STUDENT EVALUATIONS OF TEACHING CHALLENGES (PERCEPTIONS OF STUDENTS AT CHINHOYI UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY IN ZIMBABWE)

Viriri. Piason
Chinhoyi University of Technology
School of Entrepreneurship and Business Management
Faculty of Marketing
Email: viririp@gmail.com

Chufama Maxwell
Department of Marketing and Logistics
Faculty of Management Sciences
Namibia University of Science & Technology
Email: mchufama@gmail.com

Viriri, Laurencia
Department of Applied Education
Midlands State University
Email: Laurenciaviriri@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Student evaluations of teaching are quite popular and old quality assurance and yet full of challenges on implementation. The objective of the study was to establish challenges encountered by university students in evaluating lecturers at Chinhoyi University of Technology. In order to fulfil this objective, case study descriptive research design was adopted. The population of the study composed of Chinhoyi University students particularly from School of Entrepreneurship and Business Management. The sample composed sixty-seven students undertaking E-Business course. The research employed cluster sampling since the course is undertaken by different faculties. Data was gathered using semi-structured and unstructured questionnaires. On challenges encountered by students in conducting lecturer evaluations, there were perceptions that students do not consider them seriously. More so, students suspect that student evaluations are not used at all for the improvement of teaching and learning. In addition, students were reluctant to complete them since they feared to be personally identified and later victimised by lecturers. Furthermore, students perceived that lecturer ratings were generally biased by grade and mark expectations by students among other several factors. Therefore, the study recommends the university to use multiple methods of evaluating lecturers' teaching. Secondly, evaluation of lecturers should be conducted during the semester and not left at the end of it, in order to have positive impact on teaching and learning.

Keywords: Student, Evaluation, Lecturers, Effectiveness, Ratings.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

At independence in 1980 the country had solely University of Zimbabwe as the only institute providing higher education. The institute was failing to fulfil demand from students in terms of vacancies to undertake degree programs from high school leavers. Accordingly, the government realized the necessity to devolve higher education by establishing other private and state-owned universities in order to cope with demand by increasing the supply side of education. These days,

there are more that thirteen universities in the country providing higher education. Even though access to education improved significantly due to various empowerment and affirmative policies by the government, there emerged quality related challenges by these institutions. With an enduring endeavor to provide education for all policy, the Zimbabwean government established ZIMCHE in 2006 with the mandate to guarantee and sustain quality. ZIMCHE is the quality assurance agency of Zimbabwe tertiary education system. The council regulates the determination and maintenance of standards of teaching, examinations, academic qualifications, and research in institutions of higher learning. Due to prevailing macro-economic challenges as evidenced by inflation, cash crisis, sanctions, recession, covid 19 pandemic and slow economic growth, the Zimbabwean government reduced its spending on higher educational sector. According to Chetsanga (2000) the government's budgetary allocation to the higher education has been in drastic decline. Due to that Zimbabwe higher education face challenges of brain drain, quality assurance and dwindled state funding (Majoni, 2014). Reduction of government spending on higher education is a global trend but is more pronounced in Africa and in Zimbabwe in particular. However, the government anticipates institutions to be quality oriented and as well focus on innovation and industrialisation to contribute to economic development through resource mobilisation.

To be specific, student evaluations of teaching have been used globally and in Zimbabwe to maintain quality in high education by institutions and by ZIMCHE. Universities were instructed to establish quality assurance directorates in order to spearhead and supervise the quality assurance agenda at institutional level. Chinhoyi University of Technology was exemplary in establishing the department. However, it should be observed and realized that the implementation of students' evaluations as a quality tool is not a walk in the park since it is fraught with several challenges from the perspectives of administration, students, and lecturers. The purpose of the study is therefore to examine the challenges encountered by Chinhoyi University students when partaking evaluations of teaching effectiveness at Chinhoyi University.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Potential Challenges of Student Evaluations of Teaching

Student ratings on lecturers were independently developed by around 1920s by educational psychologist Herman H.Remmers at Perdue University in collaboration with teaching and learning psychologist Edwin R, Guthrie at Washington University. Both Remmers and Guthrie sought for a tool that provides universities with relevant information about how their teaching was regarded by students such that necessary improvements could be made. Since then, student evaluations have since been embedded in the national and institutional quality assurance frameworks in higher educational sector to measure student experience. These days, university faculties are held responsible over how well they serve student populations. Accordingly, it has become a common practice in universities to evaluate lecturers and grade them. To date, student evaluations have attracted significant attention in higher education due to the necessity for improvement in teaching and accountability purposes. The following discussion highlights relevant literature on students' concerns and reservations regarding evaluations of teaching effectiveness. Economic Notebook (2011) illustrates that student prefer lecturers who do not challenge them in terms of activities and learning materials. On a similar note, lecturers who regularly teach difficult courses like hard sciences like physics, chemistry and biology eventually become unpopular and are likely to be

rated lowly by students. Expressing similar sentiments, Felder (1992) suggested that students award higher ratings to lecturers who teach difficult courses and whereby students are required to work very hard. Majority of students these days do not want to put extra effort on their studies. They consider lecturers who give them demanding workload as cruel and wicked. Quite often, students complain that they are being given too much work which is unnecessary. In certain circumstances, students construe student evaluation exercise as witch-hunting opportunity whereby non-performing lecturers are punished by students through low ratings. Goos and Solomons (2016) criticized student evaluations of being noisy. These authors argue that student evaluations are biased by factors like course, student, lecturer characteristics and administrative procedures including rating instrumentation that may not actually reflect the quality of teaching as such. Such biases and subjectivity provide room for grade inflation. Furthermore, student ratings on teaching are influenced by both internal as well as external factors of the university, for instance teaching environment.

