



A STUDY ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
LECTURERS' QUALITY AND STUDENTS' INTEREST

Koordinator
Unit Penyelidikan & Perundingan
Universiti Teknologi MARA
Kampus Segamat
85009 Segamat, Johor.

DISEDIAKAN OLEH :

ZAINI AHMAD
NOOR SUFIAWATI KHAIRANI
MOHD JOHARI HJ MOHD ALWI

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ABSTRACT

This study is carried out to identify whether lecturers' quality affect students' interest. The lecturers' quality is measured by its 'teacher quality', 'teaching quality' and 'teacher personality'. The students are required to recall the positive or negative attributes of their accounting lecturers during classes. They were also asked to determine their preferred attributes of the accounting lecturers. Here, the researchers are looking at the preferred attributes that affect students' interest. Our findings indicate that the attributes presented during classes are mostly the attributes preferred by the students. The findings also indicate that there is a relationship between preferred lecturer's quality and students' interest. We note that, lecturers' quality is not the only factor influencing students' interest. There are other contributing factors to the students' interest such as students' own motivation, family advice and etc. Also, it is noted from the findings that there are differences in opinion on the preferred lecturer's attributes between the Diploma and Bachelor students.

INTRODUCTION

Several criteria are normally considered in evaluating the quality of universities. We believe an excellent teaching staff is the key factor in determining a university's standing (Pozo et.al., 2000) because the quality of teaching is most crucial in ensuring the quality of student learning. Hence, the quality of classroom teaching, which is mainly determined by the attributes the teacher possesses, is important.

Overtime, various changes have occurred in the education world. The scenario in Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) is similar. The traditional classroom approach such as the 'chalk and talk' method is no longer by itself sufficient and an effective tool for teaching. Many educators find themselves losing an ever-escalating battle to capture their students' interest. As a result, education needs to be reformed and educators need to reform. Teachers are being called upon to develop more creative approaches in order to teach the new generation of students.

Education reform requires that teachers adopt new roles and ways of teaching. School improvements efforts over the last few decades require teachers not only to study, implement, and assess learner outcomes outlined in local, state, and national educational standards but also to provide meaningful, engaged learning for a very diverse student population (Cook, 1997).

According to Heizer J. and Render B. (2001), total quality management systems are driven by identifying and satisfying customer needs. Total quality management takes care of the customers. Simply put, quality is the ability of a product or service to meet customer needs. Quality maybe in the eyes of the beholder, but to build a product, operation managers must define what the beholder or the consumer expects. Consequently, they accept the definition of quality as adopted by the American Society for Quality i.e. "the totality of features and characteristic of a product or service that bears on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs".

If lecturers in higher education are seen as service providers, then, one way to ensure the provision of a quality service is to know the expectations of students. The current climate in higher education suggests that students could be seen as primary customers who are

1.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

The *Macmillan English Dictionary* (2002) defines the word '*teacher*' as someone whose job is to teach. While the word '*teach*' means to help students to learn something in school, college or university, to help someone to learn a skill by showing them how to do it and to change the way someone behaves or the way someone thinks or feels about something. Therefore, '*teaching*' is a job of a teacher. Meanwhile, '*quality*' means of a high standard.

Kaplan, L.S. and Owings, W.A. (2001) discussed teacher quality and student achievement and defined '*teacher quality*' as teacher preparation/qualifications and teaching practices. '*Teacher quality*' concerns the inputs that teachers bring to the school including their demographics, aptitude, professional preparation, college majors, teacher examination scores, teacher licensure and certification, and prior professional work experiences.

Accordingly, Kaplan, L.S. and Owings, W.A. (2001) stated that '*teaching quality*' refers to what teachers do to promote student learning inside the classroom. It includes firstly, creating a positive learning climate, like having a well-structured class with a consistent schedule, established rules and consequences, and clear behavioural expectations for the students. Secondly, selecting appropriate instructional goals and assessments, thirdly, using the curriculum effectively, and fourthly, employing varied instructional behaviours that help all students learn at higher levels. Generally the following criteria has been used to measure the above four factors. The criteria comprises teachers' spoken ability, content knowledge, education coursework on teaching methods in their discipline, teaching behaviours using a broad repertoire of approaches that respond to students and curricular needs, giving students opportunities to learn criterion material, on-going voluntary professional learning, enthusiasm for learning, flexibility, creativity, and adaptability, class sizes, planning time, and opportunities to work with colleagues and curricular resources. Patrick J. et.al. (1998), in determining teachers' effectiveness included respect for students, ability to challenge students and organisation and presentation skills as additional criteria.

Most researchers agree that '*teacher quality*' or '*teaching quality*' or the combination of both has an effect on the students' achievements. They have used several criteria to