

## Students' Perspective on the Domains of Teaching Quality

**ABSTRACT:** This study is aimed to evaluate the teaching and learning quality at the UNRI (University of Riau), which currently ranked at the top 21 best Indonesian universities and ranked at the 2,185 of the world universities ranking. The UNRI was chosen because it is the top university at the Riau Province and it offers various fields of study. The research population is all registered students for the year 2010 academic session. The instrument to test the teaching quality is adapted from a study conducted by M.D. Toland & R.J. de Ayala (2005). In overall, it was found that the lecturers' teaching and learning quality is at the low level for the domain of course subject. Students reported that the teaching and learning dynamic is also very low, particularly due to the lecturers' failures in integrating various methods. In addition, the absence of active interaction process is because it is very exam oriented and the lessons are normally conducted one way with only a little option for question and answer session. This result shows that students prefer to find other sources of information regarding the content of the course, instead of meeting and consulting the lecturers. In overall, the lecturers' quality is only average which needs improvement in the aspects of teaching motivation, teaching approaches, maintaining relationship with students, efficiency, assessment, and assignments. Other than that, the result also shows the quality is at the low level for the list of courses and students relationship in the context of academic development. Obviously, the teaching and learning quality of lecturers in the UNRI needs to be upgraded in order to improve the image of the university and to attract more new students domestically, regionally, and internationally.

**KEY WORDS:** Educational service quality, student satisfaction, quality teaching, motivation, teaching approach, academic development, and image of the university.

### INTRODUCTION

Higher education is an important indication of the development of a country; this is due to the fact that higher learning institutions are the places to produce the future leaders, skilled workers, and the intellectuals to develop a nation. Thus, improving the quality of higher learning education is a very important agenda of the whole world. The university graduates are the country's hopes for a better future. Therefore, a culture of total and holistic quality management should be inculcated to produce quality products and graduates, which then reflect the identity of a higher learning institute.

The 2015 Indonesian Educational Vision has stated the objective of higher learning institutes is to produce intelligent and

competitive people. To achieve that, the educators' quality and the learning climate are two very crucial elements. Based on the world university ranking, Indonesian universities are ranked at the 54, as shown in table 1.

This report is a major challenge for the higher learning institutions to integrate and comprehensively improve their education quality for a quest of better position at least to move up to the first top 30 of the 133 countries; thus, becoming more competitive among the ASEAN (Association of South East Asia Nations) countries. It is also a challenge for the premier universities in Indonesia to be the icons and role-models for the other universities, particularly in managing the university to become more competent and more quality to produce knowledgeable,

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**Table 1:**  
Ranking of Universities

No	Countries	Ranking
1	Singapura	3
2	Malaysia	24
3	China	29
4	Thailand	36
5	India	49
6	Indonesia	54

Source: THE [the Times Higher Education] (2009/2010).

**Table 2:**  
Top Universities in Indonesia

No	Universities	World Ranking
1	UGM (Gadjah Mada University), Yogyakarta	414
2	UI (University of Indonesia), Depok	532
3	ITB (Bandung Institute of Technology)	622
4	IPB (Bogor Agriculture University)	813
5	UNDIP (Diponegoro University), Semarang	1,102
6	UNIBRAW (University of Brawijaya), Malang	1,110
7	UNPAD (Padjadjaran University), Bandung	1,210
8	UNS (State University of Surakarta), Solo	1,383
9	UNAIR (Airlangga University), Surabaya	1,508
10	UNDARMA (Gunadarma University), Jakarta	1,647

Source: RWU [Ranking Web of Universities] (2013).

skillful, and highly competent graduates as required in the job market. The graduates, then, should contribute for the country's development and in modernizing the nation.

Based on the ranking as showed in table 2, UGM (Gadjah Mada University) in Yogyakarta is the premier university in Indonesia, followed by UI (University of Indonesia) in Depok, ITB (Bandung Institute of Technology) in Bandung, and IPB (Bogor Agriculture University) in Bogor. However, those universities need to integrate greater efforts to upgrade in the world ranking, particularly in the management and academics aspects. Apart from that, the universities need to meet the assessment criteria by focusing on the teaching and learning climate, quality of the academic research, quality of the lecturers, outstanding management model, and systematic foreign students' enrollment registration.

