Bruker vi studentevalueringer på feil måte?

Do we use student evaluations of teaching (SET) for the wrong purpose?

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SET are more or less systematic ways to survey students’ experiences from or opinions on teaching, courses, or study programs.
We often say that SET support development, measure quality, and give students a voice.

But mostly we just create dead data for hangar 51.
Strong or very strong faith in Swedish universities
(Medieakademin 2018)

The government may have an accountability problem that spills over to higher education
(Stensaker & Harvey 2011)
SET are here to stay
But there are a few problems
American air force training
(Borg and Hamilton 1956)

89 instructors, each of them “taught” 60 trainees
Instructors self rated themselves and rated each other and were rated by supervisors
6 trained assessors rated trainee’s performance when they (after training) in groups of 6 solved 12 realistic problems
Trainees anonymously rated their respective instructors

Instructors’ self- and peer rating, and rating by supervisor were correlated with each other – not with student rating
None of these correlated with student performance.
SET and student learning are NOT related
(Uttl et al. 2017)
Students’ epistemological views – effects on SET
200 students’ ways of knowing on entry to Business
(Oxford Brooks University)

91 Absolute
“knowledge to be certain, either right or wrong”

84 Transitional
“knowledge as less certain in some contexts”

21 Independent
“acknowledging the contestability and uncertainty of knowledge”
“no system for evaluating the relative strength of knowledge”

4 Contextual
“a contextual way of knowing also recognised the uncertainty and contestability of knowledge claims, but evaluated these claims in relation to the context in which they were made.”

From which position are students answering?

Deep approach to learning

Surface approach to learning

Teaching Course Teacher

If we don’t know the position of students – how can we interpret the result?
Other biases

**Gender**
(Andersen and Miller 1997; Sprague and Massoni 2005)

**Ethnicity**
(Basow, Codos, and Martin 2013; Huston 2006)

**Attractiveness**
(Wolbring and Riordan 2016)

**Physical space**
(Kwan 1999)

**Weather conditions**
(Braga, Paccagnella, and Pellizzari 2014)

**Academic discipline**
(Bini and Masserini 2016)

**Course type**
(Alhija 2017)

**Student belief in SET usefulness**
(Spoooren and Christiaens 2017)
Surprisingly little on teachers feelings towards SET (Arthur 2009; Yao and Grady 2005; Darwin 2017; Roxå and Bergström 2013)

Teachers in downward resp. upward spiral as a result of SET (Lutovac et al. 2015)

Teachers using SET to talk bad about students or not engaging at all (Edström 2008) (Kember et al. 2002)

Administrators and managers have more faith in SET than teachers (Linse 2017; Morgan, Sneed, and Swinney 2003)
Should we abandon SET altogether? 

No

So what can we do?
What we need to do

We need to know what we are measuring – chose a perspective for our survey

We need to know what to do with our results – a theory of change

We need to align other development interventions to the theory we have chosen

We need to do what we say we are going to do (walk the talk)
Development at LTH
LTH reporting/summative evaluation (process)

1. Students fill out CEQ* (25 items 2 open-ended questions)  
   good teaching; goals & standards, examination, exp. workload, general skills

2. Students remove offensive comments. This is administraded by student union.

3. Working report produced: background stats. survey stats. open-ended comments

4. Mandatory meeting: a) course leader b) student reps. c) program coordinator discuss the course with the working report available

5. Summary: course leader, student reps., and program coordinator independently summarize their impressions, thoughts and suggestions

6. End report: Summaries, and statistics (not open-ended comments) are published on LTH intranet & emailed to all students participating in the course

* The Course Experience Questionnaire (Ramsden 2005)
Good Teaching LTH.
In CEQ this scale consists of six items:

1) The teaching has motivated me to do my best.
2) During the course, I received many valuable comments on my achievements.
3) The teachers made a real effort to understand the problems and difficulties one might be having in this course.
4) The teaching staff normally gave me helpful feedback on the progress of my work.
5) My lecturers were extremely good at explaining things.
6) The teachers on the course worked hard to make the subject interesting.

5 point Likert scale
Totally agree (coded as +100) – totally disagree (coded – 100)
Since 2003, database of 247 224 filled out questionnaires
The scale is a five point likert scale where totally agree means +100 and totally disagree -100. The higher score the more the course in question supports deep approach to learning.
Development per department
Good teaching 2007-12 compared to 2012-17

Improved
Declined
Quality in education

Arenas: conference, newsletter
Artefacts: written accounts
Criteria for rewards
Critical friends

Pedagogical courses
Teaching portfolios
Conference proceedings
Reports on teaching
Relevant theory
Systematic observations
Peer review
Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL)

Number of conversations about teaching and student learning

Rewards/incentives for excellent teachers
Recruitment and promotion
Direction and vision
Confirmation of progress

Quality of leadership

Quality of conversations about teaching and student learning
advice

Focus on development measuring will follow
Tensions emerging from SET policies  
(Darwin 2017)

(1) Should teachers focus on students expectations or should students be challenged?

(2) Should teachers innovate or should they teach in “normal ways”?

(3) Should SET metrics lead development or should context specific experiences lead?

(4) Should the institution guide teachers or should the discipline?

(5) Should decontextualized policies lead or should professional judgement lead?
References 1

References 2


Thank you!

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