

# The Results of Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) on Teachers and Students

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## Abstract

The method of completing student evaluation of teaching (SET) has been changed from paper to online investigation in recent years. In one of the colleges in South-central Taiwan, students have to finish online SET before the next semester's courses selection. However, few students indicated that they weren't aware of any improvement after filling out SET. Therefore, the aim of this article attempted to explore the teachers' and students' opinions and the validity of SET. This research involved a survey, comprised of two sets of questionnaires concerning teachers and students. Four colleges of 404 students and 11 teachers participated in the study. The results of this study on SET showed a medium level of consistence between the teachers and students. Overall, this study might be of importance in explaining the useful effect and influence between the teachers and the students through SET.

**Keywords:** student evaluation of teaching; teacher-student interaction

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## I. Introduction

What is the standard of being a good teacher? The most immediate way to assess teachers is to ask students to give feedback at the end of the courses (Shevlin, Banyard, Davies & Griffiths, 2000). Later on, Knapper (2001) found student evaluations of teaching (SET) are the most common tool for assessing teaching in contemporary higher education. SET was a field that was in a state of constant change; over the past 10 years there have not been many changes. By way of the illustration, the method of completing SET has been changed from paper to online investigation.

Recently, the practice of SET in universities has been a common trend around the world (Lin, 1985; Newton, 1988; Pan, 2012; Pounder, 2007; Seldin 1989; Stratton, 1990). Likewise, the university in this study has also started adapting online SET. This system provides a comprehensive platform for teachers to receive different comments from students in order to improve their teaching. Only if completing SET of current semester by school regulation, students at this school can register and select courses for the coming semester. However, students doubt that SET is possibly not anonymous and teachers can check it secretly. That is to say, in fact, some fill out SET in casual way merely for selecting classes online. Similarly, Shevlin, Banyard, Davies and Griffiths (2000) found that the outcomes of the research imply SET does not exactly represent teaching performance. On the other hand, in terms of viewing the results of

SET, teachers also have a variety of opinions. For example, some prefer the score of SET to the suggestions or comments, others are in favor of the later one, and the others adapt both of these criteria (Chang, 2000). For professional development of teachers, reflection helps teachers become more effective and motivated to realize their own implicit teaching beliefs, and examine their assumptions about learning and teaching, to acquire a new perspective, search for alternatives, and thereby develop a new understanding of their practices (Harste, Short, & Burke, 1988). Besides, by holding predominant thought, some educators see that students do not complete the questionnaires in neutral stand; vice versa, students do not consider that educators evaluate them in fair stance. Then as well, Ballantyne, Borthwick, and Packer (2000) found the assumption of bias might affect attitude of teachers with SET, which are important for both obtaining and using SET data; after all, their usefulness for the improvement of teaching depends upon the extent to which teachers respond to SET and use them. In addition, a certain group of students long for the improvement of teachers after SET inspection. An emotional teacher, as an example, is one of the kinds that students expect for being corrected. Therefore, the target of this study was to understand the performance of SET among teachers and students at this university, then distinguish if SET contains validity in the academic field.

### 1. Research Questions

Five questions that needed to be resolved in this regard were:



- (a) Do the results of SET influence teachers' attitude on educating students?
- (b) Does SET give appropriate dedication to teachers' performance?
- (c) Do students fill out SET with impartial attitude?
- (d) Are students aware of the improvement of teaching policy after results released?
- (e) To what extent, does SET affect the quality of teachers' teaching performance?

## II. Method and Methodology

### 2.1. Research Design

The method to carry out this study was using a survey, which included questions and statements to which the participants were expected to respond anonymously. In this work, we developed two different questionnaires for teachers and students.

### 2.2. Subjects/Materials

The primary criterion for selecting subjects was that they have already filled out online SET for one time at least. To ensure some homogeneity of study background, all subjects were selected from the student population at one technical University in central Taiwan. The population for the study consisted of College of Engineering, College of Electrical and Computer Engineering, College of Management, and College of Applied Arts and Sciences. The questionnaires we retrieved were 404 copies in total.

The distribution of gender in this survey was each 261 males and 143 females. Their ages were ranged from 18 to 22 years old. In addition, we invited 11 professors to participate in this investigation. One of them, the chairman from the department of Applied

For these objectives to be accomplished, the article was structured as follows. The first part dealt with the theoretical foundations for the development of the study. Next, the research methodology was presented, with full details of the participants in the research, and of the instrument and procedures used. Results were then presented, with a thorough description of the investigation of SET. Finally, discussions and conclusions were drawn.

