

Listening to Students, Learning from Feedback: A Qualitative Evaluation of Faculty Performance in a Multi-Level Academic Setting

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Abstract:

The quality of teaching remains a critical determinant of student success and institutional effectiveness in higher education. As institutions strive to enhance instructional quality, student feedback has emerged as a vital component of faculty performance evaluation. While quantitative measures provide general indicators of teaching effectiveness, they often fail to capture the nuanced experiences and perceptions of students. This study employs a qualitative descriptive design, utilizing thematic analysis to explore and analyze open-ended feedback from students across Basic Education, College, and Graduate School subgroups during Academic Year 2023–2024. The analysis identified six dominant themes influencing students' perceptions of faculty performance: Student Engagement and Support, Instructional Delivery and Effectiveness, Classroom Management, Time Management and Punctuality, Professionalism and Attitude, and Feedback and Assessment. Results revealed that while these themes are consistently valued across academic levels, their specific manifestations and importance vary according to the developmental and academic needs of each subgroup. The findings underscore the necessity for differentiated and targeted faculty development programs that address the unique instructional demands of each academic level. This study contributes to the growing body of research advocating for the systematic use of qualitative feedback in faculty evaluation processes and the continuous improvement of teaching practices in higher education.

Keywords: Faculty Evaluation, Qualitative Feedback, Thematic Analysis, Teaching Effectiveness, Student Engagement, Faculty Development, Higher Education, Professional Development Programs

Introduction:

In the pursuit of academic excellence, higher education institutions continually seek effective methods to evaluate and enhance teaching quality. Student evaluations have long served as a cornerstone for assessing instructional effectiveness, providing insights that inform faculty development and pedagogical strategies. Traditionally, these evaluations have leaned heavily on quantitative measures, such as Likert-scale ratings, to gauge various aspects of teaching performance. While these metrics offer a broad overview, they often fall short in capturing the nuanced experiences and perceptions of students.

Recent scholarship underscores the value of qualitative feedback in providing a more comprehensive understanding of teaching effectiveness. Qualitative data, derived from open-ended student responses, can reveal specific areas of strength and opportunities for improvement that quantitative measures might overlook. For instance, a study by Spooren, Brockx, and Mortelmans (2013) highlights that while quantitative evaluations can indicate general satisfaction levels, qualitative comments often pinpoint particular teaching behaviors and classroom dynamics that significantly impact student learning.

Moreover, the integration of qualitative feedback into faculty evaluations aligns with the broader educational shift towards student-centered learning. By actively considering students' narratives, educators can tailor their teaching approaches to better meet learners' needs, thereby fostering a more engaging and effective educational environment. This approach is supported by research from Hernandez (2012), who found that instructors who engaged with student feedback were more likely to implement changes that enhanced student engagement and learning outcomes.

In the context of the Philippines, where educational institutions encompass a diverse range of academic levels—from Basic Education to Graduate School—the need for differentiated teaching strategies becomes even more pronounced. Each academic level presents unique challenges and expectations, necessitating a nuanced understanding of student feedback to inform faculty development effectively. However, there remains a paucity of research focusing on the comparative analysis of qualitative student feedback across these varied educational stages.

Given this backdrop, this study aims to fill this gap by conducting a thematic analysis of qualitative feedback collected from Basic Education, College, and Graduate School students. By identifying and comparing the dominant themes that emerge from student feedback across these academic levels, the study seeks to provide actionable insights that can inform targeted faculty development initiatives. Such an approach not only acknowledges the evolving expectations of students as they progress through different educational stages but also reinforces the importance of incorporating student voices into the continuous improvement of teaching practices.

Review of Related Literature:

Student evaluations of teaching (SETs) have long been considered a critical tool in the assessment of instructional effectiveness within higher education institutions. As part of institutional quality assurance systems, SETs are designed to capture student perceptions of faculty performance and overall course experience. These evaluations typically comprise two key components: quantitative metrics, such as Likert-scale ratings, and qualitative feedback in the form of open-ended narrative comments (Spooren, Brockx, & Mortelmans, 2013). While the former provides standardized data for comparison, the latter offers a more textured and context-rich account of student experiences. However, the reliability and fairness of SETs—especially the quantitative component—have been the subject of increasing scrutiny. Research has shown that student evaluations may be influenced by non-instructional factors such as course difficulty, class size, and instructor gender, race, or personality traits (Uttl, White, & Gonzalez, 2017; Boring, Ottoboni, & Stark, 2016). For instance, Uttl et al. (2017) conducted a meta-analysis and found little to no correlation between high evaluation scores and actual student learning, raising questions about the validity of using SETs as a proxy for teaching effectiveness. Similarly, Linse (2017) warned that biases in student evaluations may disproportionately affect underrepresented groups in academia, making it essential to interpret SET scores with caution.