Furthermore, in most institutions, the response rate in terms of participation from students' evaluations are relatively low indicating that they are not necessarily representative of students' opinions. This is attributed to the fact that it is usually difficult if not impossible to persuade all students to complete them. Worse still, if the students are not randomly selected to participate, there would be a tendency for selection bias. Such bias is exacerbated if online students' evaluations of lecturers are undertaken. In that context, student ratings serve as an indicator of effective teaching rather than providing a holistic picture. It can partially be established that student ratings are not sufficiently valid and reliable to be used in high-stake personnel decisions like tenure and promotion. Despite mixed interpretability of students' evaluation of lecturers, universities and colleges continue to use them as reliable and valid barometer of teaching effectiveness (Seldin, 1993).

There are also strong sentiments raised regarding the suitability and usefulness student evaluations especially if they are used for administrative and summative purposes. Concerning students' participation in evaluations, research confirms that generally only 60 per cent of students tend to complete them since they are an administrative requirement by universities. In that regard, student evaluations of teaching are criticized of sampling-bias. The best evidence from research suggests that student evaluations of teaching are neither valid nor reliable, even if the survey response rate is nearly perfect in terms sample representation.

The personality and character of the lecturer also have pronounced influence on student evaluations. The leniency hypothesis states that lecturers who are generally lenient with students are awarded better grades by students. This suggests that lecturers can actually 'buy' favourable grades from students by awarding them higher marks in tests, assignments, presentations or whatever method of assessment. Therefore, the grade-ratings relationship introduce bias that pose a serious threat to the validity of student evaluations (Watchtel, 1998). Review of existing research revealed that college students anticipated or actual grades in class are positively correlated with the evaluation of lecturers and courses. Professor Valen Johnson of Duke University confirmed that there is a strong statistical relationship between a professor's objective of receiving a positive student rating through evaluations and grade inflation (Wolfer & Johnson, 2003). This suggests that lecturers can inflate student marks in order to get positive ratings by students. A more recent study established that the personality characteristics of a lecturer such as pragmatism, intellectual

competency and amicability were positively correlated to student evaluations. For instance, lecturers who are friendly, dynamic, communicate well with students, rational and helpful always receive higher performance ratings. These findings are consistent with those of Chireshe (2011) who advocated that student view lecturers as effective if they have rapport, engages with them, and are competent, fair and knowledgeable in their subject matter. Majority of students worldwide have a positive attitude towards evaluation of lecturers in terms of content and format, while others feel that their feedback may not be used in improving teaching. Kozub (2010) revealed that student evaluations are influenced by other factors like course type, and gender of the lecturer. Lecturer characteristics like gender, age, or ethnicity also influence student perceptions. Students have a propensity to give higher ratings to elective courses and a bias towards lecturer appearance and attractiveness. Young *et al.* (2019) observed that gender bias plays a critical role in students' views of effective teaching with regard to how students evaluate pedagogical and content characteristics. Felton *et al.* (2008) further proposed that web-based evaluations of teaching established a preference for lecturer sexiness and course easiness.

Several studies have demonstrated strong gender bias in student evaluations. Students tend to rate a lecturer better if they share similar gender. Research confirmed that female students rate female lecturers positively in comparison to males who are considered impartial. Kilpatrick (1997) correspondingly concurred that, of course gender influences lecturer perceptions. Min and Baozhi (1998) reasoned that gender does not only influence participation but even evaluation outcome. They further argued that females 'evaluation of lecturers are prejudiced by affection. Research papers confirming biases in student evaluations have prompted universities to reconsider their weight in retention of lecturers and on tenure decisions. Student evaluation of teaching are often criticized of being biased. This is partly true since they can be influenced by several factors like grade inflation, perceived difficulty of class tests and assignments. They are prejudiced by non-instructional factors like lecturer's gender, age, nationality, students' expected grade and their views of what comprise knowledge. Felton, Mitchell & Stinson (2005) also observed that lecturers who are perceived as attractive are rated more favourably. This suggests that student evaluations are subject to several biases which are beyond the control of the individual lecturer. Such apparent biases contribute to hostility and cynicism pertaining to their usefulness in universities. Ultimately, the use of student ratings undermines faculty morale and job satisfaction since they do not measure learning outcomes. Feeley, (2002) maintained that student evaluations are vulnerable to halo-effect whereby one underlying factor influence students' perceptions of teaching, for instance lecturer's physical characteristics. Chan and Shuhaily (2011) emphasized that lecturer characteristics are the contributing factor to explain the variance in performance with regards to student ratings.

