Student Evaluation of teaching in Higher Education
A focus on The Impact of Social Media E-Word of Mouth

Dr. Ream Kinawy
Lecturer
College of Business Administration,
Gulf University for Science and Technology, Kuwait
Kuwait
Kinawy.r@gust.edu.kw

Abstract

Consumers are often believed to be able to engage in global contacts due to rising electronic word of mouth (eWOM) in social networking sites. The most influential potential judge of eWOM in higher education institutions is in the assessment process. The student evaluation rate reached 94% during the 2000s, showing high relevance and have grown into a valuable source of information for administrators to use in determining merit raise and promotion decisions, which is a high priority to manage.

Along with the traditional forms of education and training processes of peer evaluation and self-assessment, student evaluation is considered an integral part of this evaluation process. The main reason for exploring student evaluation in the case of higher education is that the evaluations are carried out by the faculty's own students. This may raise ethical concerns regarding the validity and reliability of those evaluations. Student evaluations on social media take the form of reviews, which may not be considered a formal assessment tool, yet their ambiguity may negatively affect the faculty members due to the validity and bias of using Electronic Word Of Mouth. This is considered an ethical challenge because the Electronic Word Of Mouth on social media platforms may negatively impact the faculty's assessment regarding teaching quality and overall evaluation. Consequently, monitoring student evaluation and course reviews on social media platforms may contribute to a positive image of the higher education institution. This needs implementation of a sustainable evaluation procedure which involve all elements of the institute.

Keywords
E-Word of Mouth(eWOM) , Social Media, Student Evaluation, Higher Education, Institution, Image, Peer evaluation.

1.-INTRODUCTION

An overview on student evaluation in higher education:

Student engagement in the activity of evaluation of teaching focused on student's judgments of teachers' performance. United States of America has introduced the first college student evaluation in 1915 and was implemented and further developed in 1927 with clear standard student evaluation system for assessment of teaching efficiency (De Neve, 1991; Theall, Abrami, & Mets, 2001). The problem clearly demonstrated the importance of incorporating students in teaching management in order to promote undergraduate teaching in higher education institutions and increase teaching quality. The quality assurance and accreditation system has been an integral part of the Higher Education system and highly integrated within almost all the Higher Education institutes academic circle. The gradual implementation produced positive results specially on the evaluation system teaching management. Relevant research (Zhao et al 2022) was progressively evolved, and several studies on student evaluation were gradually implemented by higher education institutes. Students' assessment of the teaching process is incorporated as an integrated criterion of the quality assurance evaluation technique and teacher performance evaluation system for accreditation. Most students at higher education institutions are still learning. As a result, they struggle to comprehend the material and concepts of educational activities, resulting in assessment deficiencies (Gu, 2021). Students may have a limited understanding of teaching evaluation or a negative random assessment, resulting in probable variations in teaching evaluation assessment and making correct judging of teaching practice difficult (Wang, 2017; Zhou, 2018). It is primarily concerned with applicability and validity, as well as anticipating hazards in implementation application and action plan tactics.

The system is heavily influenced mainly by reliability and validity of student evaluations of higher education courses. Success and reliability of student assessment of education must be backed by credible evaluation outcomes for validity. As a result, academic administration must be aware of the factors that influence reliability and validity. According to Zhao et al 2022, influencing aspects are classified into teaching factors and non-teaching variables. Furthermore, because the teaching components are ruled

by the students' evaluation instructions, they have a positive influence on the evaluation findings. In academic circles, the influencing variable primarily focuses on the non-teaching variables that lead to variances in evaluation conclusions. The grounded theory research technique was used by Li and Meng (2020) to infer that four factors impact students' assessment of teaching: the institute, students, instructors and courses. They have been shown to negatively affect selection if not managed properly, which has an impact on the efficacy of instructor evaluation and the quality of institute instructions.

The degree to which students' evaluations of teaching may stably indict instructors' adequate teaching level, as evidenced in the stability or consistency of the evaluation outcomes, is referred to as dependability. Hong (2010) defines validity as the ability of students' evaluations of instruction to accomplish the intended goals and outcomes. Its dependability and effectiveness are strongly tied to whether students' teaching evaluations may be transferred to instructors' teaching evaluations. According to the findings of Zhoa,2022, academic circles, while there are many issues about the reliability of college students' teaching assessment, the conventional view that its reliability is high has not been challenged, and the validity is also debatable (Uttl, 2021).

Research problem:

Can we use a well-structured social media platform to convey significant evaluation through eWOM in the context of spreading the values of proper evaluation and promotion of the institute's image?

