

Perceptions of Lecturers' Gender and Position on Students Evaluation of Teaching

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Abstract. Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) is mostly used widely in various level of education institution especially in Malaysia to evaluate teaching effectiveness and also there are extensive studies that look SET from student perception. In this study, the purpose is to investigate the perception of lecturers' gender and position on importance of SET in terms of general needs, formative and summative purposes of SET. This study was conducted in a Malaysian public university using an adapted questionnaire called LRSET (Lecturer Responses to Student Evaluation of Teaching). The respondents were randomly drawn from the whole population and a total of 419 lecturers from different faculties took part in this study. An independent sample t-test was used in data analysis using SPSS 19.0. Findings showed that there is significant difference between genders for the evaluation of general needs; however, no significant difference was found between gender for the purpose of formative and summative. Additionally, there is no significant difference between position in junior and senior for the purpose of general needs, formative and summative. Further investigation will look onto significant contribution between formative and summative purpose of evaluation on the lecturers' perception of the importance of student evaluation of their teaching.

Keywords: Lecturer Perception, Gender, Student Evaluation of Teaching, Teaching and Learning.

Introduction

In order to ensure the quality in teaching and learning processes, both assessment to students and evaluation of teaching are required to implement. In higher education institutions in Malaysia, they have implement ways to evaluate lecturers teaching effectiveness. One of them is using student evaluation of teaching (SET) (Shevlin *et al.*, 2000; Spooren, Brock & Mortelmans, 2013), one of the best approach (Nakpodia, 2011) and the most frequently used (Sulong, 2014), and it is unique in every institution (Sulong & Hajazi, 2014). The SET implementation is also part of the requirement set by the Department of Standard Malaysia which is a member of International Organization for Standardization (MS ISO), a body that ensures the quality of services delivered to the students.

There is very little research that focused on perceptions of lecturers to SET and in particular, the potential impact of gender. Recent studies found that SET is influenced by the demographic characteristics of lecturers (Arbuckle & Williams, 2003; Reid, 2010) and the most researched in demographic characteristic in relations to SET is gender (Heckert *et al.*, 2006). Kogan (2010) stated that gender can effect on people thinking and incorporate response. He also added that male and female are effected equally when the response is objective, except females more negatively perceived than males when the response is subjective.

Yusuf *et al.* (2010) in their studies found that there was a significant difference in the perception of lecturers on SET across gender where female lecturers are more sensitive than male lecturers. These findings are similar with Harun *et al.* (2011), nevertheless it was disagree with Idaka *et al.* (2006) and

Olatoye & Annu (2011) where their results showed that no significant influence on the lecturers perception to SET.

Besides gender, lecturers have different perceptions on SET based on their teaching experiences. According to Kogan (2010), there was a lack of correlation that SET have with teaching experience. Lecturers having wide experiences in teaching are more positive towards the use SET than lecturers with minimum teaching experience. For example, Iyamu and Aduwa-Oglebaen (2005) stated in his research that senior lecturer with more experienced in teaching show more preference for SET than junior lecturers. Other study by Yusuf *et al.* (2010) found that there was a significant difference in perception of junior and senior lecturers of the effects of SET, which showed senior lecturers, had good perception of the effects of SET than their junior counterparts. In additional, there was a distinct difference between experienced and inexperienced lecturers on the study by Dunkin (2002). In contrast, few studies discovered different outcome as Zabaleta (2007) in her research found that lecturers with years of teaching experience are not associated with SET.

This paper is organized as follows. In section 2, the hypotheses for this study are given. In section 3, the method based on survey design is presented. The survey results based on the hypotheses and discussion are presented in section 4 and 5 respectively. Finally, this paper is concluded in the last section.

The following hypotheses were tested in this study: 1. There is no significant difference between male and female lecturers' perception of the importance of student evaluation of teaching.; 2. here is no significant difference between junior and senior lecturers' perception of the importance of student evaluation of teaching.

Method

This part of a larger study implemented a quantitative approach. An existing questionnaire so called LRSET (Lecturer Responses to Student Evaluation of Teaching) (Iyamu & Aduwa-Oglebaen, 2005) was used to collect data and was distributed randomly among lecturers in a Malaysian public university. The questionnaire was distributed during the teaching evaluation week by the students via online system where it was perceived that this duration might be the suitable time to carry out the survey to the lecturers with their best interest on this matter (Sulong, 2015). A total of 419 lecturers were participated in this study and an independent sample t-test was used to analyze the data using SPSS 19.0 software.

Results

Out of 419 respondents that were participated in this study, 222 (53%) were male lecturers and 197 (47%) female lecturers. 314 (75%) respondents were junior lecturers with less than ten years of teaching experiences and 105 (25%) respondents were senior lecturers with more than ten years of teaching experiences. Further data analysis using independent sample t-test was used to determine the differences between gender for the general needs, formative and summative purpose of evaluation. The results are shown in Table I.