Of course, student evaluations be biased by student perception of lecturer identity for example gender, race, ethnicity, personality, age, disability, and other characteristics. Mason *et al.* (1995) further maintained that students' evaluations of lecturers are not scientifically accurate since students do not have relevant knowledge of the subject areas especially content and subject matter. There is compelling evidence that show that student evaluation scores demonstrate a discrepancy depending on level of class, class size, the discipline and prior knowledge of the class. Perceptions of students towards lecturer ratings is influenced by several factors, for instance normative influence of other students and other lecturers during the evaluation exercise and also grade expectations. They are also influenced by whether the lecturer is present in the lecture- room not during evaluations. Such perceptions are also influenced by the curriculum, class size, and

availability of tutors. Additionally, the study revealed that their ratings are influenced by lecturer's personality traits. Beran and Violato (2005) suggest that student engagement likewise influences evaluations to a larger extent. For instance, students who usually attend classes regularly become motivated in that particular subject and consequently rate those respective lecturers positively. Furthermore, students who get high grades in a course are likely to give high ratings to those respective lecturers. Related studies carried out by Chikazinga (2018) in Malawian higher education concluded that, whether students should evaluate lecturers is not relevant. What is most important is who should do the evaluations, for what purpose, and using what means? Generally, most university administrative personnel and lecturers do not have requisite data analysis skills and software packages to analyses the completed questionnaires translate them into meaningful data for informed decision-making.

The results of students' evaluations are used by institutions to identify professional development needs and review academic staff performance. Some critics argue that lecturers question the practice of deciding issues relating to promotion, salary, dismissal, or tenure based on anonymous students who just complete few items on the questionnaire at the end of the semester that may not truthfully measure the complexity and multidimensionality of effective teaching (Mwachingambi and Wadesango, 2011). This argument cannot be ignored as currently there is no specific definition in research of what constitutes effective teaching. Murray (1997) stated that student evaluations instruments can only assess those attributes that are observable by students such as keeping teaching hours, covering learning objectives, speaking clearly, or keeping classroom environment. However, students cannot assess non-classroom factors such as lecturer's subject knowledge, course design, assessment methods or academic standards. Secondly, lecturers have a tendency to change their teaching methods in order to receive favorable ratings. This is partly true as lecturers attempt to improve their relationships with students if they are aware that they shall be evaluated by them at the end of the semester. Invariably, they may retaliate to students in the final exam if they are rated badly by students.

Kozub (2011) argued that the voluntary nature of student evaluation poses a challenge. In several institutions, students do not complete the teaching evaluation instrument. This raises questions about whether such non-participation is a sign of poor teaching, lack of interest in the course or limited confidence in the evaluation system, which-ever case maybe. The other challenge is the survey data. Student evaluations are a result of students completing a survey instrument. Such survey instruments provide just an overview of student feelings and opinions concerning a particular lecturer. However, they hardly provide in-depth information of what really transpired in the lecturer-room. They neither provide room for probing to determine the underlying factors that contribute to such negative evaluations. If it were possible, an in-depth interview would be done to identify reasons for such dissatisfaction. That would enable administrators to determine if this were attributed to the weaknesses of instructor or problems of the students such that appropriate remedial action can be taken.

Regardless of the size of a college or university student evaluations on lecturers generates immense quantity of data. Such massive data makes it difficult to identify lecturer's weaknesses or failures. In most universities, there would be several faculty members to evaluate, and this worsens the problem of deriving meaning from student evaluations of respective lecturers. The capacity of students to evaluate lecturers has been a bone of contention by researchers throughout the world.

A notable issue is whether undergraduate students have the knowledge to assess the competence of a lecturer. Borch, Sandvoll and Risor (2019) argued that students do not deserve to evaluate lecturers since they neither have knowledge as teachers about pedagogics nor the mandatory skills of the profession. The validity and reliability of anonymous students' evaluations rests on the assumption that, by virtue of attending lectures, students observe the ability of the lecturer, and they report truthfully. This raises the issue that students are not relevant evaluators of lecturer's performance. To make matters worse, the objectives of students and those of the university might differ and this influence the evaluation process. More often students are concerned with their grades whilst universities are preoccupied with quality of teaching and learning.

On a similar note, other opponents of student evaluations maintain that students cannot measure several aspects of teaching performance. Challenges include over-interpretation and students not being equipped to judge critical aspects of teaching. Indeed, Trout (1997) recognized that first year students cannot judge critical aspects of teaching. This attributed to the fact that they do not have requisite knowledge and experience to assess the multidimensionality nature of teaching. However, previous studies reveal that regardless of level, students themselves perceive those evaluations are an effective means of expressing their opinions relating to teaching.

Seldin (1993) reasoned that student by virtue of their inadequate background and experience should not evaluate lecturers together with the materials being used in the learning process. In circumstances were they are applied, such evaluations should be complemented by other tools such as peer evaluations or observation. However, in practice even peer-evaluations can also be biased if they are not handled properly. Belanger and Longden (2010) suggested faculty members are the best to judge knowledge of fellow lecturers through peer evaluations. On the other hand, students should assess issues to do with pace of learning or learning atmosphere.

