

Evaluation of Lecturer by Students: Self vs. Institutional Evaluation

Sookdhev Rajkaran

*Walter Sisulu University, Mthatha, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa, 5100,
E-mail: <srjakaran@wsu.ac.za>*

KEYWORDS Staff Development. Teaching. Learning

ABSTRACT The aim of this paper is to share the experiences of a lecturer on an evaluation process followed to improve the lecturer's teaching philosophy and to achieve effective learning. This will benefit academics, students, society, grant providers and institutional assessors. Using autoethnography and quantitative methodology (survey approach), information from third year students by means of a questionnaire was solicited. Two steps were followed in data collection and analysis. Firstly, the lecturer personally collected and analysed the data. Secondly, to get an objective view, the Institutional Learning and Teaching Development (LTD) Unit collected and analysed the information independently. The results indicate that the average scores for course evaluation, instructor evaluation, overall course evaluation and overall instructor were over eighty percent. Comments included: good instructor, good motivator, always punctual and very professional. It is recommended that a variety of methods be used to evaluate and assess teaching effectiveness.

INTRODUCTION

Research on assessment of lecturers by students has been ongoing in Higher Education (HE), nationally and internationally (Shelvin et al. 2000; Penny 2003; King 2007; Dorasamy and Balkaran 2013; Abedin et al. 2014). Rajkaran and Mammen (2012) propose that academics in universities need to be evaluated by students once in a 3-year cycle, in order to ensure continuous professional development. Academics are required at some universities to have themselves evaluated every semester for semester courses (Abedin et al. 2014; Chuan and Heng 2015), biannually (Stein et al. 2013), and annually for year courses (Walter Sisulu University 2009; Shah and Nair 2012). The aim of this paper is to share the experiences on an evaluation process followed to improve teaching philosophy and to improve effective learning. There is a need to assess an academic's performance so that one could develop professionally. By undertaking this exercise the researcher hopes to encourage aca-

demics to have themselves evaluated so that they can improve their competence and ensure that effective learning and teaching takes place in the classroom. This will then benefit academics, students, society, grant providers and institutional assessors.

The students' evaluation report, on the teaching quality of their instructors, is based on the opinions of 'customer satisfaction' in Higher Education (HE). Almost all HE institutions around the world conduct student evaluations (Stein et al. 2013; Abedin et al. 2014; Adeyemo 2015). The student is the direct customer of the service of learning. Students are the direct beneficiaries of instruction, and given that they spend a great deal of time with lecturers, they can offer useful inputs in identifying flaws during instruction and ways of remediation (Iyamu and Aduwa 2005). Students are the main consumers of education and best placed to evaluate the quality of their education and their teaching (Hughes and Quinn 2013). The view of 'value for money' is relevant, as students need to assess whether they receive high quality tuition for the fees they pay (Vinson 2013). Also important is accountability (Stein et al. 2013). Increasingly, students and institutions are considering their own investment in scholarly work in value-for-money terms (Bitzer 2004: 27). Another important concept is lecturer-feedback (Human-Vogel and Mahlangu 2009: 314), which describes what

Address for correspondence:
S Rajkaran
Faculty of Commerce and Administration
Private Bag X1, Mthatha,
Eastern Cape Province,
South Africa, 5117
Telephone: +27 475022560/2562,
Fax: +27 475022563,
E-mail: srjakaran@wsu.ac.za

the student receives about their progress in class and during the semester/year from the lecturer. Such evaluation is not unique to tertiary education. The client as evaluator can be witnessed in car sales, hotels, restaurants and the insurance industry where the client is asked for feedback on all aspects of the service provided (King 2007).

According to Iyamu and Aduwa (2005), teacher (or lecturer) evaluation refers to a periodic evaluation of teachers' performance by students. It involves a systematic gathering and analysis of information, on the basis of which decisions are taken regarding the effectiveness, efficiency and/or competence of the lecturer in realising set professional goals and the desire of the university to promote effective learning (Machingambi and Wadesango 2011). Continuous evaluation contributes to the professional development of the lecturer (Dimova 2017; Knapp 2017). The opinion of students on the quality of teaching at the institution they attend impacts on the quality of higher education (Hughes and Quinn 2013; Mittal et al. 2015; Husain and Khan 2016). Often the institution will require (or at least recommend) that this feedback is obtained using some form of standardised evaluation instrument, which in most cases is a questionnaire.

Student questionnaires are a long-standing and significant instrument in HE in Malaysia (Ghazali et al. 2012; Abedin et al. 2014) in the USA (Honolulu Community College 2014); Canada (Canadian Association of University Teachers 2014); India (Mittal et al. 2015) and Scotland (Parkinson 2016). There is also sufficient evidence of questionnaires being used in South Africa (Mizikaci 2006; Machingambi and Wadesango 2011; Rajkaran and Mammen 2012; Dorasamy and Balkaran 2013). Standardised evaluation has the advantage (from the institution's point of view) of consistent methods of evaluation being used throughout the institution. Such evaluations can take place during the semester and at the end of the semester.