Despite these limitations, qualitative feedback from students remains a powerful, often underutilized, source of insight into teaching practices. Narrative comments can uncover critical details about an instructor's clarity, enthusiasm, fairness, classroom management, and responsiveness—attributes that may not be easily measured through numerical ratings alone. Qualitative feedback can also reflect emotional engagement, inclusivity, and supportiveness—factors that strongly influence student motivation and retention (Hornstein, 2017).

To analyze such qualitative feedback systematically, researchers have turned to thematic analysis, a flexible method for identifying, organizing, and interpreting patterns or themes within textual data. Braun and Clarke (2006) provided a widely adopted six-phase framework for thematic analysis: familiarization with data, coding, theme development, theme review, defining and naming themes, and writing the report. This approach allows for the extraction of consistent themes across numerous open-ended responses, thereby transforming anecdotal comments into evidence-based insights (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The application of thematic analysis to SETs has gained traction in recent literature. For example, Zhao et al. (2022) conducted a comprehensive review of how institutions are increasingly using thematic coding to detect recurrent strengths and weaknesses in teaching practices. Their study emphasized that the approach is particularly effective when triangulated with other evaluation methods such as peer reviews and teaching portfolios. Similarly, Hoon, Oliver, Szpakowska, and Newton (2015) demonstrated that using structured qualitative analysis techniques—such as "Stop, Start, Continue" frameworks—leads to more actionable and constructive student feedback.

Nevertheless, there are challenges in interpreting and using qualitative feedback effectively. Students may lack the pedagogical knowledge to articulate feedback with precision, or may use evaluations to vent frustrations unrelated to teaching quality (Clayson, 2009). To address these concerns, institutions are advised to guide students on providing constructive and focused feedback and to contextualize evaluations within broader pedagogical standards and institutional goals (Theall & Franklin, 2001; Berk, 2013).

More recent studies argue for a multi-modal approach to faculty evaluation—one that does not rely solely on student ratings. Incorporating peer assessments, self-reflection tools, and longitudinal classroom observations can yield a more comprehensive and accurate portrayal of instructional effectiveness (Kreitzer & Sweet-Cushman, 2021). While SETs provide important student-centered data, they are best understood as part of a broader evidence-based system for continuous faculty improvement.

While SETs—particularly when enriched with qualitative feedback—offer critical insights into the learning experience, they must be interpreted with care. Institutions must ensure their proper use through methodological rigor, bias mitigation, and triangulation with other evaluative data. When executed properly, thematic analysis of student narratives not only supports faculty development but also fosters a teaching culture grounded in reflection, responsiveness, and continuous growth.

Methodology:**Epistemology**

This study adopts a constructivist epistemological stance, recognizing that knowledge is shaped through individual experiences and social interactions. Student feedback is viewed as a rich, subjective narrative that reflects diverse perceptions of teaching effectiveness within the learning environment. Rather than seeking an objective evaluation of faculty performance, the study explores multiple realities constructed by students and faculty, acknowledging the influence of institutional culture and personal experiences.

Guided by the principles of Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Berger and Luckmann (1966), this perspective values the lived experiences of participants as valid sources of knowledge. The use of qualitative thematic analysis enables the identification of recurring patterns in student feedback, providing insights that inform responsive and contextually relevant faculty development programs. Through this lens, faculty improvement is understood as a dynamic, socially constructed process that evolves from ongoing reflection and feedback.

Theoretical Tenets

This study is grounded in the interconnected theoretical perspectives of Constructivism, Adult Learning Theory (Andragogy), and Experiential Learning Theory, which collectively inform its exploration of faculty development needs through student feedback.

At its core, the research adopts a constructivist worldview, which holds that knowledge is not discovered in an objective sense but is actively constructed through social interactions and lived experiences (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). In the context of higher education, this perspective acknowledges that perceptions of teaching effectiveness and professional development needs are shaped by the unique experiences of students and faculty members within specific institutional and cultural environments. Rather than viewing feedback as a set of static, objective evaluations, this study understands student responses as meaningful narratives that reflect their constructed realities within the learning environment.