Foreign Languages, was interviewed in person for several controversial issues. The questionnaire consists of 10 items. The questionnaire, based on Likert scale ranged from strongly disagrees to strongly agree, contained 9 rating items; moreover, 2 open-ended questions were enclosed. Meanwhile, the questionnaire for teacher consisted of 9 rating items, and 1 open-ended question was enclosed.

### 2.3. Data Collection Procedure

The data for this study were obtained by means of a paper-and-pencil record, and data analyst was compiled statistics. The data collection sessions each lasted about 20 minutes, and were conducted at roughly two-week intervals. Thus, the subject was asked to fill out a questionnaire which elicited information concerning their perspectives in SET.

### 2.4. Questions from student's questionnaire

The questionnaire design was a corrected design utilizing survey methodology. There are ten rating items included in the questionnaire.



- Q1. I think SET is a valid survey.
- Q2. I think SET enables teachers to understand more about the needs and thoughts of students.
- Q3. I fill out online SET with fair attitude.
- Q4. I think teachers whose SET scores are excellent should be rewarded.
- Q5. I think teachers whose SET scores are poor should be investigated.
- Q6. I have ever filled out online SET casually.
- Q7. I think the result of SET should be public.
- Q8. I think SET is anonymous.
- Q9. After filling out SET, I perceive changes of instructors' teaching.
- Q10. If online SET is not anonymous, I will not fill out honestly. Why?
- Q11. Do you think what might be some improvements for SET system?

## **2.5 Questions from teacher's questionnaire**

There are nine rating items included in the questionnaire for the teachers.

- Q1. You think SET can improve your professional development.
- Q2. You think SET can promote your educational quality.
- Q3. You think SET can provide an opportunity of making self-reflection.
- Q4. You think SET is an available approach to view ineligible teachers.
- Q5. You think SET makes you more understand students' needs and thoughts.
- Q6. You think students fill out SET with fair attitude and neutral stance.
- Q7. You think this evaluation is a fair approach to inspect your teaching effectiveness.
- Q8. You are satisfied with your annual SET results.
- Q9. You think SET can represent your performance on education.
- Q10. Do you think what might be some improvements for SET system?

## **III. Results**

### **3.1. The results of students' questionnaire**

The following analyzed data showed the results of students' questionnaire; the percentages were also presented graphically below.