However, not all lecturers' value assessment by their students and some are even hostile towards evaluations (Stein et al. 2013). University lecturers in a South African HE had negative perceptions of students' evaluation of their instructional practices (Machingambi and Wadesango 2011). This view is supported internationally by Stein et al. (2013). Various arguments can be raised for such negative perceptions. One possible explanation could be that lecturers (especially junior and less experienced ones) are probably apprehensive about the potential aca-

ademic and professional inadequacies that may be exposed by student evaluations. This is supported by Imogie (2000) who concluded that senior lecturers tend to have a more positive disposition towards students' evaluation of teaching than junior academics. Students are swayed by simple courses and likeable lecturers (Stein et al. 2013). Another explanation is that lecturers are skeptical of students' evaluation because of the possible damage these might inflict on their tenure and promotion decisions (Chory and Offstein 2017; Spooen and Christiaens 2017). Other writers (Baldwin and Blattner 2003; Mittal et al. 2015; Parkinson 2016) state that student evaluation must be used with caution. There is also a view that it should not be the only method of assessing teaching performance (Stein 2013; Canadian Association of University Teachers 2014; Mittal et al. 2015; Parkinson 2016) and that student evaluations should not be used to initiate any action for unsatisfactory performance (Macquarie University 2014). Although there are some negative perceptions of student evaluations; if conducted properly, there are many benefits for most stakeholders, especially, the lecturer, the students, the community and management of HEIs (Adeyemo 2015).

Against this background, the lecturer was evaluated by his students in the last two years internally and externally using an instrument developed by the LTD unit at one South African University. According to The University of Warwick (2014) there are a variety of reasons for wanting to evaluate one's own teaching, namely, (1) to improve your teaching; (2) for promotion; (3) for a teaching award; (4) for quality assurance purposes; and (5) research and evaluation as part of good practice. They proceed to state that self-evaluation can assist the lecturer to (1) improve the educational experiences provided to students; (2) identify the professional education needed to further one's capacity to teach well; (3) prepare for performance review with one's supervisor; and (4) assess one's readiness to apply for promotion and tenure (The University of Warwick 2014). Many of these reasons are also underlined by Macquarie University (2014). Self-evaluation is also recommended within nursing education as it gives educators greater ownership over their evaluations (Lord 2009). The above are excellent reasons for having oneself evaluated.

Objectives

The main objective of the paper was to undertake an evaluation of the lecturer to check if one was effective in the classroom and if there was a level of quality in the modules, and more importantly if there were aspects that the lecturer could improve and become a better professional in the future.

METHODOLOGY

Autoethnography, which is a method of research that involves self-observation and reflexive investigation, was used. Autoethnography is sometimes regarded synonymous with self-ethnography, reflexive ethnography, performance ethnography and can be associated with narrative inquiry and autobiography. Specifically, reflexive accounting which is the narrator's subjective experience and subjectivity which is known as autobiographical writing that has ethnographic interest, was employed (Marechal 2010; Cooper et al. 2017; Knapp 2017). According to Marechal (2010: 1), autoethnography broadly operationalises three different conceptions of self: *self as representative subject* (as a member of a community or group), *self as autonomous subject* (as itself the object of inquiry, depicted in 'tales of the self') and *other as autonomous self* (the other as both object and subject of inquiry, speaking with their own voice). Elements of all three are present in this study. The lecturer (as representative subject) was both the object and subject of inquiry and also wrote this paper ('tales of the self').

Both autoethnography and quantitative methodology were used, to overcome biasness and to improve credibility of the results. A survey design was employed. Firstly, this lecturer had himself evaluated by his students using a questionnaire (see Appendix 1) developed by the LTD Unit. This is a requirement of the institution. This paper would not consider the validity and reliability of the instrument since it was considered by the institution before its implementation. The questionnaires were administered to the third year students (the population) towards the end of the semester for two modules (Business Management: Marketing – BMA 3101 and Business Management: Finance – BMA 3202). Anonymity was assured as students were not

required to write their names on the questionnaires. Further, for ethical reasons, students were not compelled to complete the questionnaires. The sample was 15 students (100% of population – BMA 3101) and 12 students (65% of population – BMA 3202) respectively. One questionnaire from the latter was incomplete and therefore removed.

The questionnaire had mainly closed questions based on five-point scale (1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = somewhat agree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree) for two categories (A) course offering and (B) instruction. Section (C) required: (i) Overall course offering rating and (ii) Overall instructor rating. This was also based on five point scales ranging from very poor, poor, fair, good and very good. There were two open ended questions: (D) Please comment on the course including any practical component (for example, likes, suggestions, etc), and (E) Please comment on the instructor (for example, strengths, suggestions, etc.). The questionnaires were analysed manually by the lecturer (self-evaluation) and use was made of a hand-held calculator. This was to keep the results confidential (especially if they were negative) and to encourage academics to get themselves evaluated. Results were mainly in percentages and tables. No statistical analysis was attempted and this could be regarded as a weakness of the study.

The closed ended questions for A and B were recorded as a number (that is, the number of respondents that agreed, strongly agreed, somewhat agreed, disagreed and strongly disagreed) and also converted to a percentage. Further the items strongly agree, agree and somewhat agree were combined as a percentage and recorded on the tables. The same method was adopted for disagree and strongly disagree. The scores for Section C were 5 points for very good; 4 for good; 3 for fair, 2 poor and 1 for very poor. In the Marketing module scores were added and divided by 75 (because 5 – very good - is the maximum score x 15 – respondents) and recorded as a percentage. That is for each criteria the maximum score is 75 (15 students x 5). In the financial module scores were added and divided by 60 [because 5 is the maximum x 12 – respondents] and recorded as a percentage.

