MANAGEMENT

Quality of Teaching Assessed by Punjabi University Patiala Students

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Abstract

Quality of teaching constitutes a critical determinant of institutional effectiveness and student learning outcomes in higher education. This empirical study investigates the perceptions of teaching quality held by students of Punjabi University, Patiala. Employing an adapted version of the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ), data were collected from 352 undergraduate and postgraduate students across diverse faculties. Five core dimensions—Good Teaching, Clear Goals and Standards, Appropriate Assessment, Appropriate Workload, and Generic Skills—along with overall satisfaction were measured on a five-point Likert scale. Descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, Pearson correlation, and independent samples t-tests formed the analytical framework. Results revealed a moderately high overall perception of teaching quality (mean = 3.72). Clear Goals and Standards and Generic Skills emerged as the strongest dimensions, while Appropriate Workload scored comparatively lower. All dimensions showed significant positive correlations with overall satisfaction. Modest differences were observed by level of study, with postgraduate students rating Good Teaching more favourably. The findings offer actionable insights for quality enhancement under the National Education Policy 2020 and NAAC quality assurance frameworks. Recommendations focus on faculty development, assessment redesign, and systematic feedback utilisation.

Keywords: course experience questionnaire; higher education management; Punjabi University Patiala; quality assurance; student evaluation of teaching; student satisfaction; teaching quality

1 Introduction

Higher education institutions worldwide are under increasing pressure to demonstrate accountability for the quality of teaching and learning. In India, the University Grants Commission (UGC), National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC), and the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 (Ministry of Education, 2020) have placed strong emphasis on student-centric evaluation of teaching processes. Student feedback has become an indispensable component of internal quality assurance systems.

Punjabi University, Patiala, established in 1962, is a prominent state public university in Punjab with NAAC A+ accreditation. The university maintains multiple teaching and research departments and regularly collects student feedback through its Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC). Despite institutional mechanisms, systematic empirical studies that apply validated instruments such as the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) specifically to the student body of Punjabi University remain limited.

Teaching quality is multi-dimensional. It encompasses not only subject expertise and classroom delivery but also clarity of expectations, fairness of assessment, manageability of academic load, and

the development of transferable skills. Students, as primary stakeholders, provide valuable insights into these dimensions. Understanding their perceptions enables institutional leaders and faculty to identify strengths and address gaps.

This research paper, framed within the discipline of management of higher education, seeks to assess the quality of teaching as experienced by students of Punjabi University, Patiala. It aims to generate evidence-based recommendations that can support continuous improvement in pedagogical practices and institutional quality management systems.

2 Review of literature

The conceptual foundation for measuring teaching quality through student perceptions was significantly advanced by Ramsden (1991), who developed the Course Experience Questionnaire. The CEQ was designed as a performance indicator capable of distinguishing between pedagogically effective and less effective academic units. Subsequent validation studies by Wilson et al. (1997) confirmed the instrument's reliability and its association with deeper approaches to learning and overall student satisfaction.

The core scales of the CEQ typically include Good Teaching (feedback, explanation, motivation, and interest generation), Clear Goals and Standards (clarity of expectations and objectives), Appropriate Workload (manageability of academic demands), Appropriate Assessment (focus on understanding rather than rote memorisation), and Generic Skills (problem-solving, communication, teamwork, and self-management).

In the Indian context et al. (2022) applied the CEQ to postgraduate management students across state universities in Punjab, including institutions in the region of Punjabi University. Their structural equation modelling results demonstrated that Clear Goals and Standards, Generic Skills, and Appropriate Assessment exerted direct positive effects on overall student satisfaction, while Good Teaching and Appropriate Workload influenced satisfaction indirectly. Gender differences in path strengths were also observed.

Other studies conducted on student satisfaction at Punjabi University (Sharma et al., 2023) have highlighted favourable perceptions of teacher enthusiasm, communication, and academic administration, while pointing to concerns related to workload, placement support, and certain infrastructural aspects. Institutional feedback forms used by the university itself cover syllabus coverage, teacher preparation, communication skills, encouragement of participation, accessibility after class, and generation of student interest.

International literature consistently affirms that well-designed student evaluation of teaching (SET) systems, when used formatively, contribute to pedagogical improvement. However, scholars caution against over-reliance on SET scores for high-stakes decisions without complementary peer review and self-reflection mechanisms. The present study builds upon this body of knowledge by applying a CEQ-derived instrument specifically to a broad cross-section of students at Punjabi University, Patiala, and by examining both quantitative patterns and qualitative suggestions for improvement.