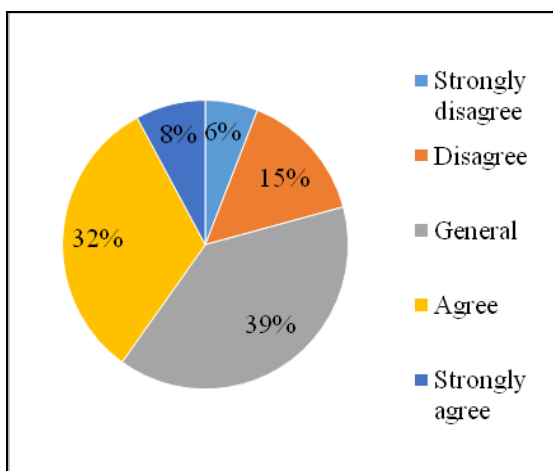


Fig. 1 The data results of Q1

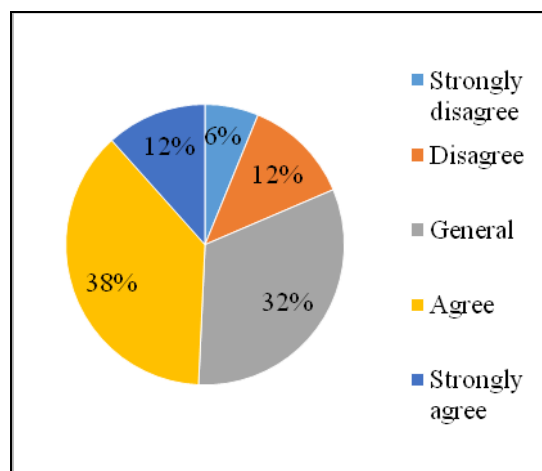


Fig. 2 The data results of Q2

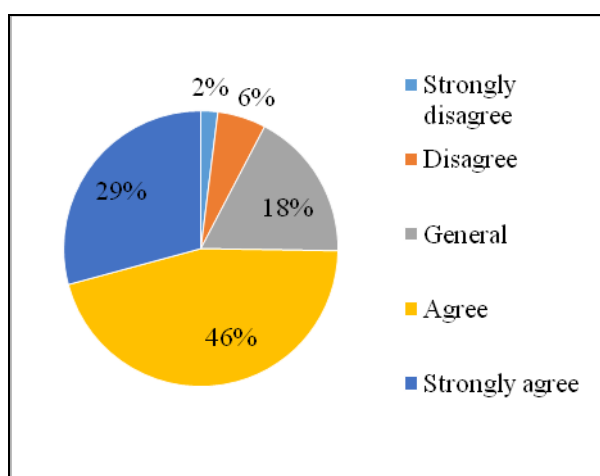


Fig. 3 The data results of Q3

According to figure 1, it showed that students strongly agreed and agreed with Q1 each accounts for 8% and 32%. 39% students were in the neutral stance. 15% and 6% of participants in each group disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that it was valid of this SET survey.

Regarding as figure 2, it showed that students strongly agreed and agreed with Q2 each accounts for 12% and 38%. 32% students were in the neutral stance. 12% and 6% of participants in each group

disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that teacher can understand more about students' thoughts and needs.

Figure 3 showed that students strongly agreed and agreed with Q3 each accounts for 29% and 46% respectively. 18% students were in the neutral stance. 6% and 2% of participants in each group disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that fills out SET with fair attitude. This data presented most of participants fill out online SET with fair attitude. However, a few students were not in the same way.



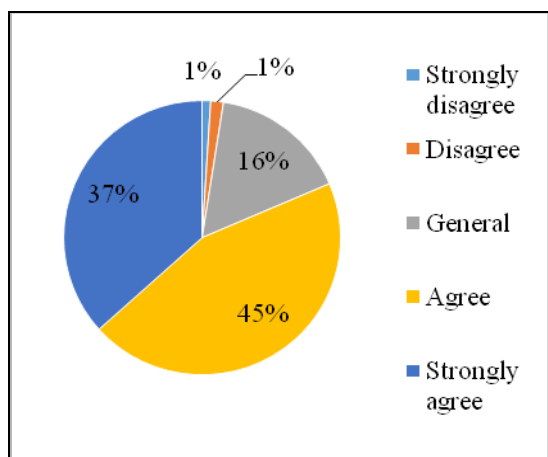


Fig. 4 The data results of Q4

For the sake of distinguishing excellent and poor score of teachers investigated for their performance from education, consider the graphic representation in figures 4 and figure 5. Figure 4 presented that the students strongly agreed and agreed with Q4 each accounts for 37% and 45%. 16% students were in the neutral stance. 1% and the other 1% of participants in each group disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement that teacher whose SET scores were

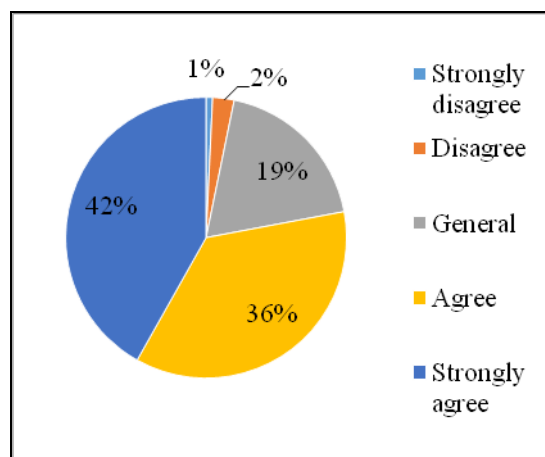


Fig. 5 The data results of Q5

excellent should be rewarded. On the contrary, figure 5 showed that the students strongly agreed and agreed with Q5 each totals 42% and 36%. 19% students were in the neutral stance. The rest of participants in each group disagreed or strongly disagreed were 2% and 1% respectively. The data implied that most of students fill out online SET support that the school had to conduct the policies which were the reward and investigation.

