RESPONSE RATE AND RATINGS FOR STUDENT EVALUATION OF TEACHING: DOES ONLINE ADMINISTRATION MATTER?

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ABSTRACT

A comparative study was conducted at the time of switching from a traditional paper-based system for student evaluation of teaching to an online one to examine if there were any significant differences in response rates and ratings between the two modes of administration, and whether lower response rates were associated with lower ratings. 'Early' versus 'late' respondents' ratings were also looked at to see if students with negative feedback were likely to be the first to respond. Results of the study suggest that, consistent with much prior research, the mean response rate for online administration was significantly lower by about 21%. However, it had little effect on the mean ratings. In addition, no significant differences were found in ratings obtained via paper-based and online administrations, nor that given by 'early' and 'late' respondents. The findings provide a starting point for dispelling some of the worries about reliability issues associated with online administration, and sheds light on ways that may better the system at the university under study.

Keywords: Online Student Evaluation; Response Rates; Student Ratings, Student Satisfaction with Teaching.