Complementing this epistemological foundation is Knowles' (1980) Adult Learning Theory (Andragogy), which emphasizes that adult learners—including faculty members—are self-directed individuals who bring with them a wealth of personal and professional experiences. According to this theory, effective professional development must be relevant to immediate challenges, problem-centered, and focused on real-world application. This tenet aligns with the study's intent to analyze authentic student feedback to identify actionable areas for faculty growth, ensuring that development initiatives are meaningful and immediately beneficial to teaching practice.

In addition, Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Theory provides further grounding by highlighting the cyclical nature of adult learning, which involves concrete experiences, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. Within the scope of this study, faculty development is seen as an ongoing, reflective process where educators not only receive feedback but also actively engage in applying and refining new teaching strategies based on those insights. This continuous loop of reflection and experimentation ensures that professional growth is dynamic and responsive to the evolving needs of students.

Together, these theoretical perspectives provide a comprehensive framework for understanding how knowledge about teaching effectiveness is constructed and how faculty development programs can be more effectively designed. By recognizing the social, experiential, and reflective dimensions of both learning and teaching, the study advocates for development programs that are contextually relevant, grounded in authentic feedback, and responsive to the lived experiences of both students and faculty.

Methodological Perspective

This study employs a qualitative descriptive design utilizing thematic analysis to examine student feedback as a basis for faculty evaluation and professional development. The qualitative descriptive approach is selected for its pragmatic focus on providing straightforward summaries of participant experiences and perceptions without extensive theoretical abstraction (Sandelowski, 2000). This design is well-suited for studies aimed at informing institutional practices and policy enhancements, such as the development of targeted faculty improvement programs.

Sampling, Subject, Setting, & Ethical Considerations

This study employs a purposive sampling technique to select relevant qualitative feedback data for analysis. Purposive sampling is appropriate for qualitative studies that aim to extract meaningful insights from information-rich sources (Patton, 2002). The feedback utilized in this study was drawn from existing faculty evaluation results

conducted by the institution across various academic units and levels. The sample includes feedback collected during the most recent academic year to ensure the relevance and timeliness of the data.

The selection criteria for the feedback data focused on completeness, clarity, and relevance to the evaluation of faculty performance. Feedback that contained generalized or non-informative comments was excluded from the analysis to maintain the integrity and depth of the thematic exploration.

The subjects of this research are the qualitative feedback comments provided by enrolled students across different academic programs. While students are the original sources of the feedback, their role in the study is indirect, as the research focuses on analyzing their evaluative responses rather than engaging them directly in interviews or surveys. The faculty members evaluated through this feedback are also considered as subjects of analysis. However, no personal identifiers are used, and the study does not aim to evaluate individual faculty performance but rather to examine recurring themes related to teaching effectiveness and areas for professional development at the institutional level.

The study is conducted within the context of a private higher education institution in the Philippines, offering basic education, senior high school, undergraduate, and graduate programs. The institution regularly administers faculty evaluations that collect both quantitative ratings and qualitative feedback from students. This existing feedback system provides a valuable source of data for analyzing students' perceptions of faculty performance and identifying areas for instructional improvement.

The setting is characterized by a diverse academic environment, including general education courses, specialized professional programs, and various learning modalities, all of which contribute to the richness of the collected feedback.

This research strictly adheres to established ethical standards concerning the use of institutional data and the protection of participant confidentiality. Although the study utilizes pre-existing feedback, all data were anonymized to ensure that no personal identifiers of students or faculty members were accessed or included in the analysis. Institutional permission was formally secured prior to the commencement of the study, and all procedures were carried out in compliance with institutional policies on data privacy and research ethics. The principle of non-maleficence was upheld throughout the research process, ensuring that the study was conducted solely for academic and institutional improvement purposes and that no harm—whether reputational or otherwise—would result for any faculty member or student. Furthermore, the reporting of results focuses on aggregated findings, highlighting general themes and institutional insights rather than evaluating or disclosing individual faculty performance. In addition, the study complies with the ethical principles outlined in the Philippine National Ethical Guidelines for Health and Health-Related Research (2017), as applicable to social science research, thereby ensuring respect for human dignity and responsible management of institutional data.

Data Collection Methods

This study utilized existing qualitative feedback gathered through the institution's regular faculty evaluation system for Academic Year 2023–2024. The evaluations, administered at the end of each academic term, included open-ended questions designed to capture students' perceptions of faculty performance, instructional effectiveness, and areas for improvement. These feedback forms provided a rich source of qualitative data, allowing the researcher to analyze authentic student perspectives without the need for additional data collection instruments.

