal discussions.
4. Questionnaire.(Harvey, 2010)

For the improvement of undergraduate students there's little research if the feedback given to faculty is important or not. (Gormally, Evans, & Brickman, 2014).

The aim of the study was to find out whether student feedback is an important tool for teacher's evaluation. Previously the research has been on the feedback being an effective tool for teacher evaluation system that was limited to one batch (Husain & Khan, 2016a). Considering its limitation, this study was carried out on three batches of Bachelor of Dental Surgery students of University of Lahore. A pre validated questionnaire was being used. The results were then obtained to find if the feedback

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taken from three batches of students showed its importance in evaluating teacher.

Methods:

This study was carried out to find the feedback importance for evaluation of teachers in University College of Dentistry. Feedback form for teacher evaluation was already established by the faculty of University College of Dentistry. Students were then made to fill these feedback forms after the class .Before starting to take feedback, faculty was given workshops on the importance of feedback.

The feedback Performa's was handed over to the teacher before the class. Students were asked to fill the feedback Performa anonymously. The Performa's were then collected and handed over to the members of the committee that was assigned for this purpose. The feedback was then analyzed by these members. The strengths and weaknesses of the teacher was then summarized, and a report was made to be send to the face in charge.

To carry out this study two pre validated questionnaires were used (Husain & Khan, 2016a). Consent was taken from both the students and the teacher before using the questionnaire. One pre-validated questionnaire was distributed among the students of first year, second year, third year and final year students (Table 1). Total one seventy-five students filled the questionnaire. The other pre-validated questionnaire was distributed among thirteen teachers and they all filled it respectively9Table 2).Teachers were also asked to suggest any other method that could be used for evaluating teacher in the questionnaire.

After obtaining the data, the statistical analysis was done using SPSS 22 version.

Results:

Pre-validated questionnaire was distributed among total one hundred and seventy-five students. Responses from all of the students were received.

Table 3 summarizes the response rate of the students to the questionnaire comprising of eight questions. The importance of student's feedback for evaluating teacher in the questionnaire was rated on a 5-point Likert scale.

The results obtained showed:

Sixty-six percentage of the students agreed on the fact that the overall performance of the teacher is enhanced by the student's feedback. Seventy-three percentage of the students agreed that teaching skills improve by student's feedback. Seventy-six percentage agreed that feedback should be a part of every problem-based learning. Seventy percentage wanted feedback to be taken after the end of all the four professionals. Sixty-eight percentage of the students agreed that teacher's designation influences their response. Eighty-one percentage of the students think that teacher's performance has helped them in their learning classes.

Results obtained from 1st year students can be shown in bar chart in Figure 1.

Figure 1: 1st year results
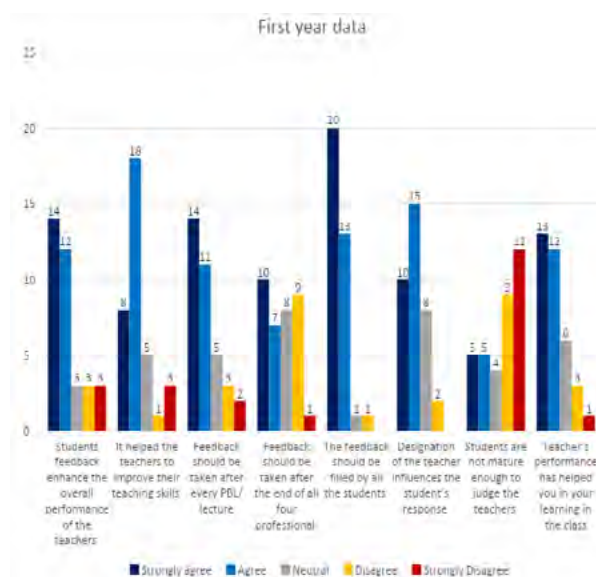
Similarly, data from 2nd Year and 3rd Year were also obtained and is shown in bar chart in Figure 2 and Figure 3.