Aim of the research:

- To evaluate the efficiency of the evaluation system in the higher education institutes.
- To reform the academic circle with a more sustainable monitoring system.

Research importance:

The present investigation would be valuable in addressing the gap in how students from diverse cultural backgrounds may perceive and interpret the evaluation process related to the higher education evaluation circle.

Moreover, elucidating how the use of eWOM in the context of spreading the values of proper feedback can assist In this research, we fill this research gap by examining the use of eWOM in conveying significant information about the institute's image and positive feelings connected to this important issue. By so doing, this contributes to the literature on assessment and reform.

Research field:

Student Evaluation of Teachers and the role of social media.

Research Questions:

This study aims at answering the following research questions: The first question is, in general, how efficient is the evaluation system in the higher education institutes? And what are the contributions of students teaching evaluation, social media, and electronic word of mouth (eWOM)? And the second question is: what reforming criteria are needed to reform the assessment of student evaluation?

Research methodology:

The study critically overviews and summarizes relevant literature that focuses on the evaluation of teaching by students in higher education. The author first reviews the classical methods of student evaluation and their importance. Secondly, it is to evaluate the active role of social media in controlling electronic Word Of Mouth in the academic evaluation. The Third is to reveal the pro and con views on student evaluation of teaching. The main logical analysis of this article argues about the reported deficiencies of the outcomes of the students' evaluation of the teaching application and some solutions.

2-Previous researches

Since the students' teaching evaluation has been widely used in higher education institutes in the world; it achieved specific results in favour of the evaluation system, in addition to that it revealed insufficient effectiveness of the process of teaching evaluation (Zhao,2022). In View of insufficient effectiveness of the process of teaching evaluation, several investigations (Wang and Guan, 2017 and Zhou and Qin, 2018)) indicated

that the students' teaching evaluation is sometimes subjected to unclear perception of teaching evaluation. Gu et al. (2021) attributed to that to the status of students being in a learning information collection phase which produce inaccuracy in the evaluations results. Morley (2012), Spooren et al. (2013) pointed out that although the methods of measuring the effectiveness of students' teaching evaluation in some reports are popular, some of them have obstacles, and they managed to reach a compromise on some features of supporting the effectiveness of teaching, but they cannot be clearly defined. Galbraith et al. (2012) and Wolfgang Stroebe (2020) also support the believes that the existing evidence is insufficient to support the effectiveness of student evaluation of teaching as an indicator to judge or measure the learning process.

In order to emphasize issues with the practice of teaching evaluation by college students, the degree of teaching evaluation's reaction to instructors' teaching level was increased (Becker, 2000; and Jiang, 2018). According to Constantinou and Wijnen-Meijer (2022), teacher evaluation should take into account all stakeholders, including students, peers, curriculum managers, and one's own assessment. In higher education institutions, management of students' teaching assessments is extensive, according to Li et al., (2019) with the majority of these activities being carried out by specific administration departments or assigned to third-party evaluation firms for action. A few of them have created distinct departments or developed standards and guidelines to uniformly and professionally carry out and facilitate the teacher's evaluation system.

It is a common process that responses to the evaluation are assessed using words in self-reported questionnaires. With social media tools, research has reported the popularity of using Electronic Word of mouth to measure students' reactions to teachers and teaching (Zhao,2022). Accordingly, there was an existence of huge competition that encourages institutes to seek improvements towards a perfect quality (Li, 2013). This was greatly facilitated through the introduction of the internet and the electronic communications that creates the term Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) which acquires significant influence when expended

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across different types of social networking sites and social media (Chau, 1997).

Over the years, the standard student evaluation of teaching methods in higher education have been relatively stable until faculty, and course rating reviews on social media platforms emerged and the use of the global Internet has spread the electronic word of mouth (Jalilvand ,2012). Social media platforms facilitate information sharing among individuals, which may leave them emotionally charged. Accordingly, a rise in the debate regarding the validity and potential uses of social media student evaluation and course reviews has been observed. It is important to point out that the nature of higher education institutional evaluations and social media reviews are fundamentally different. For instance, on social media, the students are the ones who frame the experience around which the feedback is provided (Hasanjanzadeh and Iahad, 2013).They argued that it is necessary to monitor the outcome of the student evaluation and course review as they may have a significant impact not only on the faculty's professional opportunities, promotion, and employment but also on their performance and career prospects. Also, student evaluation and reviews may create a need to positively influence the students' evaluations which may be a source of grading choices and information bias for the advantage of both parties. Moreover, the student's viewpoint about what constitutes acceptable teaching may be unclear and could depend on several factors such as cultural differences, personalities, and level of academic achievement. This shows that students' opinions have a high likelihood of becoming a significant factor influencing consumers' participation in eWOM. Shen, et al (2011) findings supported the concept that the higher the level of motivation of the academic community towards a desire to help the institution, the higher the rate of occurrence eWOM through the website. However, it is highly recommended that the management repercussions of global internet marketers must be altered. This study will examine the current teaching evaluation system as it is performed by students using traditional methods and electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) for exposure, the creation of a more efficient, sustainable monitoring procedure, and a managerial reform.

