

## **Relationship among Students' Academic Achievement, Students' Evaluation of Teacher and Students' Evaluation of Course**

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### **Abstract**

*The effect of achievement on teachers and course evaluation has been topic of concern for faculty members in Pakistan after introduction of mandatory teachers and course evaluations as a measure of quality enhancement. The existing studies about the effect of achievement on the evaluation of teacher and course were marred by the inability to control the ability level of students. The low and high achievers may have different personalities and ability levels. The present study tried to overcome this difficulty by getting the data from the same students with respect to their achievement level. So, in this study low and high achievers were same persons hence ability level has been controlled. The present study intends to explore the relationship among students' perceptions of course and teacher and achievement at higher level. The sample of the study was 157 students of public universities randomly selected by keeping in view the variation of subject, gender, and program. The questionnaires developed by higher education commission of Pakistan for teacher and course evaluations were used in the study. The analysis of the data revealed that the students gave credit of high achievement to teacher and course while blamed the subject and teacher for low achievement. The study has implications for teachers and management for improving their teaching and rearrangement of course contents for effective teaching.*

**Keywords:** Students Academic Achievement, Students Course Evaluation, Students Teacher Evaluation.

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## Introduction

Historically, teachers have been evaluating their students, but in recent past the evaluation of teachers and course by the students has been in practice in institutions of Pakistan. Students' Evaluation of Teachers (SET) and Students' Evaluation of Courses (SEC) help teachers reflect on teaching process and learning, note strengths and weaknesses and identify target areas to work on. Educators use SET to check for faculty performance and functioning.<sup>1</sup> SET is multidimensional, valid, reliable, and useful and a function of teacher's teaching and not a function of course allotted.<sup>2</sup> It has also been found that students usually rate teachers high if they have good rapport with the teacher and also have good grade expectations.<sup>3</sup> A widespread dialogue among educational community exists about teachers that those teachers who give more marks and less course work tend to have better evaluation by the students. Current study is an attempt to find out the hold of this widespread claim.

SET is getting more important in Pakistan as teachers are being rated by quality assurance agencies on the basis of these surveys. As teachers strive to get their evaluations good, they may come in a bargaining position that they have to give students (their evaluators) something in return. This may affect quality of teaching and henceforth overall functioning of higher education.

Educational scientists have tried to find out the relationship among SET and revenge due to low grades, but it had not been proven.<sup>4</sup> But cognitive dissonance is somehow related to grades (i.e. Students' Academic Achievement) and SET.<sup>5</sup> Another factor is that usually students do not pay sufficient attention on teacher or course evaluation as they consider it unimportant, or may not be taken seriously by authorities.<sup>6</sup> As far as impact of SET on teachers is considered, it is known to have considerable impact on teachers' self-efficacy, student interactions as well as teacher-teacher interaction.<sup>7</sup> In the face of grading issues, SET remains a delicate issue which needs to be dig out.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, it is possible that students might give wrong, molded or subjective opinion about teachers and courses.<sup>9</sup>

Present study would focus on teacher and course evaluation by students. The study is based on cognitive dissonance theory and students' evaluation of teachers and courses. This study would help to point out the factors responsible for differences in SET and SEC; and what these differences tell us.

### **Theoretical Framework of Study**

The study is based upon concepts that encompass cognitive dissonance theory, alongside with students' evaluation of teachers and courses. Cognitive dissonance theory examines the factors which influence students' behaviours, attitudes, and how they rationalize the situations according to their own feelings and behaviour. Hopes for achievement are usually linked with self-perceptions, capabilities and self-efficacy.<sup>10</sup> The cognitive dissonance framework provides a multidimensional approach to find out how students provide rationalizations to their inconsistent behaviour in educational contexts.<sup>11</sup> Educationists have worked long enough in cognitive dissonance theory to establish its grounds in the field of students' evaluation of teaching and courses.<sup>12</sup> Students try to blame teachers and courses for their low achievement. So, in this study we took cognitive dissonance theory and students' evaluation of teaching and courses in areas of high and low achievement. Cognitive dissonance can simply be defined as striving for internal consistency when individual is faced with different issues and contradicting values. Students, who have varied learning and achievement expectations, when faced with contradicting results, strive for internal consistency or cognitive dissonance.

