



Likert or not? Is there a linkage between the qualitative and quantitative results of faculty evaluations?

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Purpose: The purpose of this research is to explore possible linkages between quantitative scores on faculty evaluations with qualitative comments made on the same evaluation. Faculty evaluation data from the past three academic years (2010-2011, 2011-2012, 2012-2013) will be reviewed. The focus of the research will be on Pre-Clerkship experiences across all three divisions (clinical disciplines, BioMedical Sciences and Community Health and Humanities) within the Faculty of Medicine. The data will be used to investigate a number of aspects surrounding use of the Likert scale in faculty evaluation situations. In particular, we will compare the overall numeric, quantitative Likert score from individual faculty member evaluations with the number and nature of narrative, qualitative comments provided on the evaluation form. The key research questions: 1. Is there a correlation between the numeric score a faculty member receives and the number of narrative comments? 2. Is there a correlation between the numeric score and the nature of the comments? (i.e., the substance and length of the comments) 3. Are there common themes that emerge from the narrative comments at different numeric score levels? 4. Is the overall numerical score for the course at the same level as the faculty score? (i.e., how heavily is the perceived quality of the course tied to the quality of the instructor?) **Methods:** Using existing data from past faculty evaluations, the numeric score for each faculty member will be recorded, number of comments counted, and various aspects related to the comments will be noted, including whether the comments were positive, negative or neutral; whether the comments were short (i.e., a phrase), medium (a sentence or two), or long (more than two sentences); whether the comment was specific to the design of the course, the teaching materials, the facilitation, the atmosphere fostered by the instructor, or the responsiveness of the faculty member. **Results and Conclusions:** At this point the research is just commencing, but there will be enough data to inform the audience of the progress and initial results.