Secondly, to obtain an objective view, the evaluation process was followed by an external

evaluation by the Quality Assurance Directorate. However, it was only for the second module, that is, Financial Management because the external evaluation took place in the second semester. The sample was eighty-nine percent of the population. The questionnaires were analysed by the Faculty Quality Assurance Officer with a software program and the results were sent to the lecturer electronically in a pdf format.

A possible limitation of this paper is the question of validity on the grounds of un-representativeness, lack of objectivity, being too personal (Marechal 2010) and untrustworthiness (Knapp 2017), which are characteristics of autoethnography or autobiographical methods. However, the concept of positivism was considered. Because of their fundamental belief in an objective reality, positivists seek to be as objective as possible in their pursuit of knowledge (Polit and Beck 2004). Therefore, this was followed up by an external evaluation to get an objective view to counter-balance the subjectivity. Triangulation was used to obtain data from another source (Knapp 2017). The methodology attempted to use a positivist paradigm that ensured that there was a gap between the researcher's subjective bias and the objective reality being studied.

Table 1: Course offering

S. No.	Criteria	Self-evaluation (n=27)		Institutional evaluation (n=16)	
		% Agree*	% Dis-agree*	% Agree*	% Dis-agree*
1.	Course objectives are clear	100	0	92	8
2.	Course is well organised	100	0	96	4
3.	Student responsibilities are clearly defined	96.3	3.7	88	12
4.	Course content is relevant and useful	100	0	88	12
5.	Texts and other materials have helped me understand the course topics	100	0	82	18
6.	Tests concentrate on important points of the course	96.3	3.7	92	8
7.	Tests are clearly worded**			92	8
8.	Tests are good measures of my knowledge, understanding or ability to perform	100	0	94	6
9.	Marking is fair	96.3	3.7	78	22
10.	Assignments are appropriately distributed throughout the year.	92.6	7.4	90	10
11.	Theory is linked to practical implementation	96.3	3.7	88	12
12.	The content covers the latest developments in the learning area	96.3	3.7	90	10
13.	The volume of the subject content is manageable	81.5	18.5	82	18
14.	Course as a whole has produced new knowledge, skills and awareness in me	100	0	96	4
	Average	96.6	3.4	89.1	10.1

Source: Author

*Note that strongly agree, agree and somewhat agree were combined. The same method was adopted for strongly disagree and disagree.

**Item 7 was omitted due to a mistake in the questionnaire.

RESULTS

Course Offering

The results of the course offering are shown in Table 1. Note that the percentages for strongly agree, agree and somewhat agree and that of strongly disagree and disagree have been aggregated throughout.

As can be seen from Table 1, only one item ('Marking is fair') in the institutional evaluation scored less than eighty percent; and one item ('The volume of the subject content is manageable') scored less than ninety percent in the self-evaluation. Five items (items 3, 4, 5, 11 and 13) scored less than ninety percent in the external evaluation. Of some concern should be the items that respondents had rated 'somewhat agree', especially if they were twenty percent or higher. These are: 'The content covers the latest developments in the learning area' (33.3%); 'the volume of the subject content is manageable' (25.9%); 'tests concentrate on important points of the course' (25.9%); 'texts and other materials have helped me understand the course topics' (22.2%) and 'theory is linked to practical implementation' (22.2%).

Comments on the Course

The results for Section D: 'Comment on the course including any practical components (for example likes, suggestions, etc)' are summarised in Table 2 and 3. Table 2 shows the strengths and positives and Table 3 gives the weaknesses, negatives and suggestions.

As Table 2 shows that students are benefiting from the course, especially as regards the assignment, the project, research, subject knowledge, examples, motivation, business world and uniqueness. There is evidence that the lecturer is adding value to the students.

As can be seen from Table 3 students have some concerns about the course. They include, amongst others, scarcity of textbooks, course materials, heavy workload, relevance of the project, time consuming as regards the project and the prerequisite of Financial Accounting II.

Instruction

The results for Section B: Instruction are summarised in Table 4. This section has 24 criteria.

As can be seen from Table 4, only one item (Item 14 – 'Seldom misses [sic] classes') in the self-evaluation had a score of less than ninety

Table 2: Summary of comments on the course (strengths/positives)