Table I. Independent sample t-test of SET and gender.

Purpose of evaluation	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Dev	t-value	Sig. (2-tailed)
General needs	Male	222	3.33	.560	2.005	.046
	Female	197	3.21	.638		
Formative	Male	222	3.36	.607	0.232	.817
	Female	197	3.35	.556		
Summative	Male	222	3.23	.749	1.682	.093
	Female	197	3.11	.729		

Analysis on male and female, there was a statistically significant shift between the perception of lecturers on general needs and those in formative and summative purposes of evaluation. For the evaluation purpose of general needs, there was a significant difference in scores for males (mean=3.33, s.d.=.56), and females (mean=3.21, s.d.=.638); ($t=2.005$, $p=.046$). Thus the hypothesis was rejected.

For the purpose of formative evaluation, there was not a statistically significant difference in scores for males (mean=3.36, s.d.=.607) and females (mean=3.35, s.d.=.556); ($t=.232$, $p=.817$). Thus the hypothesis was accepted. This result similar with the purpose of summative evaluation, where it shows that there was also not a statistically significant difference in scores for males (mean=3.23, s.d.=.749) and females (mean=3.11, s.d.=.729); ($t=1.682$, $p=.093$). Thus the hypothesis was also accepted.

An analysis between positions of junior and senior in Table 2 shows that the perception of senior lecturers was not significantly different from junior lecturers for all purposes of SET. Thus the hypothesis was not rejected.

Table 2. Independent sample t-test of SET and position.

Purpose of evaluation	Position	N	Mean	Std. Dev	t-value	Sig. (2-tailed)
General needs	Junior	314	3.27	.621	-0.118	.906
	Senior	105	3.28	.534		
Formative	Junior	314	3.36	.585	0.249	.804
	Senior	105	3.34	.580		
Summative	Junior	314	3.16	.752	-0.852	.395
	Senior	105	3.23	.710		

For the general purposes of SET, junior (mean=3.27, s.d.=.621) and senior lecturers (mean=3.28, s.d.=.534); ($t=-0.118$, $p=.906$) had a slightly similar views on SET. Meanwhile, both junior (mean=3.36, s.d.=.585) and senior lecturers (mean=3.34, s.d.=.580); ($t=0.249$, $p=.804$) rate SET highly for the formative purposes. As for the summative purposes, both junior (mean=3.16, s.d.=.752) and senior lecturers (mean=3.23, s.d.=.710); ($t=-0.852$, $p=.395$) also rate SET highly though senior lecturers are clearly more receptive towards SET.

Discussion

From the gender perspective, overall result shows that male lecturers indicated higher levels of agreement to all purposes of evaluation than female lecturers. However, a difference was found in responses based on general purpose. The result on male and female towards SET for general needs was in line with Yusuf *et al.* (2010) and Harun *et al.* (2011) that there was a significant difference in the perception of lecturers on SET across gender where female lecturers are more responsive than their male lecturers. The male lecturers value student evaluation of teaching more highly than female lecturers. These gender differences support by Kogan (2010) and Nasser & Fresko (2002) that suggests males and females receive and react differently to personal evaluation. This however does not agree with the previous finding who found no significant difference in the perception of lecturers towards students' evaluation of teaching by factor of gender (Iyamu & Aduwa-Oglebaen, 2005).

As for the positions based on teaching experiences, the finding is agrees with Idaka & Joshua (2006), and Iyamu & Aduwa-Oglebaen (2005) findings who also found no significant difference based on teaching experiences. It is quite interesting, informative and encouraging knowing that lecturers with different positions (junior and senior) based on teaching experiences had expressed similar positive attitude to SET. This finding is a little surprising. This, however, oppose with Yusuf *et al.* (2010), Iyamu & Aduwa-Oglebaen (2005), and Inko-Tariah (2013) findings who found a significant difference in the perception of junior and senior lecturers based on teaching experience with respect to SET, as more experienced lecturers were found to show more preference for SET. Senior lecturers must have been better disposed to student evaluation because they are more confident, focused, purposeful, and methodological in their instructional

delivery (Iyamu & Aduwa-Oglebaen, 2005). Junior lecturers on the other hand, are commonly apprehensive of their qualification and experience insufficiencies that may be discovered by evaluation from students (Machingambi & Wadesango, 2011).

Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to investigate the perception of lecturers' gender and position on student evaluation of teaching. The findings of the gender study clearly indicated that male lecturers adopt a more positive outlook of SET. In other words, male lecturers tend to be little more accommodating of SET and they see it as positive thing. The findings of the position study logically concluded that senior lecturers spending more time on research and less time on teaching, which makes them less student-oriented than their junior faculty counterparts.

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