Although previous research has explored the use of eWOM as a tool for examining and comprehending student and university cultural attitudes toward the existing evaluation process, the issue remains to be thoroughly examined for evaluating the involved variables (Li,2013). The importance of exploring the direct and indirect use of eWOM can be represented by using an index to indicate a variety of meanings about perception and understanding when referring to this issue. Accordingly, the logical framework of the present article is; an analysis of the range of reliability and validity of student teaching evaluation in the literature, an overview of the impact of Social media and e-Word of Mouth (eWOM) on student evaluation, an analysis of reported difficulties and problems expected with their application and assessment on decisions related to faculty and the academic circle in higher education, and finally, a conclusion with recommendations and limitations for future research.

Definitions of the main terms in the study

A. Evaluation at Higher Education Institute

Evaluation is the process of assessing the value, worth, or quality of something. In education, evaluation refers to the systematic and ongoing assessment of student learning, progress, and performance in relation to set learning objectives and standards. Evaluation is the systematic collection and analysis of data needed to make decisions, a process in which most well-run programs engage from the outset. Evaluation is the cornerstone of strong program planning, execution, and improvement.

B. Student Evaluation of teaching

Student Evaluations of Teaching commonly take the form of completion of institutes questionnaires. They are originally developed to evaluate courses and programmes, throughout the years also been used to measure teaching effectiveness and subsequently to guide important decisions in this issue.

C. Academic Circle

Academic circle generally considers the factors affecting reliability and validity comprehensively. The influencing factors are two categories: teaching factors and non-teaching factors.

3-ETHICAL CHALLENGES

3.1 Electronic Word Of Mouth

Word Of Mouth (WOM) is considered a nonmarketer-driven medium for positive or negative communication regarding a brand, product, service or organization (Jan & Bhat, 2021).. The transition of internet technology allowed access to public information, transforming the WOM into Electronic WOM (E-WOM). Hence, eWOM became any positive or negative information regarding a product, service or organization shared through the internet. E-WOM is considered a marketing strategy that relies on online users sharing both positive and negative knowledge, experiences and opinions about the service or institution, in this case, the higher education institution and its services. Moreover, eWOM may impact prospective students during course enrollment and even higher institute search phase (Lehmann, 2015).

3.2 Social Media

In this digital era, individuals are more immersed in digital technology and prefer social media as a source of information and online reviews (Mangold & Smith, 2012). Social media platforms, such as Twitter, online forums and blogs, facilitate the dissemination of eWOM (Hernández-Méndez, Muñoz-Leiva, & Sánchez-Fernández, 2015). The reviews on social media may not be considered a formal assessment or evaluation tool, yet the validity and bias in using e-WOM may impact the faculty members' ratings and course enrolment decisions.

3.3 Student Evaluation

In the 1920s, student evaluation of teaching was initiated to acquire information and feedback on teaching performance (Stroebe, 2016). Student evaluation of teachers requires students to give overall ratings of the instructors and their characteristics as well as their course. For instance, the student may evaluate the instructor's knowledge, helpfulness and fairness, the course's difficulty, organization, and the information received (Stroebe, 2020). The idea was to use the information and feedback to highlight the areas that require improvements. Figure 1 illustrates the increase of student evaluation rates over the years.
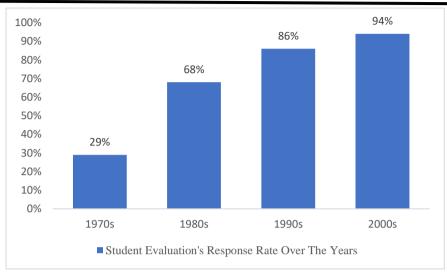
Figure 1- Student Evaluation's Response Rate from the 1970s – 2000s