<i>Self-evaluation</i>	<i>Institutional evaluation</i>
<i>Finance</i>	
Course is running smoothly.	It is satisfactory.
Makes things easier and practical. Course is very practical.	I love it.
Course is understandable.	The course is motivating me.
He gives us notes (PowerPoint presentations), suggestions, practical examples.	Course is very well organised.
Course is very interesting.	Course objectives are very well outlined.
The course is very good.	Examples are made so that everyone understands.
Use of research project is good. Project introduces us to research.	Continue with the good work. I wish you could take us for all three years.
I like the brain teasers (which he started when I was in the first year).	Projects are very interesting they make us engage with the community.
I feel I can be able to run my own business. I now know how important it is to invest, save money and also manage it.	Gave me a lot of understanding of the business world.
Project was good as it was done in groups.	
Course is well thought out by the instructor as he has excellent knowledge of the subject matter.	
<i>Marketing</i>	
Course is well organised.	[No comments, as this module was not evaluated by the Institution as it is done only in the first semester.]
Examples are clear.	
Workload is enough.	
It is a good course and makes me more interested.	
The course makes us ready for the outside marketing world.	
I feel comfortable because of the way the lecturer is lecturing.	
This module was enjoyable.	
Examples by lecturer are very clear and current and useful to students.	
It is still interesting.	
Tutorials help me to learn more things from other students.	
My lecturer was encouraging me to always read my books.	
Course is very challenging but good.	
He taught me how to write an assignment.	
To be honest I didn't even know how to write an assignment.	
I got a lot of knowledge about the collection of data for the research.	

Source: Author

Table 3: Summary of comments of the course (weaknesses, negatives, suggestions)

<i>Self-evaluation</i>	<i>Institutional evaluation</i>
<i>Finance</i>	
We have few textbooks. We need learning materials.	Prescribed textbook must be made available in the library.
I am worried about the prerequisite of Financial Accounting II for Business Management III.	Course notes must be available even before the course starts.
I have not seen it at another University	
The project must be relevant to Finance as we had in Marketing, not Education.	
<i>Marketing</i>	
The module is broad.	[No comments, as this module was not evaluated by the Institution as it is done only in the first semester.]
Demands more time than other modules.	
Steps in some topics are too many.	
Suggest more detailed scope on specific chapters should be given for examinations only.	
Make computers and internet available for assignments and Project.	
Heavy workload.	
Instead of one big test, have five.	
It requires more research.	
Must collect project a week before exams like School of Law.	
The project requires a lot of time.	
Classes should be attended three days (sic) a week.	

Source: Author

Table 4: Instruction

S. No.	Criteria	Self-evaluation (n=27)		Institutional evaluation (n=16)	
		% Agree*	% Dis-agree*	% Agree*	% Dis-agree*
1.	Has an excellent knowledge of the subject matter	100	0	92	8
2.	Is enthusiastic about the subject	96.3	3.7	94	6
3.	Is well prepared for each class	100	0	96	4
4.	Makes good use of class time	96.3	3.7	92	8
5.	Gives clear examples and explanations	100	0	92	8
6.	Provides constructive and informative feedback	96.3	3.7	90	10
7.	Clearly explains difficult concepts, ideas or theories	92.6	7.4	92	8
8.	Responds respectfully to student questions and viewpoints	100	0	94	6
9.	Is genuinely interested in helping me understand the subject	100	0	86	14
10.	Is available to students during regular and reasonable office hours	100	0	84	16
11.	Motivates me by his/her example to want to learn about the subject	100	0	100	0
12.	Has produced new knowledge, skills and awareness in me	100	0	100	0
13.	Starts/dismisses class at scheduled times.	100	0	82	18
14.	Seldom misses classes	88.9	11.1	76	24
15.	Gives reasonable notice of tests and assignments	100	0	96	4
16.	Provides opportunities for self-study	96.3	3.7	94	6
17.	Inspires confidence	100	0	92	8
18.	Is in control of the teaching situation	100	0	96	4
19.	Creates a positive class atmosphere where students feels free to participate	100	0	98	2
20.	Explains the aims of individual lectures and projects	96.3	3.7	94	6
21.	Stimulates the creative ability of students	100	0	90	10
22.	Encourages students to think independently	96.3	3.7	100	0
23.	Presents interesting and stimulating lectures	100	0	100	0
24.	Presents interesting and stimulating tutorials	96.3	3.7	90	10
	Average	98.2	1.9	92.5	7.5

Source: Author

*Note that strongly agree, agree and somewhat agree were combined. The same method was adopted for strongly disagree and disagree.

percent and seventy-six percent in the institutional evaluation. Three other items (Items 9, 10 and 13) had a score of less than ninety percent in the institutional evaluation. Of concern should be the items that respondents had rated 'somewhat agree', especially if they were twenty percent or higher. They are: 'has an excellent knowledge of the subject matter' (29.6%); 'presents interesting and stimulating tutorials' (29.6%); 'is available to students during regular and reasonable office hours' (25.9%) and 'is enthusiastic about the subject' (22.2%).

Comments on the Instructor

The results of Section E: 'Comment on the Instructor (strengths, suggestions, etc)' are presented in Table 5 (strengths and positives) and in Table 6 (weaknesses, negatives and suggestions).

Students have confidence in the instructor as can be seen from Table 5. Comments range around friendliness, good examples, management skills (especially organisation), motivation, and communication; amongst others.