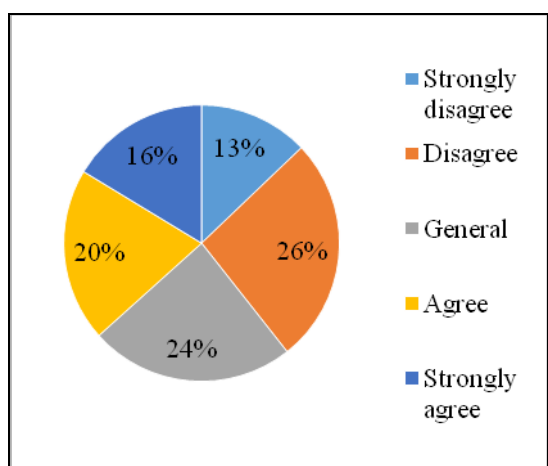


Fig. 6 The data results of Q6

As shown in the figure 6, 16% and 20% students each strongly agreed and agreed with Q6. 24% students held in central position. For the rest of parts, 26% and 13% participants each disagreed as well as strongly disagreed with the statement that they had ever filled out online SET with casual attitude. From

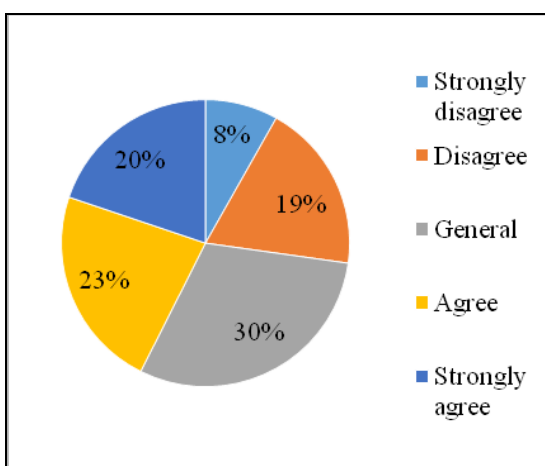


Fig. 7 The data results of Q7

the figure 6, it could tell the distribution of Q6 was graphically average. But, obviously from the figure shown in the pie chart, a great part of students denied that they had ever filled out online SET casually.

From the data demonstrated in figure 7, 20%



and 23% students for each group strongly agreed and agreed with Q7. Also, 30% students were in neutral position for mixed opinion. However, there were 19% and 8% participants for each group disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement that the result of SET should be public. Some agreed with this statement is for the reason of justice and public judgment; on the other hand, the other fought against this statement because they thought SET score report belongs to personal information of teachers.

In the figure 8, there were 35% and 33%

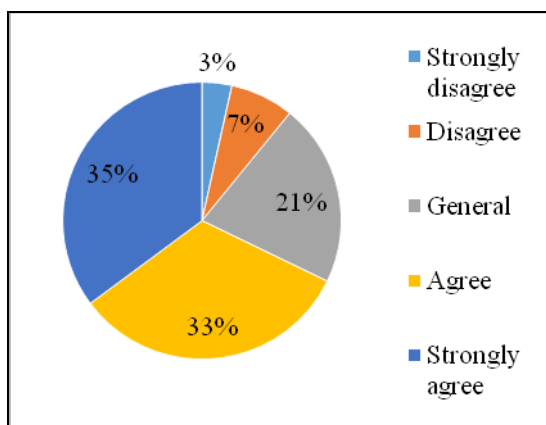


Fig. 8 The data results of Q8

According to figure 9, this seemed to contradict the qualitative data that suggested students perceive changes of instructors' teaching. However, in the absence of statistically significant results, no definite conclusion could be drawn. This question received much more positive result, but 45% participants took a neutral stance with this question. There were 12% and 21% students each strongly disagreed and disagreed with Q9. In the other words, 78%

students each strongly agreed and agreed with Q8. As well, 21% students kept in central mind. Yet, although there were only a few participants, 7% disagreed and 3% strongly agreed with the statement that SET was anonymous. To the minority, the reason why they thought about SET was not anonymous was because they had ever been told that teachers could probably review the result of SET. Nevertheless, after the interview with the chairman and the official announcement from school, the result of SET was totally anonymous and concealed.

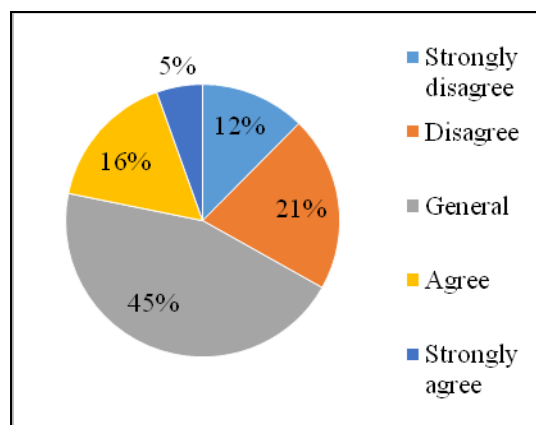


Fig. 9 The data results of Q9

participants didn't observe considerable changes of instructors' teaching.

