UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

CONSEQUENTIAL VALIDITY OF STUDENT RATINGS OF INSTRUCTION FOR ADMINISTRATIVE PURPOSES AND INSTRUCTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

SEYEDEH AZADEH SAFAVI

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CONSEQUENTIAL VALIDITY OF STUDENT RATINGS OF INSTRUCTION FOR ADMINISTRATIVE PURPOSES AND INSTRUCTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

By

SEYEDEH AZADEH SAFAVI

Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my late father whose unconditional love will always be my inspiration, my kind husband, Amir, for all the love and support he has given selflessly, and my lovely sons Behrad and Behtin who have always comprehended my commitment to my objective.
Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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SEYEDEH AZADEH SAFAVI

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Chair: Prof. Kamariah Abu Bakar, PhD

Faculty: Educational Studies

Student ratings of instruction (SRI) are popular evaluative procedures which are widely practiced in universities around the world including most Malaysian universities. With many universities using student ratings around the world, there are still uncovered issues regarding student ratings that research has not yet explored sufficiently. For instance, student ratings of instruction have been the subject of several validity studies with much of the research focusing on traditional evidence of validity. Only a fewer studies have examined consequential validity of SRI. Validity in its modern concept focuses on the use of instrument for a particular purpose as well as the consequences of instrument use. The evidence on consequences can include evaluation of the effects. Two intended effects of using student
ratings are making instructional improvement by faculty members and making administrative decisions by administrators.

This study examined consequential validity of student ratings by investigating evidence on the consequences as well as evidence on the utility of student ratings based on the Messick’s validity theory. Additionally, this study uncovered the administrators’ and faculty members’ reactions toward student ratings and obtained their recommendations for the effective use of student ratings.

In this study, a descriptive survey design was employed. Two self-developed instruments were used to collect data from a stratified proportionate random sample of 141 administrator and 1089 faculty member populations. The responses were subjected to descriptive statistics, principal component analysis, Pearson’s Product Moment correlation analysis, one way ANOVA, and independent t-test.

The study explored the perceived actual and the perceived potential consequences of student ratings on one dimension of administrative practices and two dimensions of instructional practices. Findings showed that the ratings information which focused on faculty members’ efforts in student learning enhancement was considered by both administrators and faculty members as the most useful type of ratings information. These findings addressed the consequential validity of student ratings at UPM, supported/improved validity of the UPM’s student ratings instrument,
addressed a gap in the validity of student ratings in its general conception in the literature and in its specific conception at UPM, and provided the university with a reliable evidence for justifying the use of student ratings.

This study revealed that administrators and faculty members had positive views toward student ratings. The findings also listed their recommendations regarding issues, such as, supplementing the ratings scale with other measures of teaching quality; providing opportunities for less effective faculty members to receive consultation services; reporting the result of student ratings in a multi-dimensional feedback form; providing an array of items so that different faculties/departments could select items suitable for their needs; and providing written explanations to assist faculty members in interpreting the results.

It is expected that the findings of this research will bring valuable insight and understanding to help the university authorities at UPM specifically, and other universities generally, as well as all faculty members to achieve more success in using the student ratings, and consequently, in enhancing the quality of instruction.
KESAHAN KEPENTINGAN PENGGUNAAN PENILAIAN PELAJAR
TERHADAP PENGAJARAN BAGI TUJUAN PENTADBIRAN DAN
PENINGKATAN PENGAJARAN

Oleh

SEYEDEH AZADEH SAFAVI

Julai 2012

Pengerusi: Prof. Kamariah Abu Bakar, PhD

Fakulti: Fakulti Pengajian Pendidikan

Penilaian pelajar terhadap pengajaran (SRI) merupakan suatu prosedur penilaian yang popular dan diamalkan secara meluas di universiti-universiti di seluruh dunia termasuk di kebanyakan universiti di Malaysia. Walaupun banyak universiti di seluruh dunia menggunakan pakai sistem penilaian pelajar, namun masih banyak lagi isu tentang penilaian pelajar yang belum diterokai sepenuhnya. Sebagai contoh, penilaian pelajar terhadap pengajaran telah menjadi subjek kepada beberapa kajian tentang kesahan yang kebanyakannya bertumpu kepada bukti kesahan tradisional. Hanya segelintir kajian yang meneliti tentang kesahan kepentingan SRI. Kesahan dalam konteks moden memberi tumpuan kepada penggunaan instrumen untuk tujuan tertentu dan juga akibat daripada penggunaan instrumen tersebut. Bukti akibat meliputi juga penilaian terhadap kesan-kesan. Dua kesan yang diharapkan daripada penggunaan penilaian pelajar ialah berlakunya
peningkatan pengajaran oleh ahli fakulti dan pembinaan keputusan pentadbiran oleh pentadbir.

Kajian ini telah meneliti kesahan kepentingan penilaian pelajar dengan mengkaji bukti akibat serta bukti penggunaan penilaian pelajar berdasarkan teori kesahan Messick. Selain itu, kajian ini merungkai reaksi pentadbir dan ahli-ahli fakulti terhadap penilaian pelajar dan mendapatkan syor mereka terhadap penggunaan penilaian pelajar yang lebih efektif.