The data consisted of written comments voluntarily provided by students across various academic programs and year levels. Only feedback relevant to faculty performance and professional development was included in the analysis. Comments that were vague, incomplete, or unrelated to the research objectives were excluded to maintain the quality and focus of the data set.

As the study primarily relied on secondary data, no interviews, focus group discussions, or surveys were conducted. This approach ensured the non-intrusive nature of the research, allowing for the examination of naturally occurring feedback within its original context. The use of existing institutional data for Academic Year 2023–2024 also ensured efficiency in data collection while providing insights that are directly applicable to ongoing faculty development efforts.

Data Analysis Process and Procedures

The study employed a thematic analysis approach to systematically examine the qualitative feedback collected during Academic Year 2023–2024. Thematic analysis was chosen for its flexibility and effectiveness in identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns within qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This method allowed the researcher to extract meaningful themes related to faculty performance and professional development needs, providing actionable insights for institutional improvement.

The analysis followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework. First, the researcher engaged in data familiarization by thoroughly reading and re-reading the feedback to gain an in-depth understanding of the content and initial impressions. In the second phase, initial codes were generated by systematically identifying significant words, phrases, and ideas related to faculty strengths and areas for improvement. These codes served as the foundation for the next phase, where the researcher began searching for themes by grouping related codes into broader thematic categories such as instructional competence, communication effectiveness, classroom management, and student engagement.

During the reviewing themes phase, the initial thematic groupings were refined to ensure internal consistency and clear distinctions between categories. Themes that lacked sufficient supporting data or were too similar to others were merged or redefined. In the fifth phase, the researcher proceeded with defining and naming themes, ensuring that each theme accurately reflected the patterns present in the feedback and aligned with the study's objectives. Finally, in the producing the report phase, the results were organized into a comprehensive narrative, with representative excerpts from the feedback data included to illustrate key findings and support interpretations.

To ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the analysis, the study applied Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria for qualitative research, specifically focusing on credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability. Peer validation of the coding process was conducted to minimize researcher bias and enhance the reliability of the findings. Additionally, triangulation was performed by comparing feedback across multiple academic departments and program levels to identify recurring themes and ensure that the analysis captured a broad and balanced perspective on faculty performance.

Findings and Discussion:

The thematic analysis of qualitative feedback collected from Basic Education, College, and Graduate School students surfaced six dominant themes that collectively reflect the key dimensions of faculty performance. These themes—Student Engagement and Support, Instructional Delivery and Effectiveness, Classroom Management, Time Management and Punctuality, Professionalism and Attitude, and Feedback and Assessment—represent the competencies that students consider critical for effective teaching across all levels of education. While the emphasis on each theme varied depending on the academic subgroup, these core areas consistently appeared in the feedback, demonstrating their universal importance in shaping the learning experience.

Student engagement emerged as the most frequently highlighted theme across all subgroups, albeit with different interpretations depending on the academic level. In Basic Education, engagement is centered on the teacher's ability to foster a warm, nurturing, and emotionally supportive classroom environment. Younger students value teachers who show empathy, kindness, and attentiveness to their individual needs, helping them build confidence and a love for learning.

At the college level, student engagement shifts toward the facilitation of intellectually stimulating environments where critical thinking and independent inquiry are encouraged. Students expect faculty members to design interactive lessons that promote active participation and allow them to apply theoretical concepts in meaningful ways. In graduate programs, while direct emotional support is less emphasized, students highly value intellectual mentorship and the creation of spaces where advanced academic discourse is encouraged. Graduate students view faculty members not only as instructors but also as academic and professional mentors who support their research endeavors and career aspirations.

Instructional Delivery and Effectiveness

Effective instructional delivery is universally recognized as a critical component of teaching excellence. Across all subgroups, students expect faculty members to demonstrate mastery of their subject matter and to employ teaching strategies that facilitate meaningful learning. However, the specific expectations vary with academic maturity.

In Basic Education, instructional effectiveness involves simplifying complex ideas into digestible lessons using relatable examples and engaging activities appropriate to the developmental level of young learners. For college students, the emphasis is on content mastery and the use of diverse pedagogical methods that accommodate different learning styles. Students at this level also expect lessons to be organized, logically sequenced, and enriched with real-world applications.

At the graduate level, instructional effectiveness is associated with the integration of cutting-edge research, advanced theoretical perspectives, and professional practices relevant to specialized fields. Graduate students expect faculty to move beyond textbook content and facilitate high-level discussions that challenge their thinking and contribute to their development as scholars and professionals.