Benton and Ryalls (2016) further argued that students are not qualified to judge the effectiveness of teaching. For instance, the worst or more lenient lecturers are conferred the highest ratings. More often, professors who are awarded high evaluations ratings are worse than their peers in the department. Conversely, the most competent lecturers are awarded the lowest ratings. Good lecturers get the worst evaluations. Due to that, student ratings may lack reliability and validity. In that regard students' evaluation of teaching should not be used to compare lecturers against each other. In that regard, some critics of student evaluations fear that they may constitute a serious threat to academic freedom and eventually lower academic standards.

Another disturbing aspect is weak correlation that exists between student evaluation and teaching experience. Zabaleta (2007) discovered that years of experience or whether a lecturer is a professor or teaching assistant are not related to student evaluations. For instance, a teaching assistant with less than one year of teaching experience can have better evaluations ratings compared to a professor with extensive ten years teaching experience. This suggests that other issues besides teaching are considered in evaluations by students. Generally, students in universities are ambivalent to participate in evaluations of teaching by lecturers. Such ambivalence worsens if students are ignorant of their benefits with regards to learning. From students' perspective, providing feedback is the most essential outcome of teaching evaluation system. It is therefore suggested that if universities communicated the rationale of evaluations to student participation would improve. Most student evaluations of teaching are just retrospective quantitative course

evaluation surveys (Erikson *et al.*, 2016; Richardson, 2005). Qualitative evaluations are considered better alternative to quantitative methods. There is suggestion of dialogue-based evaluations in comparison to traditional student evaluations. Evaluations are the best method of evaluating teachers to ensure quality assurance and faculty development. However, students should be aware of such feedback mechanism which they should provide in a committed and responsible manner. Even though formative evaluations have yielded positive results in several studies, numerous lecturers are unwilling and reluctant to adopt them due to the amount of time required to execute them and provide useful feedback. Alternatively, some universities are now preferring self-evaluation and peer evaluation since they involve students in the learning process.

2.1 Research Objective

To identify the challenges associated with student evaluation of teaching at Chinhoyi University of Technology

2.2 Research Question

What are the challenges associated with student evaluation of teaching at Chinhoyi University of Technology?

2.3 Statement of the Problem

Student evaluations of teaching are applied to measure performance in several institutions of higher education throughout the world. There is abundant research which proves that feedback from student evaluations is effective to improve teaching. Recently, there has been growing ambivalence by Chinhoyi University students to participate in lecturers' evaluations. Research confirms that students' participation in lecturer evaluations in universities globally ranges between 30 to 50 per cent. The problem is serious since evaluations are considered valid if 80 per cent of students respond to them. This leads to failure by most lecturers to be evaluated by their students at the end of the semester thereby compromising the quality of teaching and learning. In an attempt to alleviate the problem, the university resorted to electronic students' evaluations, but the problem of student apathy still persists. The purpose of the study is therefore to examine challenges encountered by students when undertaking evaluations of teaching effectiveness at the institute.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The study used case study descriptive design. Target population at Chinhoyi University of Technology on year 2020 were 10500 students of which 8995 were undergraduate and 1505 were post-graduate students. The study adopted cluster sampling and later simple random sampling when picking respondents. Data was collected from sixty-seven students undertaking pursuing E-business course and other 3.2 students who completed attachment program. Data was gathered using semi- structured questionnaires and interviews.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter covers data presentation, analysis, and discussion of findings. It analyses the response rate, reliability test, tests of normality, sample adequacy test, descriptive data analysis, inferential data analysis and hypothesis testing using regression test.

4.2 Response Rate

Table 4.1 below shows the response rate as deduced form questionnaires returned versus those administered.

Table 4.1: Response rate

Item	**Percentage/number**
Questionnaires issued	80
Returned	60
Screened out	2
Effective number	58
Absolute response rate as a percentage	75%
Effective response rate	73%
Interviewees	15
Interviews accepted and conducted	10
Interview's acceptance rate	67%

Table 4.1 show that 80 questionnaires were issued out and 60 were returned. Two questionnaires were screened out because they were incomplete in some sections, so effectively 58 questionnaires were used for the study. The absolute response rate was 75% and the effective response rate was 73% which indicates a high response rate. In terms of interviews 15 people were invited and 10 accepted the interviews giving an acceptance rate of 67%. The response rate was quite positive to produce reliable findings which can be generalized to the entire institute.

4.3 Reliability Test

Reliability test measures how reliable is the instrument used and the data collected.

Table 4.2: Reliability statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.891	36

The results of reliability test on table 4.2 shows Cronbach's Alpha index of 0.891 this means that the instrument and data were reliable therefore, further tests can be done. Acceptable Cronbach's Alpha index must range between 0.7 and 1. The general rule of thumb is that a Cronbach's alpha of .70 and above is good, .80 and above is better, and .90 and above is best.

Challenges Associated with Students' Evaluations of Teaching

This section analyses the challenges associated with students' evaluation of lecturers' teaching. Analysis was done using communalities, total variance explained, scree plot and rotated component matrix.