This study intended to control the student ability as both high and low achievement scores are of the same individual who evaluate teachers, courses. So, we are working out on possible differences in students' evaluation of teachers, courses linked with achievement keeping the ability level constant as both high and low achievers were the same individuals with difference in achievement.

### **Methodology**

The research design adopted for this study was a descriptive survey. This study explores students' evaluation of teachers and courses (by controlling ability level and individual differences) in which student has scored higher and lower marks. The sample of the study was 157 university students enrolled at five different departments of a university in central Punjab. The University caters the needs of middle class students mainly from rural background.

A questionnaire was devised which comprised 47 items to measure the students teacher evaluation and students course evaluation. The students' evaluation of teacher was measured through the indicators like 'teacher evaluation' 'learning

environment and teaching methodology', 'quality of delivery' and 'assessment'. The indicators of students' course evaluation were 'course evaluation', 'Course Content Organization', 'Students Contribution', 'Learning Resources' and 'Teaching Practicum'. Each indicator sought perception of students in two areas or subjects; one in which student has scored higher marks and one in which student has scored lower marks. In teachers' evaluation there were 14 items (e.g. The teacher was prepared for your class), learning environment and teaching methodology consisted of 4 items (e.g. The learning and teaching methods encouraged participation), quality of delivery consisted of 4 items (e.g. The pace of the course was appropriate), assessment consisted of 5 items (e.g. Assessment was based on course objectives), course evaluation was consisted of 5 items (e.g. The subject matter presented in the course has increased your knowledge of the subject), course content organization was consisted of 7 items (e.g. The course objectives were clear.), students contribution was consisted of 3 items (e.g. I completed all requirements of the course), learning resources was consisted of 3 items (e.g. The provision of learning resources in the library was adequate and appropriate), teaching practicum consisted of 2 items (e.g. The material in the practical was useful).

### Data Analysis

This study explored students' evaluation of teachers, courses, and learning experiences in maximum and minimum achievement subjects. The paired opinions provided a framework for controlling ability and thus checking out differences in students' evaluation of teachers and courses of maximum and minimum achievement. Thus by controlling ability, we can see differences in students' evaluation for teachers, courses and learning experiences in highest and lowest achievement subjects.

The data were analyzed with the help of statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). The paired sample t test was applied to compare the students' teacher score and students' course evaluation score about higher scoring subject and lower scoring subject. To find the relationship among SET, SEC, and SAA the Pearson correlation was calculated.

Table 1: Comparison of Students' Evaluation

Nature of Evaluation	Relative Achievement Level	Mean	SD	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
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Teacher Evaluation	Higher	4.14	0.55	11.52	15	0.000
	Lower	3.47	0.77	2	6	
Course Evaluation	Higher	4.18	0.63	11.71	156	0.000
	Lower	3.45	0.87	5		

N = 157 p = 0.05

Table 1 shows paired sample statistics for the data. All paired sample t-test statistics are significant at 0.05. It shows that students tend to rate the subject and teacher more positively in all areas of teaching, course and learning experiences.<sup>13</sup> As, Individuals feel cognitive dissonance when data coming from different sources are contradictory.<sup>14</sup> It motivates them to find reasons which could provide this inconsistency, thus rationalizing the behavior in favor of preferred results or attitudes.<sup>15</sup>

Table 2: Relationship among Evaluations by Students Achieving Lower and Higher Scores

Students Evaluation Score	Students achieved Higher Scoring Subject	Students achieved lower Scoring Subject	Average Achievement
Teachers	0.202** (P=0.011)	0.092(P=0.261)	
Course	0.179* (P=0.025)	0.140(P=0.080)	
Average Teacher Evaluation			0.158* (P=0.050)
Average Course Evaluation			0.144 (P=0.072)

N = 157 p = 0.05

Table 2 shows that there was statistically significant positive relationship between the students' achieved higher scoring subject and students' evaluation about teacher and course while there was no significant relationship between the students' achieved lower scoring subject and students' evaluation about teacher and course. There was a positive correlation between average students' teacher evaluation and students' average achievement while there was no relationship between average students' course evaluation and average students' achievement.