Table 5: Summary of comments on the instructor (strengths and positives)

<i>Self-evaluation</i>	<i>Institutional evaluation</i>
<p><i>Finance</i> Examples by lecturer are very clear and current and useful to students. My lecturer was encouraging me to always read my books. He taught me how to write an assignment. To be honest I didn't even know how to write an assignment. Makes things easier and practical. He gives us notes (PowerPoint presentations), suggestions, practical examples. He has additional lectures to cover lost time He understands and appreciates our differences. He is well organised and friendly. I like the brain teasers (which he started when I was in the first year).</p> <p><i>Marketing</i> Well organised lecturer.</p> <p>Always on time. Keep in touch with students. Instructor is well disciplined. I like that he gives you a lot of pressure and work. Instructor's strengths are his broad views and intensive knowledge of the courses and other fields. Is able to relate each topic or example to outside world. Instructor is good. His organising, planning, control as well as motivation of the class is excellent and cannot be compared to any other lecturer that has taught me. You cannot fail this module if you follow his instructions. He is also proud of his students and even 'opens a way' for the students to succeed. He is a good lecturer who inspires confidence in every individual Comes to class regularly and early (x 2). He is always emphasising that we students must share views so that we can learn more. He is good, clear and understandable.</p>	<p>Examples are made so that everyone understands. Continue with the good work. I wish you could take us for all three years. Course is well thought out by the instructor as he has excellent knowledge of the subject matter.</p> <p>[No comments as this module was not evaluated by the Institution as it is done only in the first semester.]</p>

Source: Author

Table 6: Summary of comments on instructor (weaknesses, negatives and suggestions)

<i>Self-evaluation</i>	<i>Institutional evaluation</i>
<i>Finance</i>	
The first semester project must be given at the earliest time.	We should consider platforms like Business Management Alumni where former students can give back something they were part of.
We would like to get some practicals (sic) or visit financial management companies.	We should now look at making the project bigger and getting a platform where we can introduce it to the whole of Mthatha.
We want to be recognised by CIMA (Chartered Institute of Management Accounting). Please give us copies or pamphlets. We can't buy textbooks.	The project should be changed to one related to Financial Management.
But he must keep in mind that we are not doing Business Management only.	
Don't be too fast.	
<i>Marketing</i>	
Tasks too many within a short period of time.	[No comments as this module was not evaluated by the Institution as it is done only in the first semester.]
Sometimes he gets too personal when we did not do our work at all or well.	
His weakness is, not wanting to give a detailed scope. Dishes out a lot of work.	
We spend a lot of time in Business Management and neglect others (subjects).	
We want to see project posted (sic) in Africana.	

Source: Author

As can be seen from Table 6, students have identified some weaknesses and negatives for the instructor. These include the project (timing and relevance), too much work, speed and not giving a detailed scope; amongst others. Suggestions include Business Management Alumni, projects posted in Africana and requesting copies or pamphlets of notes.

Overall Course and Instructor Rating

The results for Section C: Overall course and instructor rating are shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Overall course and instructor rating

<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Self-evaluation (n=27) (%)</i>	<i>Institutional evaluation (n=16) (%)</i>
Overall course offering rating	86	92
Overall instructor rating	90	87
Average	88	90

Source: Author

Once again the results are over eighty percent for both overall course offering rating and overall instructor rating. It is surprising to note

that the institutional evaluation has a higher average, which is ninety percent compared to the self-evaluation which is eighty-eight percent.

DISCUSSION

The institutions and academics from different countries make use of various types of questionnaires that measure different items for student evaluations, therefore to make direct comparisons would not be practical. However, there are some items that are common, and the discussions would focus on them.

As regards the course offering, thirteen items had a score of over eighty percent. Only one item had a score of seventy-eight percent, that is, item 9 'marking is fair' and that only in the institutional evaluation. Students are always given an opportunity to see the lecturer if they feel that the marking was unfair in anyway. With over 25 years' experience as a lecturer, only one part-time class had a problem with the lecturer's marking. Students complained that the lecturer did not award marks fairly. But opportunities are provided to return their scripts for remarking. Some of the results of Table 2 resonate with Human-Vogel and Mahlangu (2009), Chuan and

Heng (2015) and Mittal et al. (2015) and they refer to motivation, examples, learning a lot and active participation. Chuan and Heng (2015) state that all students are motivated to learn but need that extra push from their lecturers to keep them going. Mittal et al. (2015) refer to the lecturer making use of examples and illustrations in his/her explanations of concepts and students learning a lot. Human-Vogel and Mahlangu (2009) highlight group work, discussions and completing assignments (projects) in a group as forms of active participation. Through participation students are more motivated (Chuan and Heng 2015).

For the sake of brevity, only some of the weaknesses, negatives and suggestions from students for the course offering are reported (see Table 3): (i) Textbooks are a serious challenge for our students. They do not buy textbooks due to financial constraints. Learning materials in the form of worksheets (notes) and powerpoint slides are provided. This information is uploaded on the university's learning platform Wise-Up. They are normally provided after a lecture. There is a perception that lecturers who do not give 'summaries' (or notes) are weak (Mittal et al. 2015). However, there should be a good reason to give notes, otherwise student opinion on their lecturers' potential could represent a partial and bias view (Mittal et al. 2015); (ii) The prerequisite of Financial Accounting II for Business Management III: this has been changed from 2015, following the proper channels; Financial Accounting II is not a pre-requisite anymore; (iii) Relevance of the project: There were two reasons to change it to a school project. Firstly, every department was required to be engaged in a community project (See Walter Sisulu University Prospectus 2017), and secondly many schools around Mthatha (Eastern Cape, South Africa) have many challenges. The researcher was invited by one such school to assist. Therefore, it was decided that it would be good to get students involved as part of service learning. The idea was discussed with them to get buy-in from them before embarking on the project. There is still an element of finance in it because the group of learners that were assisted take Accounting as a Grade 12 subject. The Financial course has financial statements and ratios which overlap with what Grade 12 learners do. An evaluation was done with students

about the project and most of them are for it. This is evidenced in Table 2 and 6. However, future lecturers might want to have a project related to finance; (iv) 'Classes should be attended three times a week', it was but students agreed on a change as some were employed and could only attend classes twice a week, but the number of hours were not affected. For workload and too much work, the lecturer is guilty here. Students must be kept busy so that they also work outside the classroom. Once they have been given too much work and they complain, they have been given some time off, to finish their work and they have appreciated this.