The ranking would inspire the universities to move for a better change and to increase their efforts in providing quality education infrastructure for the purpose of producing

educated and skillful individuals for a bright and promising future nation. Hence, universities in Indonesia need to establish a standard of quality at par with the world and regional standard. According to T.A. Angelo (2002), the major role of education institutions is to develop great and quality people for the country.

Education quality is referred to an education system, which is able to fulfill the hopes and the needs of the people through continuous improvement process. In relation to that, the system can be improved through effective education institutions, which provide great service in line with the mission and vision of the institutes.

Students are the major clients of an institution, who need the conducive learning environment. Thus, learning institutions need to be super sensitive in providing their services for the students, particularly in the teaching and learning aspects. It is important for the institutions to increase the level of students' motivation, students' creativity, and to establish the sense of belongings. Improving

the teaching and learning quality is becoming the main agenda of the country and the institutions themselves, even if this means they have to face a great hurdle in upgrading the quality of teaching and learning.

## RESEARCH BACKGROUND

According to J. Rowley (1996), the SEEQ (Students' Evaluations of Educational Quality) instrument could be used for the purpose of getting feedbacks from students, regarding the teaching and learning quality. The SEEQ instrument has nine domains, they are: (1) *the learning/value*, regarding the course; (2) *instructor enthusiasm* or lecturers' motivation in teaching; (3) *organization/clarity*, the ways lecturers facilitate students' learning, for example how they organise their lesson and the clarity in presenting the subject; (4) *personal rapport*, the personal relationship between lecturer and students; (5) *group interaction*, students' pattern of interaction and relationship; (6) *breadth of coverage*, lecturers' knowledge and ability in delivering and discussing the content of the subject; (7) *examinations/grading*, matters related to examination and assessment; (8) *assignments/readings*, course works and references; and (9) *workload/difficulty*, workload and constraints faced by students (cf Rowley, 1996; and Holford & Patkar, 2003).

There are six items of overall student satisfaction inclusive of quality in: facility, curriculum, learning, service, teaching, and learning quality. According to Robiah Sidin (2000), the key to develop higher education is by improving the quality of teaching and learning. From the quality perspective, students are the main clients of the learning institutes, who need to be focused on especially their individual needs. Students not only need fun learning experience, but also quality teaching and learning. Hence, students have the right to receive quality education; thus, it is the responsibility of the faculty or learning institutes to ensure the courses and programs offered are in great quality.

This study investigates the impacts of various items of teaching and learning quality towards students' satisfaction by applying the client satisfaction theory and educational