Table 4.4: Communalities on challenges associated with students' evaluations of teaching
Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
Students' evaluations of teaching are biased	1.000	.782
They are subjective in nature as they depend on student opinions	1.000	.868
The responses from evaluations are unreliable.	1.000	.715
I do not have adequate time to complete them.	1.000	.701
They are not used to improve teaching and learning	1.000	.858
I am not knowledgeable to evaluate teaching and learning	1.000	.618
Ratings on lecturers are influenced by grade or mark expectations by students	1.000	.769
Students fear to be personally identified and victimized by lecturers	1.000	.829
Students' evaluation of teaching is influenced by course characteristics	1.000	.503
Students' ratings are influenced by lecturer characteristics	1.000	.750
Lecturer evaluations are not implemented at CUT	1.000	.769
No feedback is provided to us after lecturer evaluations	1.000	.761
I do not take students evaluation on teaching seriously	1.000	.804
Students are more preoccupied with studies instead of evaluations	1.000	.752
I face technological challenges in conducting student evaluations of teaching	1.000	.746
Administrators lack skills to analyses student ratings on lecturers	1.000	.590
Students' evaluation of teaching are invalid	1.000	.771

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

All the variables on table 4.4 show communalities that are high and are well loaded as per the extraction figures shown. This shows that students perceive evaluations on lecturers to be associated with challenges and their usefulness in improving teaching and learning is highly questionable. This is attributed to the allegation that they are biased by several factors like course characteristics, lecturers' physical characteristics, students' perceptions, and feedback mechanisms. This greatly compromise their validity and reliability. Literature confirms that students' evaluations of teaching are heavily biased and barely reflect effective teaching. Studies conducted by Hejase et al. (2013) further confirm that students' evaluations do not reflect effective teaching. Additionally, ratings by students can be influenced by other extraneous factors that may not be related to lecturer's effective teaching.

The influence of student evaluations on course quality and teaching is quite debatable due to concerns regarding their validity and reliability. Research conducted by Mart (2017) in Iraq confirmed that student evaluations cannot be applied as a sole measure of effective teaching, but such feedback can be used to improve quality of teaching. This suggests that student evaluations should be applied in combination with other tools like self- assessments, peer evaluations or performance appraisals. The study also revealed that undertaking evaluations is one way of motivating students and this obviously enhances their satisfaction with university educational services.

Table 4.5: Total variance explained on challenges associated with students' evaluations of teaching

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	5.720	33.647	33.647	5.720	33.647	33.647	4.928	28.990	28.990
2	3.380	19.881	53.528	3.380	19.881	53.528	2.909	17.114	46.104
3	2.274	13.375	66.903	2.274	13.375	66.903	2.531	14.891	60.995
4	1.214	7.141	74.044	1.214	7.141	74.044	2.218	13.049	74.044
5	.933	5.488	79.532						
6	.722	4.248	83.780						
7	.639	3.757	87.537						
8	.463	2.726	90.263						
9	.428	2.518	92.781						
10	.381	2.241	95.022						
11	.293	1.725	96.747						
12	.181	1.066	97.813						
13	.124	.731	98.544						
14	.096	.566	99.109						
15	.067	.392	99.501						
16	.056	.330	99.831						
17	.029	.169	100.000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Table 4.5 shows four components out of the seventeen which constitute 74.044% of the total variance. These means 4 components contributed much to the variance. These components best describe the challenges associated with students' evaluations on teaching done by lecturers. These components have eigenvalues higher than 1 and their values are 5.720, 3.380, 2.274 and 1.214 respectively. Component 1 is more outstanding as it has the highest eigenvalue of 5.720 including a percentage of 33.647% alone of the total variance. Figure 4.2 below further illustrates this variance.

