ANALYZING LECTURER'S PROFESSIONALISM BASED ON ENGINEERING STUDENTS' PERSPECTIVES THROUGH ONLINE FEEDBACK

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ABSTRACT

In the field of academia, the role of a lecturer is crucial in guiding students' educational experience and preparing them for future careers. The professionalism and teaching effectiveness of the lecturers play a vital role in engineering courses where technical expertise and practical skills are important. To assess and improve the quality of education, educational institutions continuously use online feedback system to gather students' perspectives on their lecturers' professionalism. In Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM), students' responses to instruction and learning are tracked using a standardised instrument. The online feedback serves as a significant tool in evaluating a lecturer's effectiveness and identifying areas of improvement which ultimately contribute to the enhancement of the students' learning experience. By considering the viewpoints and experiences of the students, this article aims to explore the significance of engineering students' online feedback in evaluating lecturers' professionalism and the impact on their overall learning experience.

Keywords: Lecturer's professionalism, feedback, online

Introduction

Student academic excellence is the main priority for any educational institutions or colleges. To ensure that academic excellence can be achieved, it requires action and cooperation from everyone in the institution. Despite concerns about the validity, student evaluations on lecturers' teaching abilities remained the most common assessment employed in higher education for evaluating the way courses are delivered. At Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM), the teaching evaluation process is known as Students' Feedback Online (SuFO) which is carried out every semester for all courses.

SuFO is available online via https://ufuture.uitm.edu.my/. It was divided into four main sections which are Overall impression about the course (Section A), Lecturer Professionalism (Section B), Teaching and Learning activities (Section C) and Infrastructure (Section D). The primary objective of the evaluation is to provide academic staffs with information and feedback related to their teaching abilities. This will allow them to engage in self-reflection and ultimately undertake the required measures to improve their teaching performance in the future. In order to be an excellent lecturer, one

should master the delivery techniques and establish good relations with the students (Samian & Noor, 2012).

Professionalism encompasses various aspects including subject knowledge, teaching skills, communication abilities, responsiveness, and overall demeanor. In the context of engineering education, lecturers must possess a strong foundation in their respective fields and stay updated with emerging trends and advancements. Additionally, they need to effectively communicate complex concepts, provide real-world examples, and foster an engaging learning environment. High performance from lecturers is anticipated in order to satisfy all stakeholders, particularly students, parents, and the larger society (Hidayati and Siswati, 2018). Students' feedbacks provide valuable insights into whether the lecturers fulfill their expectations and contribute positively to their academic journey.

Educational institutions have embraced online feedback system as an efficient instrument to collect students' opinions on various aspects of their educational experience. This system allows students to provide anonymous and honest feedback while also ensuring that their opinions are unbiased. By utilizing such system, institutions can identify areas where the lecturers excel, need improvement, and subsequently take necessary measures to enhance the quality of teaching. Besides that, the students' feedbacks will help to improve on the lecture formats and materials, course requirements, assessment methods, classroom management and interactions (Eng et al., 2015)

Regularly assessing lecturers' professionalism based on students' feedback allows for continuous improvement in teaching practices. Constructive criticism and positive feedback help lecturers to identify their strengths, weaknesses, and enable them to adjust their teaching methodologies accordingly. Furthermore, feedback collected can aid faculty's programme development and organize targeted training workshops to enhance lecturers' skills and expertise.

The main objective of this article is to explore the significance of mechanical engineering, civil engineering and electrical engineering students' online feedback in evaluating lecturers' professionalism on Section B of SuFO for Semester Oct 2022 - Feb 2023 and its impact on their overall learning experience.

Methodology

Samples were taken from the mathematics course MAT 183 (Calculus 1) by 98 undergraduate engineering majors at the UiTM campus in Permatang Pauh, Pulau Pinang. This study used descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, and confidence intervals) in the analysis. Descriptive methodology refers to the process of describing and summarising the data collected in a study. It focuses on presenting the main features, patterns, and characteristics of the data without making inferences or generalisations beyond the sample being studied.
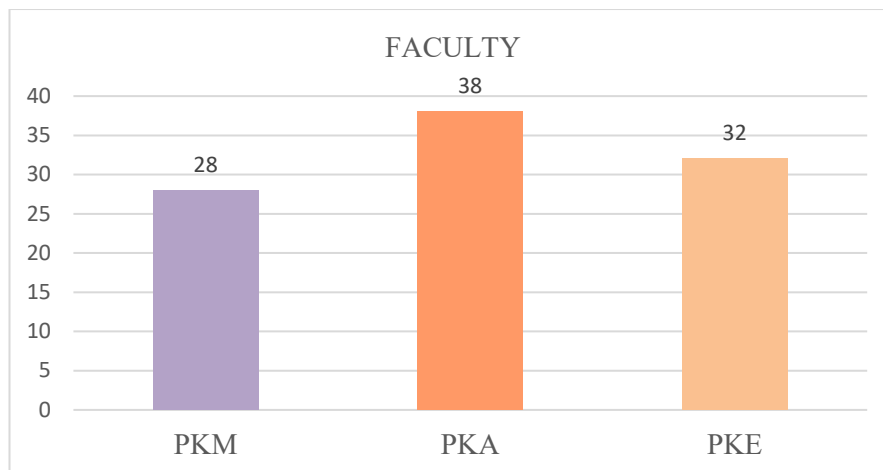
Figure 1: Student Enrollment by Faculty

The number of students enrolled in MAT183 (Calculus 1) in the College of Engineering specifically School of Mechanical Engineering (PKM), School of Civil Engineering (PKA), and School of Electrical Engineering (PKE) is depicted in Figure 1. Particularly, there are 32 students registered in MAT183 at PKM, 38 at PKA, and 28 at PKE.