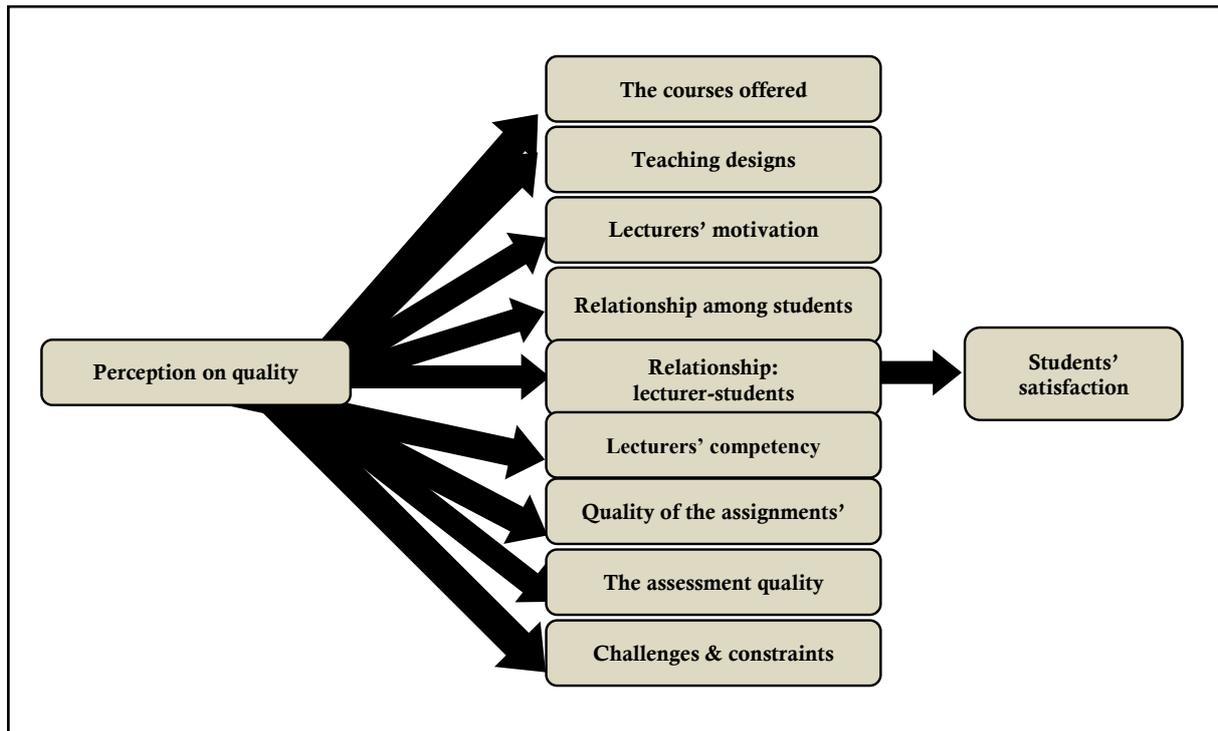
psychology research on a group of students from the education faculty. This approach tries to apply the client satisfaction research on the higher learning education, as it is now becoming a common practice of recent researches to relate various quality factors with the evaluation of clients' satisfaction.

This study is conducted to provide information for the lecturers in executing their teaching and learning process, as well as for the students who are undergoing the education program. The purpose of the study is to identify characteristics of quality teaching and learning. This study is also beneficial for the higher learning institutions to know the items or the main characteristic of quality teaching in order to satisfy the students' need for great learning experience.

**On the Domains of Education Quality at the Higher Learning Institutions.** The instruments commonly used in assessing teaching effectiveness by students are: EI (*Endeavor Instrument*), SIRST (*Student Instructional Rating System Form*), questionnaire of SDT (*Student Description of Teaching*), SEEQ (*Students' Evaluations of Educational Quality*), and CEQ (*Course Experience Questionnaire*). Those instruments involve various domains to measure the quality of teaching (Stringer & Irwing, 1998; and Guolla, 1999); but each domain is measured through different numbers of items (Centra, 1979; and Ramsden, 1991).

At present, there is still no consensus regarding the most effective domain to measure the quality of teaching and learning. This is because to measure teaching effectiveness requires various constructs from various domains. The common domains in measuring teaching effectiveness are values, lecturers' enthusiasm, organization of lesson, interaction, contents of the subject, assessment, and more. P. Ramsden (1991) stated that there are certain characteristics of teaching quality at the department or faculty, which very much related to the educators/lecturers.

Those characteristics are *good teaching* (clear instruction, the level of lecturer's energy, eagerness in helping students); *freedom in learning*; *clear goals and standard*; *appropriate work load*; and *assessment quality* (Ramsden, 1991).



**Figure 1:**  
Conceptual Framework  
(Source: Zeithaml, Parasuraman & Berry, 1990)

Those characteristics are highly related with learning effectiveness experienced by students.

According to Jamiah Md Jahim, teaching effectiveness involves three factors, there are: (1) delivery of the lesson by lecturers; (2) lecturer's role in facilitating relationship with their students; and (3) lecturers' role in students learning (Md Jahim, 2002). Students' evaluation towards teaching effectiveness is a frequent topic discussed in the literature of higher education; hence, it is categorised into three factors: the energy, structuring, and presentation.