### 3.2. The consequences of teacher's questionnaire

There were nine rating items and one open-ended question included in the questionnaire for teachers.

Tab 1 The analyzed results of teachers' questionnaire

Question	AVG	SA	A	G	D	SD
Q1. You think SET can improve your professional development.	3.36	0%	45.5%	45.5%	9.1%	0%
Q2. You think SET can promote your educational quality.	3.45	0%	54.5%	36.4%	9.1%	0%



Question	AVG	SA	A	G	D	SD
Q3. You think SET can provide an opportunity of making self-reflection.	4.00	9.1%	81.8%	9.1%	0%	0%
Q4. You think SET is an available approach to view ineligible teachers.	2.55	0%	9.1%	45.5%	36.4%	9.1%
Q5. You think SET makes you more understand students' needs and thoughts.	3.82	18.2%	45.5%	36.4%	0%	0%
Q6. You think students fill out SET with fair attitude and neutral stance.	3.09	0%	36.4%	36.4%	27.3%	0%
Q7. You think this evaluation is a fair approach to inspect your teaching effectiveness.	3.09	0%	36.4%	36.4%	27.3%	0%
Q8. You are satisfied with your annual SET results.	4.00	18.2%	63.6%	18.2%	0%	0%
Q9. You think SET can represent your performance on education.	3.18	0%	36.4%	45.5%	18.2%	0%

The averages of Q1 located at the interval of 3 and 4, each represented general and agree. Table 1 showed that it tended to general which meant they did not consider it was beneficial to the profession development of teachers. On the other hand, it could also tell there was no exact connection between SET score and teaching performance.

The averages of Q2 located at the interval of 3 and 4, each represented general and agree. Table 1 indicated that it was close to general which meant they did not think it could promote their quality on education. In the other words, this could refer to no direct relation between SET and teaching quality.

The average of Q3 mostly located at 4, which meant almost all professors agree with this item. Table 1 also demonstrated that there was a strong bond between the self-reflection of teachers and the reference from SET. That was to say, teachers had great effort in reflecting and altering their teaching method.

The average of Q4 was relatively lower at the

figure of 2.55, which located at the interval of 3 and 2. Although most of teachers investigated were in the neutral stance to the stage of agree, the average was tend to contrary edge that referred to a little disagree with this question.

The averages of Q5 located at the interval of 3 and 4, each represented general and agree. Most of teachers investigated consider that they could know more about students' needs. Compare with Q2 from student's questionnaire, students also indicated that teachers knew more about their needs after filling out online SET.

The averages of Q6 located at the interval of 3 and 4, each represented general and agree. The means were also represented that most teachers considered students filled out online SET with fair attitude and neutral stance. Compared with Q3 from student's questionnaire, students also thought that they filled out SET with fair attitude.

The averages of Q7 located at the interval of 3 and 4, each represented general and agree. The means





represented that most teachers considered SET was a fair approach to inspect their teaching effectiveness.

All of teachers were satisfied their annual SET results, and no one considered that the result was bad. The average of Q8 locates at 4, which meant all of teachers were satisfied their SET result.

The averages of Q9 located at the interval of 3 and 4, each represented general and agree. Most teachers considered that SET could represent their performance on teaching.

### 3.3. *Results of qualitative research*

## IV. Discussion and Conclusion

From the results of two surveys concerning students and teachers respectively, most figures turned into positive side; only a few items were at negative side. However, for the data from students, our questions mainly focused on the improvements to SET; in the other words, the more positively the figures showed in report, the more concerned the students felt about the consequence of SET. On the other hand, for the data from teachers, our questionnaire primarily aimed on the opinions of SET; to put that differently, the higher the scores were, the more optimistically the investigated teachers thought. Therefore, there are five main discussions in this passage, including (1) the influence of SET to teachers' attitude, (2) the commitment of SET, (3) the students' attitude toward the function SET, (4) the improvement of SET, and (5) the impact of SET to the quality of teaching performance.

### 4.1. Review of research findings

Five of these findings are worth summarizing:

When asked to comment on Q10 in the student's questionnaire, the responses were generally negative. Most students considered that if online SET was not anonymous, they were not willing to write any comment to teachers honestly. This seemed to contradict with the data that it would indicate futurity to Q10. Students pointed out that they were afraid of "revenge" or "look upon with hatred" from teachers. Some of comments would be too cruel for teacher to accept. A large number of students reported favorable on anonymous aspect, as shown in the following comment: if online SET could be anonymous; students would be more careful for filling out SET.