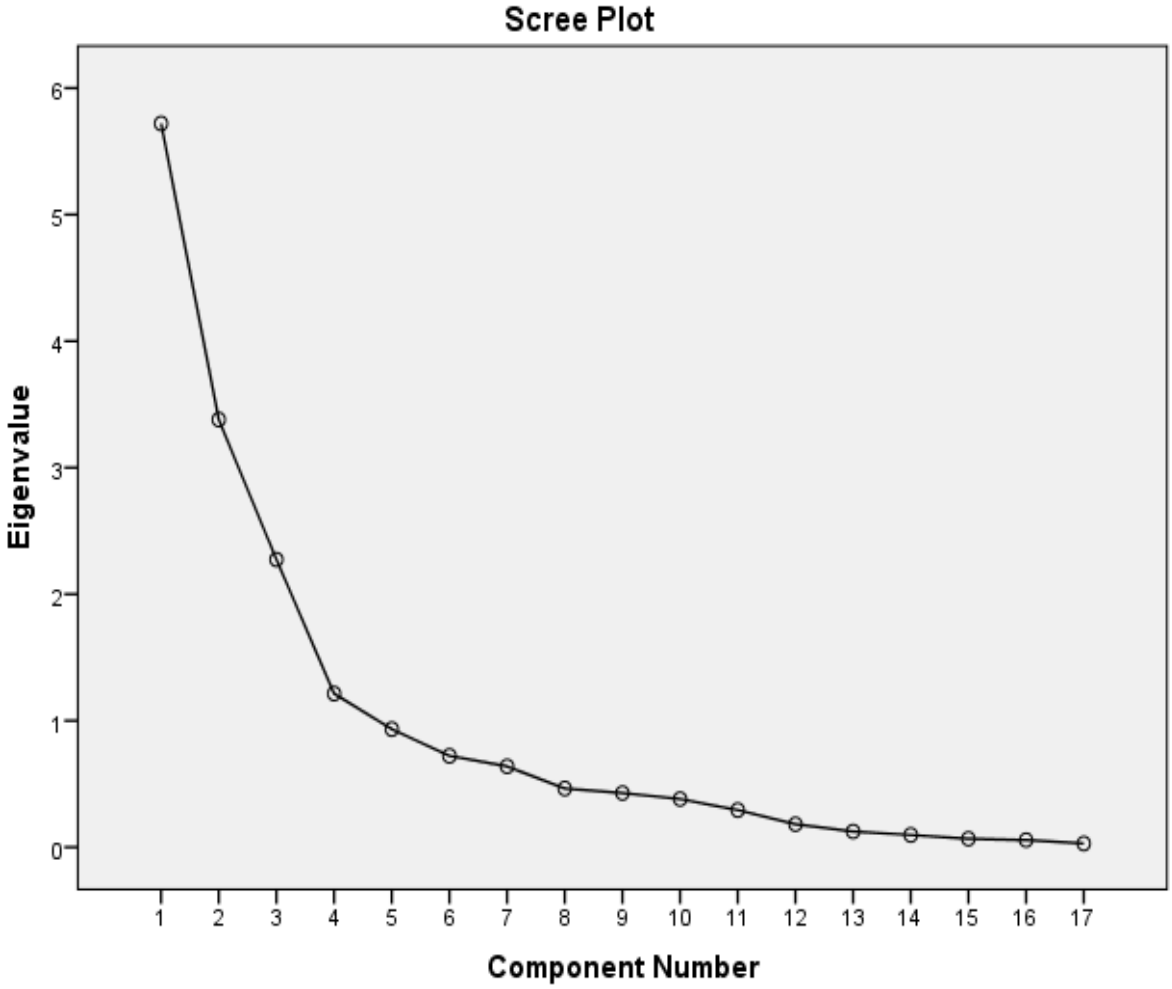

Figure 4.6: Scree plot on challenges associated with students' evaluations of teaching

Table 4.7: Rotated component matrix on challenges associated with students' evaluations of teaching

Rotated Component Matrix[a]

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Student's evaluations of teaching are biased	.611	-.102	.424	.468
They are subjective in nature as they depend on student opinions	.599	.688	.071	-.179
The responses from evaluations are unreliable.	.589	.111	.377	.461
I do not have adequate time to complete them.	.710	.369	-.197	.149
They are not used to improve teaching and learning	.097	.909	.092	.115
I am not knowledgeable to evaluate teaching and learning	.471	.618	.077	.095
Ratings on lecturers are influenced by grade or mark expectations by students	.248	-.250	.118	.794
Students fear to be personally identified and victimized by lecturers	.091	-.098	.901	.022
Students' evaluation of teaching are influenced by course characteristics	.644	.190	-.016	-.228

Students ratings are influenced by lecturer characteristics	-.315	.069	.798	.100
Lecturer evaluations are not implemented at CUT	-.317	.161	.139	.790
No feedback is provided to us after lecturer evaluations	-.266	.338	.631	.423
I do not take students evaluation on teaching seriously	.886	.040	-.117	.068
Students are more preoccupied with studies instead of evaluations	.076	.854	-.012	-.126
I face technological challenges in conducting student evaluations of teaching	.835	.078	-.024	-.203
Administrators lack skills to analyse student ratings on lecturers	.419	.208	.504	.342
Students evaluation of teaching are invalid	.834	.188	-.063	.189

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
a. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.

From table 4.7 above four variables which are loaded strongly on these four components. Through the rotated component matrix these variables can be identified. On component one the variable with the highest factor loadings has 0.886 and this variable is "I do not take students evaluation on teaching seriously". This means that when students evaluate their lecturers they do so without seriousness. It also means that students think that the information is not important, yet it is crucial for feedback to their lecturers and management and to improve on future lectures. Improvement of quality teaching depends on how lecturers receive, interpret and analyze SET responses (Ballantine, Packer & Borthwick, 2000).The response rate in terms of students who participate in lecturer evaluations is generally low in several universities globally due to several factors like overall satisfaction with evaluation form, absence from class, apathy, technical problems, and perceived lack of anonymity, inconvenience, lack of importance, inaccessibility and time of completion (Berk, 2012). More often, students are given lecturer evaluations by administrator to complete, but they simply ignore them.

Another serious difficulty in implementing student evaluation is that they are time consuming and compromise attention on other important commitments like learning, teaching, research, or community service. Universities are therefore challenged to provide incentives to students and lecturers in order to undertake evaluations for significant change to take place. On component two the highest factor loading is 0.909 and the variable is "They are not used to improve teaching and learning". This means that respondents perceive lecturer evaluations by students as not useful in improving teaching and learning of students. On component 3 the highest factor loading is 0.901 and the variable is "Students fear to be personally identified and victimized by lecturers".