3 Research objectives

The study was guided by the following objectives:

1. To assess the overall level of teaching quality as perceived by students of Punjabi University, Patiala.
2. To measure student perceptions across the five key dimensions of teaching quality derived from the Course Experience Questionnaire.
3. To examine the strength and direction of relationships between the teaching quality dimensions and overall student satisfaction.
4. To explore differences in perceptions according to gender and level of study (undergraduate versus postgraduate).
5. To formulate practical recommendations for enhancing teaching quality and strengthening institutional quality assurance processes.

4 Research methodology

4.1 Research design

A descriptive and correlational survey design was adopted. The study is quantitative in primary orientation, supplemented by qualitative insights from open-ended responses.

4.2 Population and sampling

The target population comprised regular students enrolled in undergraduate and postgraduate programmes at the main campus of Punjabi University, Patiala. Distance education and external students were excluded. A convenience-cum-quota sampling approach was employed to ensure representation across faculties and levels of study. A total of 450 questionnaires were distributed; 368 were returned, of which 352 were complete and usable (effective response rate 78.2%).

The sample profile was as follows:

- Gender: Male 48.3%, Female 51.7%
- Level of study: Undergraduate 57.7%, Postgraduate 42.3%
- Faculty distribution: Management and Commerce 31%, Arts and Humanities 27%, Science 22%, Professional and Other programmes 20%.

4.3 Research instrument

The primary instrument was a structured questionnaire adapted from the short form of the Course Experience Questionnaire (Wilson et al., 1997) and aligned with items appearing in Punjabi University's official student feedback performa. The questionnaire contained demographic questions, twenty-three closed-ended items measuring five dimensions on a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree), one overall satisfaction item, and two open-ended questions soliciting qualitative comments. Content validity was established through expert review by three faculty members familiar with higher education quality assurance. Pilot testing with 35 students yielded satisfactory item clarity and internal consistency.

4.4 Reliability

Cronbach's alpha for the overall scale was 0.89. Sub-scale reliability coefficients were: Good Teaching 0.87, Clear Goals and Standards 0.82, Appropriate Assessment 0.79, Appropriate Workload 0.76, and Generic Skills 0.84. These values indicate acceptable to high internal consistency.

4.5 Data collection procedure

Data collection occurred during the academic session 2025–26. Both online (Google Forms) and offline (paper-based) modes were used. Participants were informed of the purpose of the study, assured of anonymity and confidentiality, and given the option to withdraw at any stage. Necessary permissions were obtained from departmental heads.

4.6 Statistical analysis

Data were analysed using SPSS. Techniques employed included frequency distributions, means and standard deviations, Cronbach's alpha, Pearson product-moment correlation, and independent samples t-tests. Significance was tested at the 0.05 level.

5 Data analysis and results

5.1 Overall teaching quality

The composite mean score across the twenty-three teaching quality items was 3.72 (SD = 0.61). The overall satisfaction item recorded a mean of 3.78 (SD = 0.82). These values indicate a moderately positive perception of teaching quality among the respondents.

5.2 Dimension-wise analysis

Table 1 presents the mean scores and standard deviations for each dimension.

Table 1. Dimension-wise mean scores (N = 352).

Dimension	Mean	Standard Deviation
Clear Goals and Standards	3.89	0.68
Generic Skills	3.85	0.71
Good Teaching	3.76	0.74
Appropriate Assessment	3.68	0.79
Appropriate Workload	3.41	0.86
Overall Satisfaction	3.78	0.82

Clear Goals and Standards recorded the highest mean, followed closely by Generic Skills. Appropriate Workload received the lowest mean, suggesting that students experience relatively greater pressure from academic load.

5.3 Item-level highlights

The highest-rated individual items were:

- "Teachers are extremely good at explaining things" (mean = 3.92)

- "Courses help develop problem-solving skills" (mean = 3.91)
- "Teachers make it clear from the start what they expect" (mean = 3.90)

The lowest-rated items related to workload:

- "The overall workload is manageable" (mean = 3.28)
- "There is usually enough time to understand what has to be learnt" (mean = 3.35)

5.4 Correlation analysis

Pearson correlation coefficients between the five dimensions and overall satisfaction were all positive and statistically significant at the 0.01 level (Table 2).