Classroom Management

Classroom management is a consistently emerging theme across all academic levels, though its manifestations differ based on the characteristics of the learners. In Basic Education, classroom management is often concerned with maintaining order, setting clear behavioral expectations, and creating structured environments that foster positive learning behaviors.

In college, students expect faculty to manage classroom discussions effectively, ensure academic focus, and create an environment where respectful dialogue and intellectual curiosity thrive. Effective management also includes handling disruptive behaviors in mature ways that do not detract from the learning experience.

In graduate programs, classroom management takes the form of guiding advanced academic debates and ensuring that discussions remain focused, constructive, and grounded in scholarly inquiry. Faculty are expected to facilitate deep conversations while maintaining an environment conducive to collaborative research and critical analysis.

Time Management and Punctuality

Time management and punctuality emerged as significant concerns, particularly at the college and graduate levels. Students across all subgroups expressed expectations that faculty begin and end classes on time, make efficient use of instructional periods, and adhere to agreed schedules for consultations and academic activities.

In Basic Education, time management is crucial for establishing consistent routines that help young learners stay focused and engaged. In college, time management is closely linked to academic discipline, with students expecting faculty to deliver lessons within the allotted time and avoid unnecessary delays that compromise their schedules. Graduate students, who often balance academic commitments with professional and personal responsibilities, are particularly sensitive to faculty time management. They expect prompt feedback on research outputs and adherence to agreed timelines for thesis and dissertation advising, viewing delays as detrimental to their academic progress and professional development.

Professionalism and Attitude

Professionalism and attitude were consistently highlighted in feedback across all levels. In Basic Education, this theme is closely tied to teachers serving as role models, exhibiting patience, fairness, and respect toward students. Teachers' professional demeanor significantly influences the character formation of young learners.

At the college level, students expect faculty members to conduct themselves with respect, demonstrate fairness in grading, and engage students in a manner that promotes academic integrity and mutual respect. Professional behavior is seen as an essential element of a positive learning environment.

Graduate students view professionalism through the lens of mentorship and academic leadership. Faculty members are expected to uphold the highest standards of research ethics, model scholarly excellence, and guide students through the complexities of academic research and professional practice. Their professional conduct plays a crucial role in shaping the students' academic identities and future career trajectories.

Feedback and Assessment

The theme of feedback and assessment, while less emphasized in Basic Education, was a critical concern at the college and graduate levels. Younger students benefit from immediate reinforcement and clear directions for improvement, but often lack the language to express specific feedback needs.

In higher education, however, students explicitly expressed the importance of receiving timely, constructive, and detailed feedback on academic work. College students expect feedback that helps them understand their strengths and areas for improvement, while graduate students require highly specific feedback to refine their research projects, academic writing, and critical thinking skills. Delayed or insufficient feedback was frequently identified as a barrier to academic success, particularly among students engaged in capstone projects, theses, and dissertations.

Emerging Themes by Academic Subgroup

The Basic Education subgroup highlighted themes that reflect the developmental needs and learning behaviors characteristic of younger students. Within this subgroup, feedback frequently revealed that classroom interactions are heavily influenced by the emotional climate established by teachers. Students responded positively to teachers who made learning enjoyable and who demonstrated patience when handling mistakes and behavioral challenges.

The limited attention span of younger learners further amplifies the need for engaging classroom activities, creative instructional strategies, and a structured learning environment that provides clear expectations.

In this context, classroom management is not just about maintaining order but about creating routines that foster a sense of security and predictability. Time management practices in this subgroup are closely tied to transitions between activities and the effective pacing of lessons to maintain engagement. Professionalism, from the perspective of young students and their guardians, often centers on the teacher's warmth and approachability, which have a profound impact on student confidence and willingness to participate in classroom activities.

While feedback and assessment are not yet deeply reflective at this stage, students benefit greatly from immediate recognition of their efforts and consistent reinforcement, which fosters positive attitudes toward learning.

In the College subgroup, the feedback reflected a transition from emotionally driven learning experiences to a focus on intellectual engagement and academic competence. Students at this level articulated more critical observations about faculty performance, particularly regarding instructional clarity and the practical relevance of lessons. They highlighted the expectation for instructors to serve not only as knowledge providers but also as facilitators of independent inquiry and critical thinking.

Student engagement, in this context, is less about emotional connection and more about intellectual challenge. Faculty are expected to employ case studies, real-world examples, and collaborative activities that promote higher-order thinking. Classroom management shifts toward maintaining productive academic discourse and minimizing distractions that derail focused discussions.