This means these evaluations are done in fear, hence may not truly reflect the actual perception of students towards the lecturers' performance. Then on component four the highest factor loading is 0.794 and the variable is "Ratings on lecturers are influenced by grade or mark expectations by students". This means that students may rate lecturers incorrectly or in a way which they think may influence the lecturers to give them better exam marks. Stroebe (2020) emphasized that student evaluations contribute to poor teaching and grade inflation. Stroebe (2020) further argued that reliance on SET scores for evaluating teaching and learning may contribute, paradoxically, to a culture of less rigorous education since they are biased. Previous studies confirm that some lecturers try to influence student evaluation scores by 'watering down' course content and lowering grade standards. Interviews revealed that students are sceptical to participate on lecturer

evaluations because of lack of anonymity, possibility of victimization by lecturers and lack of student engagement in the process. More so, students would hesitate to partake in evaluations if they fear possible victimization and repercussions from lecturers (Mortelmans, Brockx & Spooren, 2013). More so, the fear of student criticism by lecturers also has potential to determine course content delivery and evaluation measures. Students expressed that, more often there is no discussion after the evaluations in order to improve learning and teaching. Additionally, students voiced that online student evaluations are adversely affected by inadequate network coverage, lack of computer skills and expensive data bundles.

5.0 FINDINGS

The study was motivated by desire to understand challenges associated with student evaluations on lecturers. Rotated Component Matrix showed that student evaluations on lecturers were biased, subjective, and unreliable. Generally, students did not have adequate time to complete them due to other academic commitments. Furthermore, students lacked adequate knowledge to evaluate teaching by lecturers. Worse still, the study revealed that student evaluations were biased by several variables like course characteristics, grade, or mark expectations. Generally, students did not take evaluations seriously and they also encountered technological challenges. Perceptions of students showed that they are not used to improve teaching and learning. In addition, students feared to be personally identified and victimized by lecturers.

5.1 CONCLUSIONS

The study confirmed that student evaluations of teaching are widely used method of evaluating faculty performance in the lecturer-room. They play a significant role from a didactic, pedagogical, administrative, and quality assurance perspective. They are also used for tenure, promotion and merit pay decisions of faculty members. Student evaluations are a useful tool to evaluate performance of lecturers and they are applied to enhance teaching and learning. Furthermore, they are valid measure of teaching performance. Student evaluations on lecturers are used for educational policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation. However, they are considered subjective, unreliable, invalid, and biased. Besides lacking adequate knowledge about them, students at Chinhoyi University were reluctant to participate in them since they consider them to be irrelevant to improved teaching and learning environment. More students feared reprisals and retaliations from lecturers in case they write negative comments. Student evaluation of lecturers are influenced by several unrelated factors which are not related to teaching thereby introducing bias.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The university advised to continue administering student evaluations of teaching since they have positive impact on their core-business of teaching and facilitating student learning. The university should educate, induct, train, and motivate their students to complete them. The university is advised to regularly revise their instruments of student evaluations on lecturers such that they are objective, valid, reliable, and impartial. Additionally, the university should communicate effectively to students regarding the purposes and objectives of administering lecturer evaluations in order to alleviate their fears and misconceptions. In order for them to have formative, diagnostic,

and summative role, student evaluations on lecturers should be implemented during the semester not the end of it as the current practice. Furthermore, student ratings should not be the sole and only measure of effective teaching but as part of a holistic assessment which includes peer assessments, observation, and self-assessments, among others. The university should adopt dialogue-based evaluations instead of quantitative methods of evaluations. Dialogue-based evaluations are more objective and developmental. They should conduct face to-face interviews with students as a way of evaluating teaching competence. The entity should involve students in developing instruments for evaluating lecturers. There should be effective consultation of all stakeholders including students, lecturers, and administration in developing, implementing, and evaluating lecturer ratings. More so, once they are administered there should be effective communication and feedback between students, lecturers, and administrative staff. The institution is advised to change the nature and format of student evaluations from being anonymous to being confidential in nature. The university is advised to implement technological awareness and training on all students, lecturers, and administrative staff on its new programmers especially lecturer ratings. The university is encouraged to compare and benchmark its instruments with those of other universities in Zimbabwe and abroad in order to enhance teaching, learning, comparability and competitiveness.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Gratitude is expressed to Chinhoyi University for providing access to undertake the study. The researcher also thanks all E business students who participated in the study. The research is partial fulfilment of Post Graduate Diploma in Higher Education at CUT.

REFERENCES

Ballantyne, R., Borthwick, J., & Packer, J. (2000). Beyond student evaluation of teaching: Identifying and addressing academic staff development needs. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, *25*(3), 221-236.

Belanger, C.H and Longden, B. (2009). The Effective Teacher's Characteristics as Perceived by Students. *Tertiary Education and Management* 15(4); 323-340.

Benton, S. L., & Ryalls, K. R. (2016). Challenging Misconceptions about Student Ratings of Instruction. IDEA Paper# 58. *IDEA Center, Inc.*

Beran, T., & Violato, C. (2005). Ratings of university teacher instruction: How much do student and course characteristics really matter? *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, *30*(6), 593-601.

Berk, R.A. (2012). Top 20 strategies to increase the online response rates of student rating scales. *International Journal of Technology in Teaching and learning*, 8, 98-107.