Table 3: Relationship between Students' Evaluation of Teacher (SET) and Students' Evaluation of Course (SEC)

Students Evaluation Score	SEC higher	SEC lower	SEC average
SET higher	0.688**		

	(P=0.000)	
SET lower	0.678**	
SET average		0.762**
		(p=0.000)

N = 157    p = 0.05

Table 3 shows that there was statistically significant positive relationship between the students' teacher evaluation score and students' course evaluation score regarding higher and lower scoring subject. There was a positive correlation between average students' teacher evaluation and average course evaluation regarding average students' achievement.

### Findings

Following are the findings of this study:

- It was found that the students rated the teacher and course higher which happened to give them higher marks and students rated the teacher and course lower which gave them lower score.
- It was also found that students' teacher evaluation score and students' course evaluation score is positively related to the achievement in case of subject where they got higher marks in the semester.
- It was found that students' teacher evaluation had positive relationship with average students' achievement while students' course evaluation had no correlation with student's achievement.
- There was a positive correlation between students' teacher evaluation and course evaluation regarding lower and higher subject scores.

### Discussion

The main purpose of the study was to find out the relationship among teacher evaluation and course evaluation by the students, and students' academic achievement. The relation of teacher evaluation and course evaluation was observed with respect to the subject, which gave them higher marks. It refers to the fact that the students thought that their higher achievement is due to the teacher and course. This study proved that the students' high rate the teacher and course in case of subject which gave them higher marks. Some researchers feel it is a halo effect that operates in course evaluation. If the students think that teacher is effective

and course is easy, they high rate the course.<sup>16</sup> The students who are high achievers tend to rate their teachers high.<sup>17</sup> The subject which gave the students higher marks may be an easy course. So, students may feel at ease in those courses and show more interest in, that subject and get higher marks. It was found that easiness of the course is favourable rating of course.<sup>18</sup>

While, the students rated low the teacher and course in case of the subject which gave them lower marks and there was no correlation among students' teacher evaluation, course evaluation and the subject which gave them lower marks. It shows that the students were confused about the subject in which they got lower marks. They were unable to decide about the actual cause (either related to the teacher or the course) of their low achievement. It may be due to less ability of students to decide upon the cause of low achievement. It may be due to biasness of students about teachers.<sup>19</sup>

This study tried to control the ability level by getting the data from same students. If the data were collected from different students they may have different abilities resulting in ambiguous results. Some researchers discussed that the teacher effectiveness rating is not same in case of different classes, years as well as individuals.<sup>20</sup>

The research has many implications for educationists. Data patterns suggest that the students who have highest achievement in one subject tend to achieve relatively higher even in lowest achieved courses and vice versa as shown by the correlation in this study. It also suggests that student achievement acts as a determinant of student's evaluation of teacher, course and learning experiences. Pakistan is a developing country, struggling to improve its higher education system. Higher education has completely internal assessment system, while for the sake of quality assurance and enhancement, internal and external agencies seek students' evaluation of teachers, courses and learning experiences. When teachers know that they will be evaluated by higher authorities on the basis of students' evaluations and they are in turn affected by their grades, it can lead to a dangerous turn of events. But, on the other hand it can be positive as teachers who perform better in their classrooms ultimately lead to better learning of students who will have better achievement. We need to dig out the whole scenario further. Average achievement of the student will tell which kind of learner he is, and this average in relation to specific subject will tell about his performance, behaviour, and determinants of causality. It was argued by a researcher that course

evaluation was impacted by grades but not in natural sciences.<sup>21</sup> In natural sciences courses which have good expected results were graded as lower or just OK while courses were rated lower for being too difficult or elementary in nature. Courses which were evaluated as 'just right' got the highest evaluations.

### **Conclusions**

Following conclusions had been made out of this study.

- It was concluded that the students rate differently the teacher and course which gave them higher and lower score. The students rated high the teacher and course in which they got higher score and rated low the teacher and course in which they got lower score.
- It was concluded that higher students' scoring subject had positive relationship with students' teacher evaluation and students' course evaluation.
- It was concluded that lower students' scoring subject had no relationship with students' evaluation of that subject's course.



## Notes and References

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