

Students' Perspectives: How do They want to be Assessed?

W. B. Sabtiawan^{1*}, E. Sudibyo², T. Nurita³, B. Setiawan⁴, A. N. M. Fauziah⁵

^{1,2,3,4,5} Department of Science, Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Indonesia

Abstract. How students are assessed is an essential part of teaching and learning processes involving students, educators, and policy makers. Mostly, in Indonesia the policy makers and the educators decide how the students will be assessed. The reason lead an aim of this study, that was, to deliver the students' perspectives, how they want to be assessed. The participant of the descriptive research was first year students of Department of Science, Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Indonesia. The participants were classified into three groups, namely students with (1) higher, (2) middle, and (3) lower performance. The researchers interviewed the participants with semi-structured technique of interview to collect their perspectives. The data analysis involved transcription of interview results and description. The findings indicated that there were two aspects to be the students' considerations when they were assessed, involving: (1) assessment form and (2) fairness. The students' perspectives on their assessments are interested to be considered by the educators at the first meeting of teaching and learning activities (classes)..

Keywords: Assessment, students' perspectives, assessment form, fairness

1 Introduction

There are three essential components had to prepared before educators conduct teaching and learning activity namely learning outcome, instructional activity, and assessment [1]. The learning outcome is goal of teaching (what the educator hope at the end of the activity) [2]. Then, instructional activity is a set of procedures or system as a guide to develop and implement the teaching and learning activity [3]. And, a tool to measure and evaluate the achievement of learning outcome is assessment.

Mostly, educators view the role of assessment is as mentioned the last sentence in the first paragraph. However, currently assessment is able to be used as a basic criteria for designing instructional activities. Arguably, assessment is a way to promote students' learning. It is not an educator's expectation, but students often refuse teachings and lay little attention on it. However, if they expect to pass their courses, they have to give more attention to the way how they will be successful to pass the courses. At least, the students will participate in the assessment processes provided by the educators. That is the reason that the educators has to design their assessment promoting the students' learning rather than only checking the students' achievement.

As cited in [4], assessment has three roles in education. The traditional role viewed assessment is as "assessment of learning". In addition, the assessment is also placed as "assessment for learning". Another role is "assessment as learning". Each role has contribution for teaching and learning activities. On the other hand,

educators has to consider how far the roles will be able to contribute for guiding students into successful performers.

The first role is assessment of learning. The assessment is utilized for checking how well the students' performance at the middle and the end of semester. The second role is assessment for learning. Experts revealed that the through the assessment, educators are able to give advice to the students to improve their learning based on what they have achieved [5]. Educators will provide feed-back to the students' works for promoting their learning and informing how to revise their works into better level. The assessment will affect positively for the students' performance in higher education [6]. The third role is assessment as learning. Reference [7] explained that the assessment as learning occurs when the students manage and evaluate their own learning, and use the feed-back from their own managing and evaluating activities to determine what they have to do.

As cited in Reference [8], teachers were comfort to view assessment as assessment of learning. It was probably because they got difficulties to implement the assessment as learning. They needed an operational design to implement the assessment as learning. Therefore, the shifting paradigm will occur. It is in line with Reference [9]. It claimed that in order to promote students' learning, shifting from traditional to alternative view has to be conducted by the teachers. The previous paragraphs are representing perspectives of educators and researchers. In addition, there is another interesting perspective, that is, students'

* Corresponding author: wahyusabtiawan@unesa.ac.id

perspectives. Therefore, how the students want to be assessed is the focus of the study.

2 Research Methods

This research was a descriptive study [10]. This study described the students' perspectives about how the students want to be assessed.

The sampling technique in this study was purposive sampling [11],[12],[13]. Participants in this study were 9 first year students in science education study program, Universitas Negeri Surabaya. They did get assessment course yet. In other words, assumably they did not have theoretical knowledge about assessment in education. The participants were classified into three groups, namely students with (1) higher, (2) middle, and (3) lower performance. Each level of performance consists of 3 students. Higher, middle, and lower performance students were symbolised by HP, MP, dan LP respectively.

Data collection was conducted by interview. The researchers interviewed the participants with semi-structured technique of interview [14],[15],[16]. The participants were interviewed with three guidance questions, involving: (1) *what do you think about assessment?*, (2) *what components that should be included in assessment?*, and (3) *how do you want to be assessed?*.