Borch, I., Sandvoll, R., & Risør, T. (2020). Discrepancies in purposes of student course evaluations: what does it mean to be "satisfied"? *Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability*, *32*(1), 83-102.

Chan, Y.F., & Shuhaily, O. (2011). A Case Study of Student Evaluations of Teaching in University. International Education Studies, 4(1), 44-50.

Chetsanga, C.J. (2000). An Analysis of the cause and effect of the brain drain in Zimbabwe. Harare SIRDE.

Chikazinga, W.W.N. (2018). Perceptions of Lecturers of Student Evaluations. *The International Educational Journal:* Comparative Perspectives, Vol.17, No.4.

Chireshe, R. (2011). Effective and in effective lecturers: University Students Perspective in Zimbabwe. Department of Further Teaching Education, University of South Africa. European Journal of Educational Research, Vol.3, No.3.

Economic Notebook (2011). The handbook for economic lecturers. University of Bristol.http://economicnotebook.ac.uk.

Erikson, M., Erikson, M. G., & Punzi, E. (2016). Student responses to a reflexive course evaluation. *Reflective Practice*, *17*(6), 663-675.

Felder, R. M. (1992). Random Thoughts: What Do They Know, Anyway? *Chemical Engineering Education*, *26*(3), 134-135.

Felton, J., Koper, P. T., Mitchell, J., & Stinson, M. (2008). Attractiveness, easiness and other issues: Student evaluations of professors on rate my professors. Com. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, *33*(1), 45-61.

Felton, J., Mitchell, J., & Stinson, M. (2005). Cultural differences in student evaluations of professors. Academy of Business Education Conference Proceedings. Retrieved December 2, 2007.

Goos, M., & Salomons, A. (2017). Measuring teaching quality in higher education: assessing selection bias in course evaluations. *Research in Higher Education*, *58*(4), 341-364.

Goos, M., Salomons, A. (2017). Measuring teaching quality in higher education: assessing selection bias in course evaluations. Res High Edu 58,341-364.

Hejase, A. J., Al Kaakour, R. S., Halawi, L. A., & Hejase, H. J. (2013). Students' perceptions of student evaluation of teaching (PET) process. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Education*, *3*(3), 565.

Hugh Feeley, T. (2002). Evidence of halo effects in student evaluations of communication instruction. *Communication Education*, *51*(3), 225-236.

Kilpatrick, A. (1997). "Another Look at Teaching Evaluations in American Junior Colleges" California: El Camino College.

Kozub, R.M. (2008). Students Evaluations of Faculty: Concerns and Possible Solutions. *Journal of College teaching & Learning.* University of Wisconsin, U.S.A.

Kozub, R.M. (2010). Relationship of course, Instructor, and student characteristics to dimensions of student ratings of teaching effectiveness in business schools. *American Journal of Business Education,* 3(1):33-40.

Machingambi, S., & Wadesango, N. (2011). Universities Lecturers' perceptions of student evaluation of their instructional practices. Anthropologist, 13(3)167-174.

Majoni, C. (2014). Challenges Facing University Education in Zimbabwe. *Greener Journal of Education and Training Studies*.Vol.2 (1) pp.020-024.

Mart, C. T. (2017). Student evaluations of teaching effectiveness in higher education. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, *7*(10), 57-61.

Mason, P. M., Steagall, J. W., & Fabritius, M. M. (1995). Student evaluations of faculty: A new procedure for using aggregate measures of performance. *Economics of Education Review*, *14*(4), 403-416.

Min, Q. & Baozhi, S. (1998). Factors affecting student's classroom teaching evaluations, Teaching and Learning in Medicine: vol. (10), No. (1), pp.12-15.

Murray, H. G. (1997). Does evaluation of teaching lead to improvement of teaching?. *The International Journal for Academic Development*, *2*(1), 8-23.

Seldon, P. (1993). The use and Abuse of student Ratings of Professors. *The Chronicle of Higher Education.*40 (1):40.

Spooren, P., Brockx, B., & Mortelmans, D. (2013). On the validity of student evaluation of teaching: The state of the art. *Review of Educational Research*, *83*(4), 598-642.

Stroebe, W. (2020). Student Evaluations of Teaching Encourages Poor Teaching and Contributes to Grade Inflation: A Theoretical and Empirical Analysis. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, *42*(4), 276-294.

Trout, P. A. (1997). What the Num providing a context for Numerical Student Evaluations of Courses. *Change: The magazine of higher learning*, *29*(5), 24-30.

Watchtel, H.K. (1998). Student evaluation of college teaching effectiveness: A brief review. Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education, 23(2), 191-210.

Wolfer, T. A., & Johnson, M. M. (2003). Re-evaluating student evaluation of teaching: The teaching evaluation form. *Journal of Social Work Education*, *39*(1), 111-121.

Young, K., Joines, J., Standish, T., & Gallagher, V. (2019). Student evaluations of teaching: the impact of faculty procedures on response rates. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, *44*(1), 37-49.

Zabaleta, F. (2007). The use and misuse of student evaluations of teaching. *Teaching in Higher Education*, *12*(1), 55-76.