Figure 2: 2nd year results

Figure 3: 3rd year results

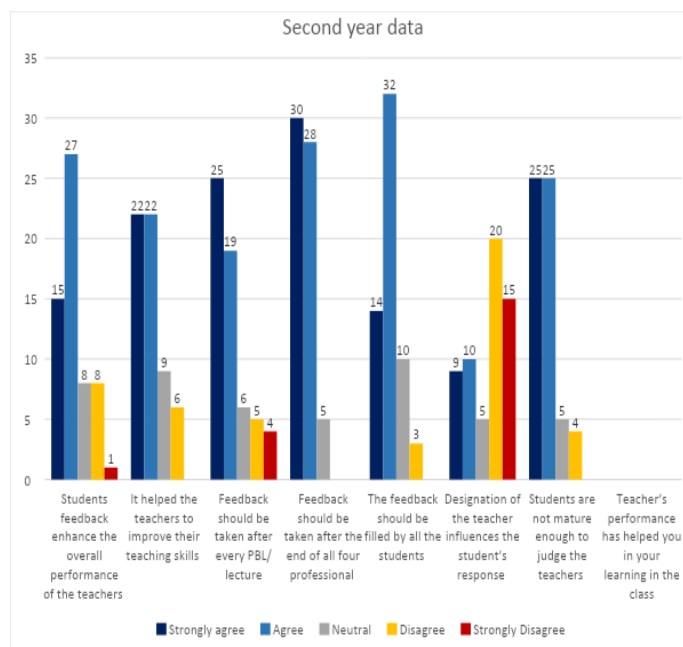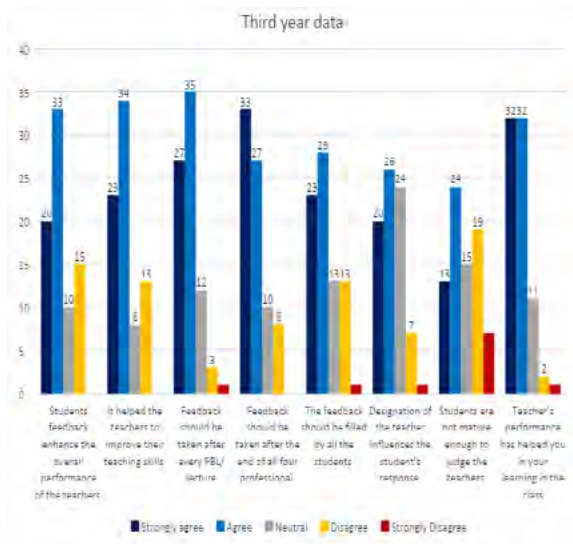along with their suggestions. (Table 4) and Figure 4

Figure 4: Teachers results

Teacher's questionnaire:

A separate questionnaire was being distributed among thirteen teachers. These thirteen teachers were already getting feedback after PBL and class. They were informed of their performance. All of the thirteen teachers filled and returned the questionnaire
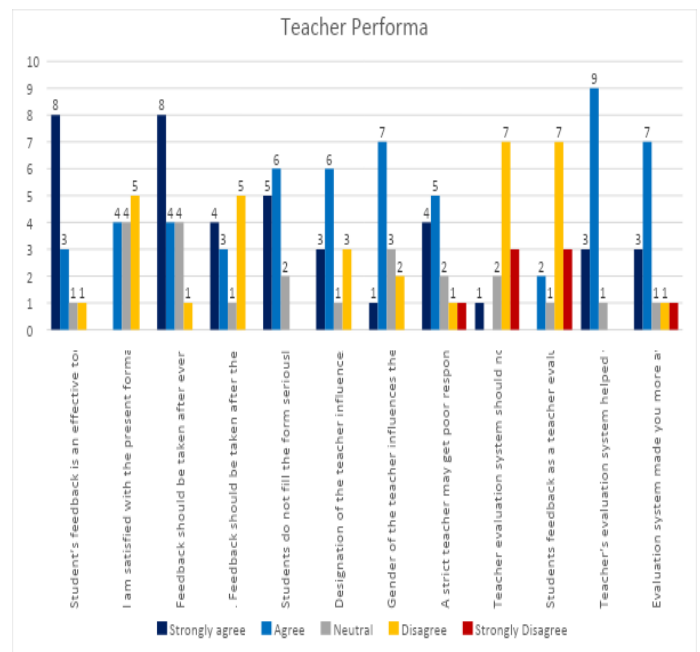
Table 1: Questionnaire regarding students response to feedback

Serial no	Statements	number of students				
		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	Student's feedback enhances the overall performance of the teachers.					
2.	It helped the teachers to improve their teaching skills.					
3.	Feedback should be taken after every PBL/ lecture					
4.	Feedback should be taken after the end of all four professional					
5.	The feedback should be filled by all the students					
6.	Designation of the teacher influences the student's response					
7.	Students are not mature enough to judge the teachers					
8.	Teacher's performance has helped you in your learning in the class					

Table 2: Teachers questionnaire

Serial no	Statements	Number of teachers				
		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	Student's feedback is an effective tool for faculty development	s				
2.	I am satisfied with the present format of teaching evaluation system					
3.	Feedback should be taken after every semester					
4.	Feedback should be taken after the end of all three professional					
5.	Students do not fill the form seriously					
6.	Designation of the teacher influences the student's response					
7.	Gender of the teacher influences the student's response					
8.	A strict teacher may get poor response as compared to lenient teacher					
9.	Teacher evaluation system should not be used at all					
10.	Students feedback as a teacher evaluation system makes you uncomfortable					
11.	Teacher's evaluation system helped you to overcome your weaknesses					
12.	Evaluation system made you more aware towards students need					