Data Analysis

The survey in this study consists of 7 questions which focusses on lecturers professionalism (Section A). It consists of several statements or criteria that assess different aspects of the lecturer's performance, including planning and preparation by the lecturer, delivery techniques and lecturer-student relationship. A 4-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 4 = strongly agree) was used to record item responses. This study uses descriptive research to determine students' perspectives toward lecturer professionalism.

Result and Discussion

Table 1: Analysis of lecturer professionalism in planning and preparation

Category A							
				95% Confidence Interval for Mean			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Minimum	Maximum
PKM	28	3.71	.535	.101	3.51	3.92	2	4
PKA	38	3.74	.446	.072	3.59	3.88	3	4
PKE	32	3.78	.420	.074	3.63	3.93	3	4
Total	98	3.74	.461	.047	3.65	3.84	2	4

Category A which focuses on planning and preparation by the lecturer assesses various aspects of the lecturer's performance in terms of their planning and preparation for instructional activities. Table 1 shows that the average score given by PKM students was 3.71; for PKA, it was 3.74; and for PKE, it was 3.78. The mean score provides an indication on the students' perception of the lecturer's effectiveness in planning and preparing for instructional activities. Higher mean scores suggest a higher level of perceived professionalism in this category. The standard deviation were 0.535 (PKM), 0.446 (PKA), and 0.420 (PKE). A lower standard deviation suggests that the scores are relatively close to the mean, indicating a higher level of agreement among students regarding the lecturer's planning and preparation. The minimum score was 2 for all three faculties, and the maximum score was 4. Overall, the findings suggest that students from PKM, PKA, and PKE perceive that the lecturers who were teaching MAT183, demonstrated a good level of professionalism in terms of planning and preparation. The relatively high mean scores and low variability indicate a general agreement among students within each schools regarding this aspect of the lecturers' performance.

Table 2: Analysis of lecturer professionalism in delivery techniques

Category B								
					95% Confidence Interval for Mean			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Minimum	Maximum
PKM	28	3.75	.518	.098	3.55	3.95	2	4
PKA	38	3.71	.460	.075	3.56	3.86	3	4
PKE	32	3.69	.535	.095	3.49	3.88	2	4
Total	98	3.71	.497	.050	3.61	3.81	2	4

The results for Category B which focuses on delivery techniques by the lecturer is summarized in Table 2. The average scores for delivery techniques were 3.75 for PKM, 3.71 for PKA, and 3.69 for PKE, indicating a relatively positive perception of the lecturer's effectiveness in delivering instructional content across all three schools. The standard deviations were 0.518 for PKM, 0.460 for PKA, and 0.535 for PKE. These relatively low standard deviation values suggest that there was a consensus among students in each schools regarding the lecturer's delivery techniques. The minimum score of 2 and maximum score of 4 were observed across all three schools, representing the lowest and highest ratings given by students for Delivery Techniques. Overall, the results indicate that PKM, PKA, and PKE students think their lecturers provide instructional content with a high level of efficiency. The low variability and relatively high mean ratings show that students in each schools generally agree on this aspect of the lecturers' performance.

Table 3: Analysis of lecturer-student relation

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
Category C								
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
PKM	28	3.75	.518	.098	3.55	3.95	2	4
PKA	38	3.68	.471	.076	3.53	3.84	3	4
PKE	32	3.72	.457	.081	3.55	3.88	3	4
Total	98	3.71	.476	.048	3.62	3.81	2	4

Table 3 shows a summary of the results for Category C. It evaluates various aspects of the lecturer-student relationship such as communication, approachability, availability for discussions, and overall satisfaction with the lecturer-student interaction. The average scores for the Lecturer-student relationship were 3.75 for PKM, 3.68 for PKA, and 3.72 for PKE, indicating a positive perception of the lecturer-student relationship across all three schools. The standard deviations were 0.518 for PKM, 0.471 for PKA, and 0.457 for PKE. These relatively low standard deviation values suggest that there was a general consensus among students within each schoolregarding the lecturer-student relationship. The 95% confidence intervals for the mean scores in the Lecturer-student relationship ranged from 3.55 to 3.95 for PKM, indicating a high level of confidence in the estimated mean score within this range. The minimum score of 3 and maximum score of 4 were observed across all three schools, representing the lowest and highest ratings given by students for the Lecturer-student relationship. In summary, the results suggest that students from PKM, PKA, and PKE schools generally had positive perceptions on the lecturer-student relationship, with a relatively high level of consensus among the schools. These findings indicate that the lecturers were viewed favourably in terms of their communication, approachability, availability for discussions, and overall satisfaction with the lecturer-student interaction.

Conclusion

The evaluation of the information collected shows that the lecturer's have exceptionally high level of professionalism. With consistently excellent evaluations in all areas, it is clear that the lecturers are deeply committed to their duties. Their ability to finish lessons during the allotted time, readiness to offer academic advice, and friendliness demonstrate their commitment to foster students' academic development.

The study on MAT183 lecturers shows that students have a highly favorable view of the lecturers in terms of professionalism, instructional delivery, and the lecturer-student relationship.

Students across all faculties generally perceive the lecturers positively, indicating that the efforts put into planning, preparation, communication, and approachability have been well-received.

In conclusion, the result demonstrates the lecturer's exceptional professionalism that underlines their commitment to deliver high-quality instruction and maintaining a supportive learning environment. They are a priceless resource for the educational institution because of their great qualities and behaviours, which help students succeed and have a sense of fulfillment in their studies generally.

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