**On the Conceptual Framework of the Research.** This study involves two variables: (1) teaching and learning quality; and (2) students' satisfaction towards lecturers' teaching quality. Quality of teaching and learning involves the aspects of the course subject, lecturers' motivation, teaching designs, relationship among students, relationship between lecturers and students, lecturers' competency, examination and assessment, workload and assignments, and challenges and constraints (Rowley, 1996). For conceptual framework of the research, see the figure 1.

According to S. Handoyo, teaching and learning quality refers to teaching effectiveness delivered by the academic staff; interaction quality between lecturers and their students, which is on how students are treated in the class, how information from the stakeholders are delivered to students, or how students are motivated and facilitated during the learning process (Handoyo, 2006). According to B. Wilson, there are six items of overall student satisfaction, involving: (1) the quality of the facility, (2) quality of the learning process, (3) quality of the faculty, (4) service quality, (5) the quality of curriculum, and (6) the quality of teaching and learning (Wilson, 1996).

#### **THE PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES, AND METHODS OF THE RESEARCH**

According to Haryadi (2005), some of the problems faced by higher learning institutions in Indonesia are the quality of the academic services and the quality of teaching, as the quality of those two are still at the low level. Quality in teaching is supposedly determined by the lecturer him/herself, especially in

**Table 3:**  
Population of UNRI's Students for the 2010 Academic Year

No	Faculty	Total Number of Students
1.	FISIP (Faculty of Political and Social Science)	3,056
2.	FKIP (Faculty of Education and Teaching Training)	5,893
3.	FE (Faculty of Economy)	5,526
4.	FMIPA (Faculty of Mathematics and Sciences)	2,508
5.	FT (Faculty of Engineering)	2,081
6.	FIK (Faculty of Marine Science)	1,595
7.	FP (Faculty of Agriculture)	1,337
8.	FH (Faculty of Law)	629
9.	FK (Medical Faculty)	628
<b>Total</b>		<b>23,253</b>

producing many excellent students (Toh, 2003). Lecturers have the capacity to develop their own potential based on what is best for them (Apple, 1983).

Lecturers help students to excel in the exam, but they should be given carte blanc in choosing the most suitable teaching method and to decide the best way to deliver it to the students (Medvedeff, 2000). However, regardless of so many studies have been conducted on effective teaching, it is still a big question needed to be answered on which model is the best for lecturers to use in their classrooms. This study is to evaluate lecturers of the UNRI (University of Riau), particularly their teaching and learning quality in relevant with the ranking of the world universities.

The UNRI (University of Riau) in Pekanbaru can improve its educational quality by establishing a very concrete and clear educational goal, which focusing mainly on the quality of teaching and learning. Students are the university's main clients; hence, their opinions and needs should be considered in planning great quality of teaching and learning process. Brushing off students' views would mean ignoring their needs and hopes resulting with a hopeless teaching and learning process. Previous studies have shown that there is a significant correlation between quality learning with students' perception towards quality teaching (cf Ramsden, 1991; and Stringer & Irwing, 1998).

This study is to get students' perception toward education quality served by the UNRI in Pekanbaru, Indonesia. The CST (Clients Satisfaction Theory) was used on a group

of post-graduate students. This study is also adapted from previous research on educational psychology for the purpose of identifying and measuring the quality of teaching and learning.

The objectives of this research are to determine the level of students' perception towards nine domains of teaching and learning quality, as well as to determine the students' satisfaction towards the lecturers' teaching quality. Thus, this study investigates two major aspects: the first aspect is students' perceptions based on the domains of teaching and learning quality; and the second aspect is students' satisfaction towards lecturers' teaching practice.

UNRI was chosen to be studied due to its position as the top premier university in the Riau Province, Indonesia, and it offers various fields of studies. See table 3.