First of all, in the extensive question of questionnaire retrieved from student, many students mentioned that if the SET was not anonymous, they would not fill out honestly. In the other words, students were afraid that if they gave bad scores to their teachers, they would risk to be avenged. What's more, during the interview with professors and chairman of department of Applied Foreign Language, they said that it was hard for people to accept bad comments about themselves, and so did teachers. Therefore, it could be deciphered that teachers might change their attitude on educating students after they knew the results of SET, especially getting bad ratings. Thus, it is believed that the results of SET can certainly influence teachers' attitude on teaching.

Secondly, from Q5 in the questionnaire of teachers and Q2 in the questionnaire of students, both of the results indicated that teachers could receive the feedback from students; meanwhile, students could feel the changes from teachers. Accordingly, it means teaching-learning is the most essential part. Although dedication was not clear enough, SET did give



slightly valid dedication to teaching performance. Specifically, for retrieving more valid and accurate rating data, school should encourage students to fill out SET with not only bold but also fair mind. Therefore, if implementing, teachers and students could both get beneficial from SET.

Next, according to the research, the statistic data indicated that most students filled out SET with fair attitude. That is to say, students trusted that SET could deliver their thoughts indirectly; therefore, they would not fill out SET in casual way. However, few of them did not care about it because they only filled out SET for wanted courses next semester, and chose all the same options in SET. For the most part, in teachers' opinion, they also believed that their students were trustworthy in SET. To sum up, these data lent support to this question.

Then, from the Q9 in the questionnaire, it should be interpreted in relation to the teachers who had poor results in SET. The study presented that most students did not see the improvement of teaching from their teachers after the SET results were released. Probably what factors had led to this low awareness is the fact that the teachers did not think SET was an available approach to view ineligible teachers. Therefore, they would not acknowledge their results of SET. As a result, teachers should face up to the truth that contained actual advices of students, or they could possibly keep an open mind and a receptive attitude.

Finally, in terms of teachers, SET comprehensively provides them a standard to evaluate themselves. Take the feedback of students from SET as an example, teachers could individually decide if it was necessary to alter their teaching methods in class or not. For the other instance,

teachers could gain an opportunity to realize what their students long for exactly and have more close interaction with them. Although a few teachers complained about how badly their students treated them, in most occasions, there had been already a deep gap between teachers and students against communication since they had some conflicts and quarrels. Therefore, from the Q3, it can prove that they were willing to make self-reflection on account of the score and comments from SET.

#### **4.2. Limitations of the study**

This method of investigation is not without problems; it is important to emphasize that methodological problems in the research design limit our study. We readily acknowledged that our research is exploratory that there are problems with the research methods. It means that we lack of interviewing teacher and students, and the data is not quite specific. To put it briefly, we couldn't know precise that thought and attitude without interview from teacher and student.

The second limitation was rooted in the number of participants. Especially, compared with the numbers of students who filled out the questionnaire, the numbers of teacher willing to fill up the questionnaire were only 11. We acknowledged that our research was exploratory; however, the teacher samples were too little to support our conclusion persuasively. Therefore, this problems may be minimized the future by increasing the numbers of teacher sample.

In addition, a lot of participants who filled out the questionnaires chose the general options as their answers; as a result, neutral positions were in majority among our survey. In other words, due to the



majority of neutral positions, the discrimination was not specific since the study involved only multiple choices and two extensive questions. Not surprisingly, the findings of such studies were not very conclusive.

### 4.3. Recommendations for future research

In order to obtain more reliable and objective data,

future research aims at finding the sound of participants' mind in depth. To put that differently, an area of future research that should be considered is the method of research. Hopefully, that future research will clarify this important profundity concern and provide more detailed results which may differentiate these views from one another.

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## 師生對於教學評量之有效性評估

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### 摘要

近年來，對於教師的教學評量已從紙本操作轉為透過網路線上填寫。而位於台灣中南部地區的一所科技大學學生必須在下學期選課前填完所有教學評量，否則無法進入該選課系統。然而，部分同學反應：透過教學評量機制，在教學方式上並未看見任何顯著的改善。因此，在本論文中，我們將探討師生對於教學評量的看法以及教學評量之可信度。此研究採用問卷調查，分別為針對教授及學生之不同兩份問卷。參與此項研究的對象為四個學院，共 404 名學生和 11 名教授。調查結果指出此評量系統在師生之間有中間程度的一致性。整體而言，此份研究透過教師教學評量系統來詮釋師生之間相互有效影響的重要性。

**關鍵詞：**教學評量、教學互動

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