The data analysis involved transcription of interview results, grouping and description/interpretation of interview results [17]. Analysis of research data was conducted by presenting data in table and doing data comparisons. In addition, the data was interpreted and rationalized in discussion section.

3 Results and Discussion

3.1 Interview Results

This section is provided the results of interview. The results are delivered into three tables. Table 1 is containing perspectives of students with lower performance. Table 2 provides the interview results of perspectives of students with middle performance. And, Table 3 represents the data of perspectives of students with higher performance.

Table 1. Interview results with lower performance students as interviewees

Question	Student's Response
What do you think about assessment?	"Exams ... activities to find the value of one's ability to what degree." (LP1)
	"The results we get from the effort. The result is a number from the specified standard." (LP2)
	"A kind of appreciation to assess the learning process and results." (LP3)

What components that should be included in assessment?	<p>"It should not be based on one standard for each student, it should vary according to the abilities or characteristics of each. For example, in presentation exams, introverted students tend to be quiet, uncomfortable for presentation exams, on the other hand, extroverted students. It should only be written exams for introverts." (LP1)</p> <p>"Judging from the process and products, not only from the final document. For example, in the matter of calculation, the most important thing is the calculation process, not the final number." (LP2)</p> <p>"Assessment should be emphasized on the process, namely the activity and the results through the exam. Direct face-to-face assessment such as interviews would be better, because the assessment measures student understanding." (LP3)</p>
How do you want to be assessed?	<p>"Better combination, between written test and practice (50:50). Let's be fair, those who don't like writing can get practice." (LP1)</p> <p>"The practice should be more dominant, than the written test." (LP2)</p> <p>"Assessment through written and practical tests. Practical tests should realize the theory that we have got, and theory only measures reasoning. Practical tests are more complex. It is better to have more practicum, because it is more authentic and practicum also includes understanding theory." (LP3)</p>

Table 2. Interview results with middle performance students as interviewees

Question	Student's Response
What do you think about assessment?	<p>"An activity to find out how many scores are obtained. Score of something ever done, for example achievement score." (MP1)</p> <p>"The result of what we have learned. For example, the assessment is done through exams or questions from the lecturer, whether students understand or not." (MP2)</p> <p>"Activities to measure the learning that has been passed." (MP3)</p>

Question	Student's Response
What components that should be included in assessment?	<p>“Which is assessed based on learning outcomes. Assessment should be done by others and yourself. Each assessment component should be shown transparently. Lecturers should provide input and suggestions, why the value is like that and how to improve it. Written tests should only be mid-term. Final test should be practical/performance tests.” (MP1)</p> <p>“Assessment is not only a written test, but must be assessed for its activeness and politeness. Because sometimes during the written test, panic occurs. Practice tests are important. The most important thing is the activity during the lecture. If the student is active, the score should be good.” (MP2)</p> <p>“Assessment is necessary, just like mid-term and final test, because I don't want to be lazy and measure the level of understanding. Assignments and participation also need to be assessed. Attitude also needs to be assessed, because it is more important than knowledge. For written exams, lecturers should provide specific grids.” (MP3)</p>
How do you want to be assessed?	<p>“The form of assessment is in accordance with what is being assessed, it can be a written or practical test. I prefer the written test, because I'm afraid of myself. Practice (performance) test is ok, but need some practice at the beginning.” (MP1)</p> <p>“The form of assessment should be emphasized on the activity test.” (MP2)</p> <p>“Depending on the material, sometimes you need a written test, sometimes you need a practicum (50:50). Must be balanced.” (MP3)</p>

Table 3. Interview results with higher performance students as interviewees

Question	Student's Response
What do you think about assessment?	<p>“Assessment is identical to the score or value, in the form of numbers. Used to measure the learning achievement of students from the material that has been taught.” (HP1)</p>

