Quality assurance of teaching and learning: validity and usefulness of student ratings

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Summary

1. Introduction

2. QUC
   i. History
   ii. Design

3. Methodology

4. Results

5. Discussion and final remarks
Introduction

Students’ evaluations of teaching effectiveness

Accreditation requirements

Selection of courses and teachers

Management decisions

Feedback to teachers
Introduction

“Teachers can ‘buy’ good student ratings by giving good grades”

“Students are too immature, capricious, and inexperienced to give reliable feedback on teaching”

“Student ratings are just popularity contests”

What is the relation between student ratings, student grades and subjective assessment of learning?

Are student ratings stable?
Introduction

High correlations between student ratings of teachers/course units, and student ratings of ‘amount learned’

"Students learn more from better teachers“
Hoffman (1979)

No consistent correlation between grades and ratings

Students are the only direct observers of a teacher's classroom teaching performance
QUC: history

Architecture, Engineering, Science and Technology

11,458 students

RD&I

853 teachers and researchers

Bachelor, Master and PhD programmes
QUC: history

1993
Paper
survey

2005
Online
survey

2007
QUC

Give
voice to
students
QUC: design

Half-yearly evaluation of course units

Sources of information:
- Students’ survey
- Students’ representative report
- Lecturer-in-Charge report/Teaching report
- Programme Coordinator report

Phases:
- Assessment
- Analysis
- Improvement
- Supervision

Results:
- Student and teacher engagement
- Dynamic quality improvement process
- Cyclical review of results
- Internal processes readjustment
QUC: design

Assessment

Global Rating (GR)
- Inadequate (GR ≤ 3)
- To improve (GR ∈ ]3,5[)
- Regular (GR ∈ [5,8[)
- Very good (GR ∈ [8,9[)
- Excellent (GR = 9)

Teaching Staff

1. Advantages from in-class learning
2. Pedagogical ability
3. Interaction with students
QUC: design

**Workload**
- Previous knowledge
- Study resources
- Attending classes

**Organization**
- Programme
- Structure
- Resources

**Evaluation**
- Method vs. content
- Evaluation process

**Perceived Learning**
- Knowledge development
- Applying acquired knowledge
- Critical judgment
- Cooperation & communication
- Autonomous work
- Implications on social context

**Teaching Staff**
- Academic activities
  - Content and pace of the classes
  - Commitment
  - Teaching method
  - Confidence
- Participation and discussion
- Clarifying doubts
QUC: design

Follow up mechanisms: Analysis + Improvement + Supervision

- Students’ representative
  - Comment on inadequate results

- Teacher + lecturer-in-charge
  - Analysis and comments on the students’ representative remarks

- Programme & Department coordinators + Pedagogical Board
  - Analysis of information
  - Summary of the problems’ sources
  - Recommendations for the future
  - Lines of action to improve the curricular unit performance
  - Monitoring progress

Follow up mechanisms:
- Analysis
- Improvement
- Supervision
Methodology

What is the relation between student ratings, student grades and subjective assessment of learning?

Are student ratings stable?

Global ratings
Student grades
Perceived Learning

1st semester 2016/17

Pearson correlation

Global ratings
Teacher / course unit

2015/16
2014/15

Paired t-test
### Results

What is the relation between student ratings, student grades and subjective assessment of learning?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pearson Correlations</th>
<th>Global Ratings</th>
<th>Student Grades</th>
<th>Perceived Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Global Ratings</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0,10</td>
<td>0,43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Grades</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0,27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Learning</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Superiority of subjective learning as a predictor of student ratings
Results

Are student ratings stable?

**Paired t-test**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2014/15</th>
<th>2015/16</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>1366</td>
<td>1366</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global Rating</td>
<td>7.87 ± 1.02</td>
<td>7.90 ± 1.06</td>
<td><strong>0.44</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

No difference between generations
**Discussion and final remarks**

- *Students rate their teachers according to how much they believe they have learned.*

- *Students' ratings of instruction are stable.*

- *Students’ ratings of instruction are much more a function of the perceived quality of teaching than of the received grades.*

- *Weakness of ratings has more to do with their use, than with the validity of ratings themselves.*
Questions

- Do you feel that students are qualified to rate their teachers?

- What are the difficulties encountered when using student ratings?

- What actions does your institution take with the output of student evaluations?

Thank you for your attention

For more information please refer to:

guc.tecnico.ulisboa.pt