As regards instruction only one item scored less than eighty percent, that is, item 14 'seldom misses classes' (Table 4 – external evaluation). These results are surprising as the lecturer is seldom absent from class. However, in extreme instance, where the lecturer has to attend an urgent management meeting, students are informed through their class representative and additional lectures are planned to cover for lost time. Some of the results of Table 5 resonate with the results of Golding (2016), which include "He believes in students and helps them succeed"; "He connects what we're learning to the real world"; "She takes a personal interest in students beyond the classroom"; "available" and "enthusiastic". There is also confirmation by Mittal et al. (2015) as regards enjoyment of the course and caring.

The questionnaire used in this assessment must be adjusted slightly. The following adjustments are recommended: 'somewhat agree' should be removed completely as it is felt it is very vague; the word 'seldom' (item 14, Section 2) should be changed to 'never'; item 24 should be changed depending whether the module/course has practicals or not (perhaps the word 'tutorials' should be used if there are no practicals); and, the abbreviation 'etc' in Section 4 and Section 5 be removed as it confuses the students and comments are very broad. These open-ended questions could be changed to closed questions to make analysis easier. Additional questions should be added by individual lecturers as they make use of the instrument regularly (Baldwin and Blattner 2003; Dorasamy and Balkaran 2013). The following questions have been added: 'If you had to redo the course, what changes would you (the student) make?' 'What

would you say are the characteristics of a good lecturer?' 'What did a lecturer do that made you feel very happy?' and 'What is it that lecturers – no names please - in the Faculty do that make you very unhappy?' These questions allow the lecturer to make amendments to what is currently been done, a form of reflective practice. It also helps the lecturer in assisting students with challenges that they might have in the module/course.

CONCLUSION

The chief reasons for the self-assessment exercise were to improve teaching; for quality assurance purposes; for professional development and research and evaluation as part of good practice. There is an on-going debate questioning the reliability and validity of student ratings in higher education. There is still a school of thought that favour students' ratings for teaching improvement purposes. There are some ratings that are more reliable and valid than other indicators of teaching quality. Four ways to improve the reliability and validity of the findings could be: Firstly for the Learning and Teaching Development unit or similar, to undertake the exercise independently and objectively; to avoid biasness. Secondly, the questionnaire should be completed by the students online, that is, on "Wise-Up" (a software adopted by the University) and analysis done independently; to be objective. Thirdly, a process of triangulation and multi-dimensional methods must be used which would involve independent persons (leading to objectivity) and other methods to conduct the assessment process; to improve credibility. Fourthly the questionnaire should be followed up with interviews with students; to improve validity. Finally, the report (results) must be discussed at a Departmental meeting and/or a seminar, so that others can learn from the process. The results of this paper are very positive and can be used, though cautiously.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that a variety of methods be used to evaluate and assess teaching effectiveness to enhance the validity and reliability of the evaluation process. These methods are, inter-alia, classroom evaluation, peer-rating, self-rating and student ratings. Other sources about teaching performance and development may include (inter-alia) teaching portfolio; participation in curriculum development; participation in

peer review of teaching; success in gaining internal and/or external grants relating to teaching; and attendance at relevant professional development programs.

LIMITATIONS

This paper has the following limitations: Firstly, there was no follow-up interviews and as a result it was mainly quantitative. Secondly, validity can be questioned on the grounds of unrepresentativeness, lack of objectivity and also of being too personal, which are characteristics of autoethnography. Thirdly, one set of data was analysed manually, which in this day and age of technology is problematic. Lastly no statistical tests were conducted to evaluate the significant difference of the two methods of evaluation used.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The researcher wishes to acknowledge the valuable input of referees, Faculty colleagues, especially Prof S Balkaran and Dr E Mang'anyi and the professional language editor, Prof T Chisanga.

REFERENCES

- Abedin NFZ, Taib JM, Jamil HMT 2014. Comparative Study on Course Evaluation Process: Students and Lecturers Perceptions. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 123: 280-288. From <www.sciencedirect.com> (Retrieved on 17 March 2017).
- Adeyemo EO 2015. Lecturers' perception towards students' assessment of their teaching effectiveness in a Nigerian university. *International Journal of Psychology and Behavioral Sciences*, 5(5): 184-192.
- Baldwin T, Blattner N 2003. Guarding against potential bias in student evaluations: What every faculty member needs to know. *College Teaching*, 51(1): 27-32.
- Bitzer EM 2004. Scholarship and professional profiling: Possibilities for promoting quality in higher education. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 18(1): 19-37.
- Canadian Association of University Teachers 2014. Use of Anonymous Student Questionnaires in the Evaluation of Teaching. From <http://www.caut.ca/about-us> (Retrieved on 2 October 2014).
- Chory RM, Offstein EH 2017. Your professor will know you as a person: Evaluating and rethinking the relational boundaries between faculty and students. *Journal of Management Education*, 41(1): 9-38.
- Chuan CL, Heng RKK 2015. Students' Ratings of Teaching Effectiveness: What Do Students Tell us About Their Teacher Education Lecturers? *The English Teacher*, XLIV(1): 13-22. From <https://www.questionia.com> (Retrieved on 21 March 2017).