Question	Student's Response
	<p>“A way to measure the extent to which the person is said to be in accordance with what is the goal, with a number or range to measure it.” (HP2)</p> <p>“An activity to measure an ability after the process.” (HP3)</p>
What components that should be included in assessment?	<p>“Assessment is assessed from 4 components: assignments, participation/activity, mid-term test, and final test. Participation is very necessary, because students are required to be more active. Assignments and UAS are the most important, because what is assessed is the learning achievement. The attitude of the students should also be assessed, because the attitude will affect all aspects of achievement and this attitude is a true reflection. The main attitude of courtesy and honesty.” (HP1)</p> <p>“Knowledge should be assessed, but attitude is also assessed. Attitudes in participating in learning every day, for example enthusiastic, polite. For example, enthusiastic, students will find it easier to understand the material.” (HP2)</p> <p>“Need to consider other advantages of students. For example, activeness in class and effort during class learning.” (HP3)</p>
How do you want to be assessed?	<p>“I recommend that the assessment does not have to be a score, it can be in the form of a description. Assessment should be done through written and practical tests. Practice should be more dominant, because we are directly performance-based, immediately knowing the original capabilities of students.” (HP1)</p> <p>“The test should be based on performance, because the practice is more difficult than the written test (the written test is just wishful thinking, the practice is sometimes difficult/confused). Written tests are necessary, but performance tests are better.” (HP2)</p> <p>“Prefers to be assessed with a written test, because it can still be revised.” (HP3)</p>

3.2 Discussion

Based on the interview results provided in the Table 1, 2, and 3, it can be interpreted that educators have to considered three aspects, those are, (1) assessment form and (2) fairness.

3.2.1 Assessment Form.

All interviewees are in line, that they want to be assessed based on their performances (not only their cognitive, through paper-pencil test). LP1 argued that performance-based assessment will be able to figure out the whole capability of the students. LP3 also stated that practicum based-test (performance-based assessment) is more authentic and practicum also includes understanding theory.

According to [18], performance-based assessment is able to accommodate the students to achieve higher level thinking skills. In addition, the assessment can increase motivation to engage in instructional activities and preparatory study. Many experts said that the form of assessment will provide more equitable outcomes [19].

There is an interesting statement said by high performance students (HP1):

“I recommend that the assessment does not have to be a score, it can be in the form of a description. ...”

The HP1 suggest to educators or assessors that they have to describe students' achievements in the form of statements. Arguably, the HP1 hoped that they will get explanation of their achievement. It is in line with the role of assessment, namely assessment for learning. Through the description or feed-back in the assessment, the students will have an opportunity to improve their achievement [6].

In addition, there is a minority perspective, that the students preferred to be tested in paper-pencil test form (MP1 dan HP3). MP1 said that MP1 will get nervous, if performance-based assessment is conducted. HP3

3.2.2 Fairness

Another aspect that has to be concerned by the educators is fairness. It is a substantial aspect for designing assessment. Fairness-based assessment will be changing approach of assessment, from traditional objective approach into an assessment approach alongside objective methods [20].

There are many aspects have to be fulfilled to be a fair assessment. The most important aspect is that the conditions of assessment must be reasonable and equitable for all students [21]. Students with lower performance result in a test may be due to limited access to learning, or because the test is biased in favour of one group [22].

To be fair in assessment, the students said several points for achieving fairness, involving variation of assessment, assessment for process and product, the way of assessment, and component of assessment.

According to LP1, variation of assessment is very important to facilitate the students to achieve their best performance.

“... it should vary according to the abilities or characteristics of each. For example, in presentation exams, introverted students tend to be quiet, uncomfortable for presentation exams. It should only be written exams for introverts.”

The variation of assessment (these different aspects of fairness) as the opportunity to acquire performance and to show performance to good effect (fairness in the assessment) [22].

The students also said that judging from the process of learning is better way to assess their performance.

“Judging from the process and products, not only from the final document. For example, in the matter of calculation, the most important thing is the calculation process, not the final number.” (LP2)

“Assessment should be emphasized on the process, namely the activity and the results through the exam. Direct face-to-face assessment such as interviews would be better, because the assessment measures student understanding.” (LP3)

Assessing students' achievement based on the process means that the educators value efforts of the students.

According to MP1, Assessment should be involved friend (peer-assessment) and their self (self-assessment). In other words, the students hope that they want get complete perspective, from lecturer, friends, and their self. To fulfil this perspective, the educators have to provide rubric with detail criteria.

Another aspect of fairness is assessment component. The students perceive that the assessment should be combined by performance based and paper-pencil based test in good portion.

“Depending on the material, sometimes you need a written test, sometimes you need a practicum (50:50). Must be balanced.” (MP3)

Also, they though that attitude of students should be included in the components of assessment.

“Knowledge should be assessed, but attitude is also assessed. Attitudes in participating in learning every day, for example enthusiastic, polite. For example, enthusiastic, students will find it easier to understand the material.” (HP2)

Based on the results of interview, to get fairness in assessment is very challenging for educators to design an assessment. It is very dynamic and depend on the characteristics of the students.