Table 2. Correlations of the teaching quality dimensions with overall satisfaction.

Dimension	Correlation (r)	Significance
Clear Goals and Standards	0.62	$p < 0.01$
Generic Skills	0.59	$p < 0.01$
Good Teaching	0.57	$p < 0.01$
Appropriate Assessment	0.54	$p < 0.01$
Appropriate Workload	0.41	$p < 0.01$

Clear Goals and Standards exhibited the strongest association with overall satisfaction, followed by Generic Skills and Good Teaching.

5.5 Demographic comparisons

Independent samples t-tests were conducted to examine differences by gender and level of study. No statistically significant difference was found between male and female students on the overall teaching quality score ($t = 1.24$, $p = 0.216$). Females reported slightly higher means on Generic Skills, but the difference did not reach conventional significance levels. Postgraduate students rated the Good Teaching dimension significantly higher than undergraduate students ($t = 2.31$, $p = 0.021$). Differences on the remaining dimensions were not statistically significant.

5.6 Qualitative insights

Open-ended responses reinforced the quantitative findings. Students frequently praised teachers' subject knowledge, clarity of explanation, and willingness to clarify doubts outside formal class hours. Common suggestions included greater use of interactive and discussion-based methods, more timely and constructive feedback on assignments, better alignment between continuous assessment tasks and intended learning outcomes, and rationalisation of the volume of continuous internal assessment in certain programmes.

6 Discussion

The moderately high overall mean of 3.72 indicates that students of Punjabi University, Patiala generally hold a favourable view of teaching quality. This finding is consistent with institutional student satisfaction surveys reported in the university's Annual Quality Assurance Reports and with earlier regional studies using the CEQ framework.

The strong performance on Clear Goals and Standards and Generic Skills aligns closely with the results reported by Kaur et al. (2022) among management students in Punjab. When students understand what is expected of them and perceive that courses develop transferable skills, their overall satisfaction rises. The relatively lower score on Appropriate Workload is a recurring theme in Indian higher education literature and reflects the combined pressure of continuous internal assessment, semester examinations, and co-curricular demands.

Significant positive correlations between all dimensions and overall satisfaction confirm that improvements in any single dimension are likely to enhance student experience. The modest advantage reported by postgraduate students on Good Teaching may reflect greater maturity, clearer academic purpose, or more specialised pedagogical attention at the postgraduate level.

From a management perspective, these results underscore the importance of treating teaching quality as a strategic institutional priority rather than solely an individual faculty responsibility. Systematic collection, analysis, and responsive action on student feedback constitute essential components of effective quality management systems.

7 Conclusion

This study provides empirical evidence that students at Punjabi University, Patiala perceive the quality of teaching as moderately high, with particular strengths in clarity of expectations and development of generic skills. Workload management emerges as an area requiring focused attention. The findings reaffirm the utility of CEQ-derived instruments for institutional self-assessment and continuous improvement.

The research contributes to the growing body of literature on student evaluation of teaching in Indian public universities and offers practical guidance for academic administrators and faculty members seeking to enhance pedagogical effectiveness in alignment with NEP 2020 quality mandates.

8 Recommendations

On the basis of the findings, the following recommendations are advanced:

1. Institutionalise periodic administration of a validated instrument such as the CEQ alongside the existing university feedback performa, with results analysed at both departmental and university levels.
2. Organise regular faculty development programmes focusing on constructive feedback techniques, active learning strategies, and assessment design that promotes understanding rather than rote learning.
3. Review continuous assessment practices to ensure that the volume and nature of tasks support deeper learning and do not create excessive workload.
4. Strengthen academic advising and mentoring systems so that students receive timely guidance on academic expectations and skill development.
5. Create structured mechanisms for closing the feedback loop—communicating to students the actions taken in response to their evaluations.
6. Encourage departments to set specific, measurable targets for improvement on lower-scoring dimensions and to monitor progress over successive semesters.

7. Integrate teaching quality data with faculty recognition and professional development frameworks in a developmental rather than purely evaluative manner.

9 Limitations and scope for further research

The study relied on convenience-cum-quota sampling, which limits statistical generalizability to the entire student population. Self-reported data may be subject to social desirability bias. Future research could employ stratified random sampling, multi-source evaluation (including peer and self-assessment), and longitudinal designs to track changes in perceptions over time. Comparative studies across multiple state universities in Punjab would further enrich understanding of regional patterns in teaching quality.

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