Table 3: Students response to the questionnaire

Serial no	Statements	number of students				
		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	Student's feedback enhances the overall performance of the teachers.	52(30.2%)	63(36.6%)	24(14%)	27(15.7%)	6(3.5%)
2.	It helped the teachers to improve their teaching skills.	46(26.7%)	79(45.9%)	21(12.2%)	22(12.8%)	4(2.3%)
3.	Feedback should be taken after every PBL/lecture	63(36.6%)	68(39.5%)	26(15.1)	12(7%)	3(1.7%)
4.	Feedback should be taken after the end of all four professional	68(39.5%)	53(30.8%)	24(14%)	22(12.8%)	5(2.9%)
5.	The feedback should be filled by all the students	73(42.4%)	65(37.8%)	19(11%)	13(7.6%)	2(12%)
6.	Designation of the teacher influences the student's response	44(25.6%)	73(42.4%)	42(24.%)	10(5.8%)	3(1.7%)
7.	Students are not mature enough to judge the teachers	27(15.7%)	39(22.7%)	24(14%)	48(27.9%)	34(19.8%)
8.	Teacher's performance has helped you in your learning in the class	70(40.7%)	69(40.1%)	22(12.8%)	9(5.2%)	2(1.2%)

Table 4: Teachers response to the questionnaire

Serial no	Statements	Number of teachers				
		Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1.	Student's feedback is an effective tool for faculty development	8(61.5%)	3(23.1%)	1(7.7%)	1(7.7%)	0
2.	I am satisfied with the present format of teaching evaluation system	0	4(30.8%)	4(30.8%)	5(38.5%)	0
3.	Feedback should be taken after every semester	8(62.5%)	4(30.8%)	4(30.8%)	1(7.7%)	0
4.	Feedback should be taken after the end of all three professional	4(30.8%)	3(23.1%)	1(7.7%)	5(38.5%)	0
5.	Students do not fill the form seriously	5(38.5%)	6(46.2%)	2(15.4%)	0	0
6.	Designation of the teacher influences the student's response	3(23.1%)	6(46.2%)	1(7.7%)	3(23.1%)	0
7.	Gender of the teacher influences the student's response	1(7.7%)	7(53.8%)	3(23.1%)	2(15.4%)	0
8.	A strict teacher may get poor response as compared to lenient teacher	4(30.8%)	5(38.5%)	2(15.4%)	1(7.7%)	1(7.7%)
9.	Teacher evaluation system should not be used at all	1(7.7%)	0	2(15.4%)	7(53.8%)	3(23.1%)
10.	Students feedback as a teacher evaluation system makes you uncomfortable	0	2(15.4%)	1(7.7%)	7(53.8%)	3(23.1%)
11.	Teacher's evaluation system helped you to overcome your weaknesses	3(23.1%)	9(69.2%)	1(7.7%)	0	0
12.	Evaluation system made you more aware towards students need	3(23.1%)	7(53.8%)	1(7.7%)	1(7.7%)	1(7.7%)

Discussion:

From the results, it's clearly visible that majority of the students found their feedback showing positive effect in teacher's skills. In this study 70% students were in favor of giving feedback by the end of all professionals. Musharraf and Sabina did a study that has shown that only 9.3% of the students were in the favor while 90% of the students disagreed with it (Husain & Khan, 2016a).This shows that the students of University of Lahore not only found giving feedback important but they also found its importance at the end of all professionals. According to 68% of the students, the designation of the teacher has an effect on student's response while in another study 89% of the students disagreed with the fact. Student's response being affected by teacher's designation can be reduced by improving the confidentiality of the teacher and the student.

The results of the study suggested the students and the teachers of University Dental College find feedback important for the evaluation of teachers.

To assess the importance and effectiveness of teacher evaluation, some other tools can also be considered. These tools are the student's achievement measures (Glass, 2011), on job evaluation, performance exercises and simulations, portfolios, and interviews. According to Ekiti he did a study related to student achievement measures, but serious doubts have been expressed related to it to judge the effectiveness of teachers. (Ekiti, 2003). On the other hand, Darling Hammond et al (1995) extensively researched on job evaluation methods. According to him, it has limited advantages. (Darling-hammond, Amrein-beardsley, Haertel, & Rothstein, 2012). Similarly, portfolios also presented with few disadvantages.

Self-evaluation and peer evaluation (Bernstein, 2010) are also some other methods for teacher evaluation. Due to small number of raters, these sources have a questionable reliability. As a result, most of the institutes are using and considering student evaluation an important tool for teacher's evaluation.

According to the literature, it has been concluded that the evaluation done by the students tend to reliable, stable and valid. (Marsh & Ware, 2006). Studies have shown that there are certain variables showing little or no effect on the evaluation done by the students on the quality of the teaching. The variables are the student variable includes student's age ("the new reporters : students rate instruction," 1971), sex, student's level(Mckeachie & Mckeachie, 2016), GPA of the student and personality of the student(Feldman, 1976).The teacher variables discussed were sex, age, teaching experience, personality, and research productivity. The administrative variable was also being addressed.

Limitation:

This study was conducted only in University of Lahore, thus there was limited generalizability.

The sample size of the study could have been increased. Not only dental students of Bachelor of Dental surgery but the study could also further include medical students.

Conclusion:

There are multiple ways for evaluating the performance of a teacher. This study focused on student's feedback acting as an effective tool for evaluating a teacher. The current results obtained from the study proved the importance of feedback.

Declaration of interest:

The authors report no conflict of interest.

Author's contribution:

- Dr. Fadia Asghar : Conception and design of the work; & the acquisition, analysis, & interpretation of data for the work

- Dr. Mohammad Al Eraky : Critical Review and final approval of the version to be published

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