UNRI has nine faculties in UNRI (University of Riau) in Pekanbaru, Indonesia, namely: FKIP (*Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan* or Faculty of Education and Teaching Training), FISIP (*Fakultas Ilmu Sosial dan Ilmu Politik* or Faculty of Political and Social Science), FE (*Fakultas Ekonomi* or Faculty of Economy), FMIPA (*Fakultas Matematika dan Ilmu Pengetahuan Alam* or Faculty of Mathematics and Sciences), FT (*Fakultas Teknik* or Faculty of Engineering), FIK (*Fakultas Ilmu Kelautan* or Faculty of Marine Science), FP (*Fakultas Pertanian* or Faculty of Agriculture), FH (*Fakultas Hukum* or Faculty of Law), and FK (*Fakultas Kedokteran* or Medical Faculty). The population of this study is the whole total number of registered students for the 2010 academic session.

**Table 4:**  
Demographic Profiles of the Respondents

Demography	Frequency	Percentage
<i>Gender:</i>		
Male	177	39.3%
Female	273	60.7%
<i>Academic Status:</i>		
New Students	310	68.9%
Senior Students	140	31.1%
<i>Field of Studies:</i>		
Social Sciences	263	58.4%
Sciences	187	41.6%

The instrument to test teaching quality is adapted from a study conducted by D. Gursoy & W.T. Umbreit (2005); M.D. Toland & R.J. de Ayala (2005); and S. Handoyo (2006). The OSS (Overall Student Satisfaction) was the instrument used to measure relationship between educational service quality with the teaching quality. The profile of the respondents, based on demographic factors, is as the following in table 4.

The table 4 shows that 177 respondents are male students (39.3%), whereas 273 respondents are female students (60.7%). About 310 respondents are new students (68.9%), while only 140 are senior students (31.1%). And about 263 respondents are representing the social sciences' students and the remaining 187 are the sciences' students.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

**First, Teaching Quality on the Course Delivered by Lecturers.** The course quality, as taught by the lecturers, is referred to four indicators: (1) increasing students' level of motivation; (2) value of the courses offered; (3) the ability to attract students; and (4) the elements of the courses.

Students' reported low perception towards all of the indicators. This shows that the courses offered need to be upgraded as they are considered as too lame, low value added, unattractive, and the elements are somehow vague. In overall, the lecturers' teaching and learning quality from the domain of course subject is still at the low level (mean = 2.13; and sd = 0.546).

**Second, Motivation of the Lecturers.** Based on students' perception, it was found

that the level of lecturers' teaching motivation is very average. This can be translated that the lecturers are not enthusiastic and they themselves are not really clear of the content. The students also reported that the dynamic of the teaching and learning session is too low, as the lecturers did not integrate the session with various methods, the interaction session was not active, and it is more as a one way session. The teaching session is exam oriented and the deviation is only limited to a simple question and answer session. The teaching session is also humourless, making the process to be too dry and stressful.

The element of humor will make the learning session to be more enjoyable for students. Hence, it is good if teachers/lecturers can create a humorous situation by giving intelligent jokes, the use of comical graphics like cartoon characters, and appropriate body language. M. Henley (2006) associates the element of humor with interesting jokes.

Findings show that lecturers prefer one-way teaching approach and rarely use multiple methods to attract students. This creates a gap between lecturer and his/her students. However, lecturing style and traditional classroom setting are still suitable to develop the lesson for students, and students agreed that lecturers are capable to deliver knowledge and are able to achieve the lesson objectives.

**Third, Teaching Practice.** The respondents reported that the lecturers have very high ability to organise their lessons systematically based on the lesson sub-components. However, other elements are still at the average level; thus, they need improvement, for instance in explaining the contents of the lesson and

in providing other sources of references for the students. This study also shows that students prefer to find other sources to get further information regarding the contents of the course, instead of meeting their lecturers personally.

According to Nooraini Othman & Khairul Anuar (2013), being a lecturer requires various types of communication abilities in various situations of interpersonal relationship. A competent lecturer should be able to develop effective interpersonal relationship, which then will provide better opportunity in maintaining work satisfaction in the ever changing and challenging working environment. A great lecturer should be able to communicate well, to adjust and understand others as well as knowing how to satisfy him/herself, particularly for the purpose of improving his/her own career for self-satisfaction.