The rate of student evaluations increased over the years. For instance, during the 1970s, the student evaluation rate was 29%. Following this was a noticeable increase to 68% during the 1980s. Then another noticeable increase was observed during the 1990s, which reached 86% (Freishtat, 2016). During the 2000s, the student evaluation rate reached 94%, demonstrating its significance (Miller & Seldin, 2014). Yet, the student evaluations transformed into a valuable source of information used by administrators to make merit increments and promotion decisions, which is considered "serious misuse" [5, p. 221]. For instance, it has been suggested that student evaluation of teaching has considerable weight on decisions related to faculty promotions, salary increments and recruitment (Stroebe, 2016). Also, student evaluations may be influenced by factors not related to teaching effectiveness, such as the student's level of satisfaction with the course delivered (Boring & Ottoboni, 2016; Freishtat, 2016; Uttl, White, & Gonzalez, 2017). It is suggested that students who receive good grades are expected to positively evaluate the instructor than the students who receive poor grades (Stroebe, 2020). It has been argued that one of the ways to improve student ratings is to lower the coursework requirements and use lenient grading, which leads to grade inflation (Babcock, 2010; Birnbaum, 2000; Braga, Paccagnella, & Pellizzari, 2014; Johnson, 2006). Therefore, it is assumed that the less work the students are required to do on a course and

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the good grades they receive, the more positive their rating and student evaluation.

4-Conclusions

The students' reviews on social media could have a positive or negative impact on course enrollment decisions and have an adverse effect on the students' learning in other courses. It is recommended to educate students about these consequences and maintain sessions of a structured awareness training program for students with a specific focus on the significance and basis of eWOM. Such awareness sessions could guide students toward more reliable and valid reviews. Moreover, the awareness sessions could guide the students to the actual basis of student evaluation which is not based on the student's final grade. Also, it is recommended that higher education institutes provide the existing students with a university-guided platform where students can vent and share their experiences. Generally, the influence of e-WOM in the field of higher education in terms of the image of the higher education institution among competitors is undeniable.

5. Recommendations and future research

- The student teaching evaluation method must be optimized based on assessment feedback and continuous development and a problem assessment and a monitoring mechanism must be developed and implemented.
- Future studies should prioritize successful student evaluation and good practice in higher education institutes for exposure and enhancement of the indicator system and monitoring mechanism toward a successful reform.
- Furthermore, the limitation of quantitative assessment on the studen t's opinion
  must be reduced as much as feasible, and additional alternatives, par ticularly on social media platforms, should be adopted.

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تقييم الطالب للتدريس في التعليم العالي
التركيز على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي والكلام الشفهي الالكتروني

د. ريم نبيل زكي قناوي

كلية إدارة الأعمال

جامعة الخليج للعلوم والتكنولوجيا، الكويت

Kinawy.r@gust.edu.kw

المستخلص:

وكثيراً ما يُعتقد أن المستهلكين قادرون على الدخول في اتصالات عالمية بسبب ارتفاع كلمة الفم الإلكترونية في مواقع التواصل الاجتماعي. ويجري تقييم أكثر الوسائل قدرة على التأثير في مؤسسات التعليم العالي في نظام eWOM في عملية التقييم. وبلغ معدل تقييم الطلاب 94 في المائة خلال العقد الأول من القرن الحادي والعشرين، مما أظهر أهمية كبيرة ونما ليصبح مصدراً قيماً للمعلومات التي يستخدمها المديرون في تحديد زيادة الجدارة وقرارات الترقية، وهو ما يشكل أولوية عليا يتعين إدارته.

وإلى جانب الأشكال التقليدية للتعليم وعمليات التدريب المتعلقة بتقييم الأقران والتقييم الذاتي، يعتبر تقييم الطلاب جزءا لا يتجزأ من عملية التقييم هذه. والسبب الرئيسي لاستكشاف تقييم الطلاب في حالة التعليم العالي هو أن التقييم يجريه طلاب الكلية أنفسهم. وقد يثير ذلك شواغل أخلاقية فيما يتعلق بصحة وموثوقية تلك التقييمات. وتتخذ تقييمات الطلاب لوسائل التواصل الاجتماعي شكل استعراضات قد لا تعتبر أداة تقييم رسمية، غير أن غموضها قد يؤثر سلباً على أعضاء هيئة التدريس نظراً لصحة وتحيز استخدام كلمة الفم الإلكترونية. ويعتبر هذا تحدياً أخلاقياً لأن كلمة الفم الإلكترونية على منصات وسائط التواصل الاجتماعي قد تؤثر سلباً على تقييم الكلية لنوعية التدريس والتقييم العام. ونتيجة لذلك، فإن رصد تقييم الطلاب واستعراضات الدورات الدراسية على منابر وسائط التواصل الاجتماعي قد تسهم في تكوين صورة إيجابية لمؤسسة التعليم العالي ككل.

الكلمات المفتاحية:

الكلام الشفهي الالكتروني؛ وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي؛ تقييم الطلاب؛ التعليم العالي؛ صورة المؤسسة؛ تقييم الأقران