Dalam kajian ini, reka bentuk deskriptif survei telah digunakan. Dua instrumen yang dibangunkan sendiri telah digunakan untuk mengumpul data daripada sampel rawak berstrata berkadar yang diperoleh daripada populasi yang terdiri daripada 141 orang pegawai pentadbir dan 1089 orang ahli fakulti. Respon-respons dianalisis menggunakan statistik deskriptif, analisis komponen utama (principal componen analysis), analisis korelasi hasil dharab momen Pearson (Product Moment Pearson), ANOVA satu-arah dan ujian-t tak bersandar.

Kajian ini meneroka tanggapan akibat sebenar (actual) dan tanggapan akibat potensi penilaian pelajar terhadap satu dimensi praktis pentadbiran dan dua dimensi amalan pengajaran. Dapatan juga menunjukkan bahawa kedua-dua pentadbir dan ahli fakulti menyatakan bahawa maklumat yang bertumpu kepada usaha ahli fakulti mempertingkat pembelajaran pelajar merupakan maklumat penilaian yang paling berguna. Penemuan ini mengutarakan
kesahan kepentingan penilaian pelajar di UPM; meningkatkan kesahan instrumen penilaian pelajar UPM; mengisi kekosongan dalam kesahan penilaian pelajar berdasarkan konsepsi umum dalam bacaan dan juga konsepsi khusus di UPM; dan menyediakan universiti ini dengan bukti yang boleh dipercayai bagi menjustifikasi penggunaan penilaian pelajar.

Kajian ini juga mendedahkan pandangan positif para pentadbir dan ahli fakulti terhadap penilaian pelajar. Dapatan juga menyenaraikan cadangan-cadangan berkaitan dengan isu-isu, seperti, menambah kepada skala penilaian dengan pengukuran kualiti pengajaran lain; memberi peluang kepada ahli fakulti yang kurang effektif untuk menerima khidmat konsultasi; melapor keputusan penilaian pelajar dalam bentuk maklum balas pelbagai dimensi; menyediakan pelbagai item supaya fakulti/jabatan yang berlainan boleh memilih item yang sesuai mengikut keperluan masing-masing; dan memberi penjelasan bertulis bagi membantu para ahli fakulti dalam menginterpretasi keputusan.

Dijangkakan bahawa dapatan kajian ini akan memberi wawasan dan pemahaman yang berguna bagi membantu pihak pentadbir universiti di UPM khususnya, dan universiti-universiti lain amnya, di samping semua ahli fakulti untuk mencapai kejayaan yang lebih, dalam penggunaan penilaian pelajar, dan seterusnya dalam meningkatkan kualiti pengajaran.
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All grand thanks and praise to God for his help and blessings. With God’s grace and help, I was able to complete this work. I would like to extend my sincere gratitude and appreciation to my supervisory committee for their encouragement and assistance during this endeavour. I offer my deepest appreciation to my chair supervisor, Prof Dr. Kamariah Abu Bakar for her expert guidance, support, and inspiration. You inspired me to do more than what I expected. It is not exaggeration to say, “I learned something new each time I met you.” Thank you very much. I would like to express my gratitude to Associate Prof Dr. Rohani Ahmad Tarmizi for offering her time and expertise in reviewing my thesis. I will never forget your technical and emotional supports. Many thanks to Dr. Nor Hayati Alwi. Your comments were very helpful. Likewise, I thank the many administrators and academic members of 15 faculties at Universiti Putra Malaysia whose participation made this study possible. Finally, heartfelt thanks to my family, my husband, and my children who have been tremendously kind, patient, and supportive and without whom this accomplishment would not have been possible.
I certify that an Examination Committee has met on ............... to conduct the final examination of SEYEDEH AZADEH SAFAVI on her Doctor of Philosophy thesis entitled “Consequential Validity Study of Student Ratings of Instruction on the Use For Administrative Purposes and Instructional Improvement” in accordance with Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Act 1980 and Universiti Pertanian Malaysia (Higher Degree) Regulation 1981. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Members of the Examination committee were as follows:

**Mokhtar Dato’ Hj. Nawawi, PhD**
Senior Lecturer
Faculty of Educational Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Chairman)

**Fadzilah Abd Rahman, PhD**
Senior Lecturer
Faculty of Educational Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Internal Examiner)

**Ahmad Fauzi Mohd Ayub, PhD**
Senior Lecturer
Faculty of Educational Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Internal Examiner)

**Robert John Coe, PhD**
Professor
School of Education
University of Durham
(External Examiner)

------------------------------------------------------------------------

**SEOW HENG FONG, PhD**
Professor and Deputy Dean
School of Graduate Studies
Universiti Putra Malaysia

Date:
This thesis was submitted to the Senate of the Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

**Kamariah Abu Bakar, PhD**  
Professor  
Faculty of Educational Studies  
Universiti Putra Malaysia  
(Chairman)

**Rohani Ahmad Tarmizi, PhD**  
Associate Professor  
Faculty of Educational Studies  
Universiti Putra Malaysia  
(Member)

**Nor Hayati Alwi, PhD**  
Senior Lecturer  
Faculty of Educational Studies  
Universiti Putra Malaysia  
(Member)

-----------------------------------------------

**BUJANG BIN KIM HUAT, PhD**  
Professor and Dean  
School of Graduate Studies  
Universiti Putra Malaysia

Date:
DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis is my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously, and is not concurrently, submitted for any other degree at Universiti Putra Malaysia or at any other institution.

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SEYEDEH AZADEH SAFAVI
Date: 2 July 2012
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