- Cooper JN, Grenier RS, Macaulay C 2017. Autoethnography as a critical approach in sports management: Applications and directions for future research. *Sports Management Review*, 20: 43-54.
- Dimova S 2017. Life after oral English certification: The consequences of the test of oral English proficiency for academic staff for EMI lecturers. *English for Specific Purposes*, 46: 45-58.
- Dorasamy N, Balkaran R 2013. Role of student ratings of lecturers in enhancing teaching at higher education institutions: A case study of the Durban University of Technology. *Journal of Economics and Behavioral Studies*, 5(5): 268-281.
- Ghazali AR, Ishak I, Saat NZM et al. 2012. Students' perception on lecture delivery effectiveness among the Faculty of Health Sciences lecturers. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 60: 67-72.
- Golding TL 2016. New Faculty Orientation Features: Advice from Students. Faculty Focus: Higher Education Teaching Strategies. Madison, Wisconsin: Magna Publications. From <support@magnapubs.com> (Retrieved on 6 January 2016).
- Honolulu Community College 2014. HCC Lecturer Evaluation Policy. From <http://www.honolulu.hawaii.edu/facdev> (Retrieved on 2 October 2014).
- Hughes SJ, Quinn FM 2013. *Quinn's Principles and Practice of Nurse Education*. Andover: Cengage Learning.
- Human-Vogel S, Mahlangu PP 2009. Commitment in academic contexts: First year education beliefs about the aspects of self, the lecturer and instruction. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 23(2): 309-328.
- Husain M, Khan S 2016. Students' Feedback: An Effective Tool in Teachers' Evaluation System. *International Journal of Applied and Basic Medical Research*, 6(3): 178-181. From <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4979299> (Retrieved on 17 March 2017).
- Imogie AI 2001. *Do You Know Who is Teaching Your Child?* Benin City: University of Benin Press.
- Iyamu EOS, Aduwa J 2005. *Assessment of the Inquiry-Teaching Competences of Social Studies Teachers in Junior Secondary Schools in Edo State*. Benin: University of Benin.
- King L 2007. SET – The Student Evaluation of Teaching Staff – in Secondary Education. From <www.taolearn.com/articles/article17.pdf> (Retrieved on 19 April 2012).
- Knapp MC 2017. An Autoethnography of a (Reluctant) Teacher Leader. *Journal of Mathematical Behaviour*, XX. From <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jmathb.2017.02.004> (Retrieved on 27 March 2017).
- Lord T 2009. What? Professors evaluating themselves? Are you out of your mind? In defense of faculty self-evaluations. *Journal of College Science Teaching*, 38(4): 72-78.
- Machingambi S, Wadesango N 2011. University lecturers' perceptions of students' evaluation of their instructional practices. *Anthropologist*, 13(3): 167-174.
- Macquarie University 2014. Performance Development and Review. From <http://staff.mq.edu.au/human_resources/ea/academic> (Retrieved on 2 October 2014).
- Marechal G 2010. Autoethnography. From <www.academia.edu/843133/Autoethnography> (Retrieved on 7 July 2015).
- Mittal S, Gera R, Batra DK 2015. Evaluating the Validity of Student Evaluation of Teaching Effectiveness in India. *Education and Training*, 67(6): 623-638. From <www.emeraldinsight.com/0040-0912.htm> (Retrieved on 17 March 2017).
- Mizikaci F 2006. A Systems Approach to Program Evaluation Model for Quality in Higher Education. *Quality Assurance in Education*, 14(1): 37-53. From <www.emeraldinsight.com/0968-4883.htm> (Retrieved on 2 November 2006).
- Parkinson B 2016. Using Evaluation to Improve Teaching and Revalidation. *Nursing Times*, 7: 8-10. From <https://www.nursingtimes.net/roles/nurse-educators/usingevaluation-to-improve-teaching/7010065.article> (Retrieved on 17 March 2017).
- Penny AR 2003. Changing the agenda for research into students' views about university teaching: Four shortcomings of SRT research. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 8(3): 399-411.
- Polit DF, Beck CT 2004. *Nursing Research: Principles and Methods*. 7th Edition. Philadelphia: Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.
- Rajkaran S, Mammen KJ 2012. Establishing performance indicators for university academics through a consensus-based approach: A South African case study. *Journal of Social Sciences*, 30(2): 127-135.
- Shah M, Nair CS 2012. The changing nature of teaching unit evaluations in Australian universities. *Quality Assurance in Education*, 20(3): 274-288.
- Shelvin M, Banyard P, Davies M, Griffiths M 2000. The validity of student evaluation of teaching in higher education: Love me, love my lectures? *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 25(4): 397-405.
- Spooren P, Christiaens W 2017. I liked your course because I believe in (the power of) student evaluation of teaching (SET): Students' perceptions of a teaching evaluation process and their relationships with SET scores. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 54(9): 43-49.
- Stein SJ, Spiller D, Terry S et al. 2013. Tertiary Teachers and Student Evaluations: Never the Twain Shall Meet? *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, 38(7): 892-904. From <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2013.767876> (Retrieved on 17 March 2017).
- The University of Warwick 2014. Evaluate Your Own Teaching. From <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/services/ldc/resource/evaluation/teaching> (Retrieved on 2 October 2014).
- Vinson KE 2013. Hovering too close: The ramifications of helicopter parenting in higher education. *Georgia State University Law Review*, 29: 423-451.
- Walter Sisulu University 2009. *Evaluation of Teaching Policy (Draft): Institutional Quality Assurance Committee Documents*. Mthatha: Walter Sisulu University.
- Walter Sisulu University Prospectus 2017. *General Prospectus*. Mthatha: Walter Sisulu University.