Lecturers' competency is very much related to students' achievement. A lecturer should know his/her lesson deeply to ensure the contents can be delivered effectively. Edward Ngelai (2006) stated that to achieve effective classroom management, a lecturer should consider the emotional and physical aspects. An effective educator should be able to control his/her emotion, especially in a stressful situation. He/she is also capable in providing feedbacks and reasonable responses.

According to Khine (2004), a competent educator has the ability to create effective teaching by having the following skills: skillful in planning achievable objectives; in providing various types of thinking levels; in choosing materials to suit the instruction; executing systematic instructions; skillful in attracting students to learn; able to start and end the lesson effectively; in using technology to deliver information and to create cheerful environment; in focusing on concepts; providing feedback; managing and understanding students as well as managing time effectively.

Khine (2004) also said that effective lecturers should be able to create new knowledge based on students' previous or past experiences. They should have the ability to diverse students' thinking skills, for example through compare and contrast, to

gradually relate information, have diversity of perspectives, capable in applying concepts with everyday life, drawing conclusion, generating ideas, assessing current issues, and identifying correct information.

#### *Fourth, Interaction with Course Mates.*

A great relationship among coursemates will help students to experience great learning experience. However, results of this study showed the absence of collaboration and cooperation among students. They prefer individual learning and sharing of information among course mates is rarely done.

According to Jensen & Kiley (2005), it is good for lecturers to encourage their students to cooperate and work as a team to achieve the learning objectives. Lecturers can carefully plan and alter their lessons in order to achieve their teaching objectives; and at the same time, encourage students to actively involve in the teaching and learning session through various activities.

*Fifth, Relationship between Lecturers and Students.* Quality teaching and its effectiveness are also related to the relationship between teachers and students. Ideally, a quality teacher is normally very friendly with his/her students, very accepting, caring, accessible, very open in accepting comments or suggestions, well-behaved, respecting, and attentive towards his/her students. Unfortunately, findings of this research showed that, in overall, the relationship and lecturers' attitudes towards students are average.

Lyle M. Spencer & Signe M. Spencer (1993) discussed that a dynamic teacher is someone who always tries to improve his/her teaching and is very creative in making sure that his students are able to develop their own valuable understanding of the world around them. However, a study by A.S. Makmun (2004) has found that even if there is a significant relationship between lecturers' competency and their students understanding of the lesson, but the connection is very low. In addition, according to Yap Ming Hui (1994), the level of students' understanding is depending on the level of lecturer's efficiency.

An educator also needs an assertive attitude. An assertive teacher reflects his/her attitude in performing his/her job. An assertive person

**Table 5:**  
Overall Students Opinion on Lecturers' Quality

No	Items of Teaching & Learning Quality	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
1	Teaching quality on the courses delivered by lecturers	2.13	0.546	Low
2	Motivation of the lecturers	2.79	0.484	Average
3	Teaching practice	2.72	0.540	Average
4	Interaction with course mates	2.22	0.651	Low
5	Relationship between lecturers and students	2.86	0.400	Average
6	Lecturers' efficiency	2.65	0.532	Average
7	Assessment, examination & evaluation	3.14	0.421	Average
8	Assignments	3.11	0.523	Average
<b>Quality</b>		<b>2.78</b>	<b>0.251</b>	<b>Average</b>

is said to have a great caliber and capable in handling his/her work. Hence, an assertive lecturer promises effective learning experience, which directly contributes to his/her students' academic achievement. According to Jensen & Kiley (2005), an effective educator always tries to have great interaction with his/her students and guides his/her students to achieve their needs.

Findings of this study showed that the relationship between lecturers and students in all the 8 aspects is average. Three aspects recorded high level, there are: kindness towards students, respecting students, and caring about students' problems. Respondents also agreed that their lecturers could accept every input from the students. However, several aspects are rated low as lecturers' are found to be unfriendly, lack of personal approach, unreachable, and are not really open in accepting critics.