4 Conclusion

The findings indicated that there were two aspects to be the students' considerations when they were assessed, involving: (1) assessment form and (2) fairness. The students' perspectives on their assessments are interested to be considered by the educators at the first meeting of teaching and learning activities (classes).

Acknowledgments

The authors acknowledged to the department and faculty of mathematics and natural sciences in terms of

financial support and giving permission to involve students as research participants

References

- [1] D. Ellis, *Aligning Learning Outcomes, Assessments and Teaching Methods*, Canada: Teaching Excellence Academy workshop, University of Waterloo, (2007).
- [2] K. Trigwell and M. Prosser, "Improving the quality of student learning: the influence of learning context and student approaches to learning-on-learning outcomes," *Higher Education*, vol. **22**(3), pp. 251-266, October (1991).
- [3] K. L. Gustafson and R. M. Branch, "What is instructional design," *Trends and Issues in Instructional Design and Technol.*, pp.16- 25, (2002).
- [4] H. Torrance, "Assessment as learning? How the use of explicit learning objectives, assessment criteria and feedback in post-secondary education and training can come to dominate learning," *Assess. in Education*, vol. **14**(3), pp. 281-294, November (2007).
- [5] T. A. Angelo and K. P. Cross, *Classroom Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Teachers*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bas, (1993).
- [6] W. B. Sabtiawan, L. Yuanita, and Y. S. Rahayu, "Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Authentic Assessment on Students' Attitudes," *JPPS (Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Sains)*, vol. **3**(1), pp. 282-285, (2017).
- [7] L. M. Earl, *Assessment as Learning: Using Classroom Assessment to Maximize Student Learning*, Corwin Press, 2012.
- [8] K. Izci and G. Caliskan, "Development of Prospective Teachers' Conceptions of Assessment and Choices of Assessment Tasks," *Int. J. of Res. in Education and Sci.*, vol. **3**(2), pp.464-474, July (2017).
- [9] L. A. Shepard, "The Role of Assessment in a Learning Culture," *Educational researcher*, vol. **29**(7), pp. 4-14, October (2000).
- [10] J. R. Fraenkel, N. E. Wallen, H. H. Hyun, *how to design and evaluate research in education*, (MacGraw-Hill, New York, 2012).
- [11] Campbell, Steve, Melanie Greenwood, Sarah Prior, Toniele Shearer, Kerrie Walkem, Sarah Young, Danielle Bywaters, and Kim Walker. "Purposive sampling: complex or simple? Research case examples." *Journal of research in Nursing* **25**, no. 8 (2020): 652-661.
- [12] Guarte, Jacqueline M., and Erniel B. Barrios. "Estimation under purposive sampling." *Communications in Statistics-Simulation and Computation* **35**, no. 2 (2006): 277-284.
- [13] Etikan, Ilker, Sulaiman Abubakar Musa, and Rukayya Sunusi Alkassim. "Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling." *American journal of theoretical and applied statistics* **5**, no. 1 (2016): 1-4.
- [14] Schmidt, Christiane. "The analysis of semi-structured interviews." *A companion to qualitative research* **253**, no. 258 (2004): 7619-7374.
- [15] Newcomer, Kathryn E., Harry P. Hatry, and Joseph S. Wholey. "Conducting semi-structured interviews." *Handbook of practical program evaluation* **492** (2015): 492.
- [16] Carruthers, John. "A Rationale for the Use of Semi-structured Interviews." *Journal of Educational Administration* (1990).
- [17] Rabiee, Fatemeh. "Focus-group interview and data analysis." *Proceedings of the nutrition society* **63**, no. 4 (2004): 655-660.
- [18] Crehan, Kevin. "Performance Assessment: Comparative Advantages." (1991).
- [19] Darling-Hammond, Linda. "Performance-based assessment and educational equity." *Harvard educational review* **64**, no. 1 (1994): 5-31.
- [20] Valentine, Nyoli, Steven J. Durning, Ernst Michael Shanahan, Cees van der Vleuten, and Lambert Schuwirth. "The pursuit of fairness in assessment: Looking beyond the objective." *Medical Teacher* (2022): 1-7.
- [21] Camilli, Gregory. "Test fairness." *Educational measurement* **4** (2006): 221-256.
- [22] Gipps, Caroline, and Gordon Stobart. "Fairness in assessment." In *Educational assessment in the 21st century*, pp. 105-118. Springer, Dordrecht, (2009).