Paper received for publication on May 2016
 Paper accepted for publication on December 2016

Appendix 1



DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS SCIENCES
EVALUATION BY STUDENT/UVAVANYO LWA-BAFUNDI
 Subject code _____ Lecturer _____
Ikhowudi Yesifundo Umhlohli

Directions: For each item below, please indicate the extent to which you agree with the statement. CIRCLE (0) the number of your choice.
Inkcazo: Ngomba ngamnye ongezantsi, chaza ukuba uvumelana kangakanani nawo.

- 1 = Strongly Disagree/*Andivumelani kakhulu*
- 2 = Disagree/*Andivumelani*
- 3 = Somewhat agree/*Ndibuvumelana*
- 4 = Agree/*Ndiyavumelana*
- 5 = Strongly Agree/*Ndiumelana kakhulu/ncam*

A. COURSE OFFERING

- 1. Course objectives are clear. 1 2 3 4 5
- 2. Course is well organized. 1 2 3 4 5
- 3. Student responsibilities are clearly defined. 1 2 3 4 5
- 4. Course content is relevant and useful. 1 2 3 4 5
- 5. Texts and other materials have helped me understand the course topics. 1 2 3 4 5
- 6. Tests concentrate on important points of the course 1 2 3 4 5
- 7. Tests are clearly worded. 1 2 3 4 5
- 8. Tests are good measures of my knowledge, understanding or ability to perform. 1 2 3 4 5
- 9. Marking is fair. 1 2 3 4 5
- 10. Assignments are appropriately distributed throughout the year. 1 2 3 4 5
- 11. Theory is linked to practical implementation. 1 2 3 4 5
- 12. The content covers the latest developments in the learning area. 1 2 3 4 5
- 13. The volume of the subject content is manageable. 1 2 3 4 5
- 14. Course as a whole has produced new knowledge, skills and awareness in me. 1 2 3 4 5

B. INSTRUCTION

- 1. Has an excellent knowledge of the subject matter. 1 2 3 4 5
- 2. Is enthusiastic about the subject. 1 2 3 4 5
- 3. Is well prepared for each class. 1 2 3 4 5

- 4. Makes good use of class time. 1 2 3 4 5
- 5. Gives clear examples and explanations. 1 2 3 4 5
- 6. Provides constructive and informative feedback. 1 2 3 4 5
- 7. Clearly explains difficult concepts, ideas or theories. 1 2 3 4 5
- 8. Responds respectfully to student questions and viewpoints. 1 2 3 4 5
- 9. Is genuinely interested in helping me understand the subject 1 2 3 4 5
- 10. Is available to students during regular and reasonable office hours. 1 2 3 4 5
- 11. Motivates me by his/her example to want to learn about the subject. 1 2 3 4 5
- 12. Has produced new knowledge, skills and awareness in me. 1 2 3 4 5
- 13. Starts/dismisses class at scheduled times. 1 2 3 4 5
- 14. Seldom misses class. 1 2 3 4 5
- 15. Gives reasonable notice of tests and assignments. 1 2 3 4 5
- 16. Provides opportunities for self-study. 1 2 3 4 5
- 17. Inspires confidence. 1 2 3 4 5
- 18. Is in control of the teaching situation. 1 2 3 4 5
- 19. Creates a positive class atmosphere where students feel free to participate. 1 2 3 4 5
- 20. Explains the aims of individual lectures and projects. 1 2 3 4 5
- 21. Stimulates the creative ability of students. 1 2 3 4 5
- 22. Encourages students to think independently. 1 2 3 4 5
- 23. Presents interesting and stimulating lectures. 1 2 3 4 5
- 24. Presents interesting and stimulating practicals. 1 2 3 4 5

C. OVERALL

	Very poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very good
Overall course offering rating					
Overall instructor rating					

D. PLEASE COMMENT ON THE COURSE INCLUDING ANY PRACTICAL COMPONENT (FOR EXAMPLE LIKES, SUGGESTIONS, ETC.)
E. PLEASE COMMENT ON THE INSTRUCTOR (FOR EXAMPLE STRENGTHS, SUGGESTIONS, ETC.)
[USE ADDITIONAL PAGES FOR D AND E IF NECESSARY]