**Sixth, Lecturers' Efficiency.** Lecturers' efficiency in this study is referred to lecturers' competency in explaining the content of the lesson for the students. Relevantly, students agreed that lecturers have the competency in explaining many theories related to the topics studied by referring to various sources. Whereas, another three aspects are still low and improvement is needed in explaining concepts, providing the overview of teaching materials, and enriching theories.

According to Abdul Shukor (2000), the year plan of work target for lecturers is focusing on teaching and learning. However, this study has found several complaints from the students about their lecturers. According to the

students, lecturers are not serious in teaching and no teaching aids is used, which damaging the lecturers' image.

**Seventh, Assessment, Evaluation, and Examination.** Quality of a lecturer is also evaluated from his/her competency in the assessment aspect. Information from examinations should be cleverly used for next action and improvement. The information is also important to be analysed in finding teaching materials suitable with the knowledge and skills, in designing assessment which is valid and precise in testing students' skills.

For this matter, respondents of this study valued the lecturers as low, because lecturers failed to give reliable test to reflect their actual performance; and students are not called to discuss the outcomes of their assessment. Examination is considered an important benchmark to measure effective lecturers as the examination results reflect the standard of every party involved. This is due to the fact that quality questions should have content validity and should be designed to test various levels of difficulties.

**Eighth, Assignments.** Adult learning requires students to explore various sources of information relevant to the assignments given by the lecturers. Hence, respondents agreed and credited very high that the list of references provided by their lecturers indeed has helped them a lot in completing their assignments and the assignments are related to the course studied. However, the other two aspects are rated low: respondents reported that the lecturers did not explain their assignment in details; and, in fact, the

assignments given were considered unable to expand their knowledge.

Based on the discussion above, students overall views on the quality of lecturers from various faculties of UNRI (University of Riau) is stated in the table 5.

Evaluation on the domain of lecturers' quality has found the overall result of the eight criteria studied is at the average level, which clearly need improvement and upgrading. The criteria are lecturers' motivation, teaching approach, relationship among students, lecturers' efficiency, assessment, and assignment. Whereas two criteria: the list of courses and relationship among course mates for academic purposes are recorded low. This is a pre-warning indicator for the lecturers of various faculties to change and double up their yearly working target by focusing more on their job scope.

**On the Challenges and Constraints.** It is beneficial to get students' perception on the challenges and constraints they are facing in order to determine lecturers' performance in providing quality service. One of the challenges and constraints faced by students is the course difficulty. This is because students fail to adjust themselves with the campus life and the educational culture in the university, which very much different than school life.

This is in agreement with findings of a research conducted by J. Sennett *et al.* (2003), which found that students would face difficulties in the university due to their own attitudes and thinking, which made them unable to catch up with the quest for diligence, seriousness, and struggle for success at the campus. Apart from that, students thought most of their assignments were irrelevant and were unable to help them much in knowledge development. Lecturers' teaching process was also rated average.

## CONCLUSION

The process of teaching and learning in universities require various approaches and it should be carried out in a very creative way. At the same time, flexibility of teaching and learning is a must. It becomes an integral part of effective teaching and learning at higher education level. In these days, the use of

technology in teaching and learning is vital. Integrating the effective teaching practices with current technology will contribute to innovative educators. Innovative educators are skillful in pedagogical content knowledge and good rapport with students. Their teaching practices will take into account various psychological aspects, including students learning styles and students backgrounds.

Conducive learning ecology is important for effective teaching and learning in the universities. Positive learning environment, including physical environment, infrastructure, and info-structure, is contributing factor for effective teaching and learning. A scientific culture among academicians will contribute to productive learning at universities level. As educators are important for effective teaching, the authorities – including the top-management of universities and Ministry of Higher Education in Indonesia – should have a specific in-service training for all academicians. The training must include various aspects of effective teaching as well the socio-cultural knowledge and technological support.

Pedagogical content knowledge must also be part or the training. Continuous training programme and attachment programme may be good strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>**Statement:** Herewith I declare that this article is my own original work, not product of plagiarism, and not yet also be reviewed and published by other scholarly journals.

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