Time management becomes more consequential at this level, as students balance academic requirements with part-time work, internships, and extracurricular commitments. Delays in providing feedback and missed consultation schedules were frequently noted as sources of frustration, often affecting academic performance and project deadlines.

Professionalism is assessed through the lens of academic fairness, respect for student diversity, and the ability to model professional behaviors that prepare students for their eventual entry into the workforce.

Graduate students offered feedback that reflects their advanced academic standing and heightened expectations for faculty mentorship. Unlike the lower subgroups, graduate students are primarily concerned with the intellectual rigor of their learning experiences and the faculty's ability to guide them through complex research processes.

Classroom management in the graduate context involves facilitating scholarly debates, managing differing perspectives within research discussions, and ensuring that academic sessions remain focused on deep analysis and critical inquiry. Students expect that their instructors create spaces for collaborative exploration of advanced theoretical frameworks and their application to real-world professional challenges.

Time management takes on heightened significance as graduate students often juggle academic responsibilities with demanding professional roles. Efficient use of class time and prompt, detailed feedback on research outputs are essential for their academic progression and timely completion of theses or dissertations.

Feedback and assessment at this level are not simply about grading but about mentorship—providing constructive, research-informed critiques that refine students' academic writing, research methodologies, and theoretical applications. Professionalism, from the graduate students' perspective, is deeply intertwined with academic leadership and mentorship, with faculty members expected to model research integrity and foster networks that support students' career advancement.

The comparative analysis of feedback from Basic Education, College, and Graduate School students reveals both shared and distinct expectations for faculty performance, shaped by the learners' developmental stages, academic maturity, and professional aspirations. While the six dominant themes—Student Engagement and Support, Instructional Delivery and Effectiveness, Classroom Management, Time Management and Punctuality, Professionalism and Attitude, and Feedback and Assessment—cut across all levels, their manifestations and relative importance vary significantly across subgroups.

In the Basic Education context, the learning environment is heavily influenced by the emotional and relational dynamics between teachers and students. Engagement is primarily defined by the teacher's ability to create a welcoming and nurturing atmosphere that promotes emotional security. Faculty are viewed not just as instructors but as primary socialization agents who model values, discipline, and positive behavior. Instructional delivery at this level focuses on breaking down complex ideas into manageable concepts, using play-based learning, storytelling, and visual aids to sustain attention and promote curiosity. Classroom management is highly structured, with clear routines and behavior expectations to provide stability for young learners. Feedback is largely centered on immediate praise and encouragement, fostering motivation through recognition rather than critical evaluation.

By contrast, the College subgroup reflects a significant shift toward academic rigor and intellectual independence. Here, engagement moves beyond emotional connection to focus on cognitive stimulation and the relevance of instruction to real-world applications. Students expect faculty to demonstrate subject mastery and to challenge them with analytical tasks that develop higher-order thinking skills. Instructional delivery becomes more varied and complex, incorporating case analyses, project-based learning, and cross-disciplinary approaches. Classroom management focuses on facilitating meaningful dialogue and maintaining academic focus amidst larger class sizes and diverse learning preferences. Time management and punctuality become more critical, as college students often face competing academic, professional, and personal obligations. Delayed feedback and poor scheduling directly affect their ability to meet deadlines and complete academic requirements. Professionalism is measured by fairness in assessments, responsiveness to student concerns, and the ability to model behaviors aligned with future professional roles.

In the Graduate School context, the nature of faculty-student interaction transforms again, placing a strong emphasis on mentorship, scholarly leadership, and professional guidance. Engagement is framed within the context of intellectual collaboration, where faculty members are expected to guide students through complex theoretical debates and advanced research methodologies. Instructional delivery prioritizes cutting-edge knowledge, integration of research findings, and practical applications within specialized fields. Classroom management is less about controlling behavior and more about structuring productive academic discourse that challenges students to contribute original ideas and critical perspectives.

Time management assumes critical importance at this level, particularly in the supervision of research outputs, thesis advising, and project completion. Graduate students, often balancing demanding careers with their studies, rely on faculty to provide timely and constructive feedback to facilitate their academic progression. In this context, feedback is no longer limited to course performance but extends to the refinement of scholarly work that has implications for future academic publications and professional practice. Professionalism is perceived as a blend of academic integrity, leadership in research, and the capacity to mentor students toward both academic excellence and career advancement.

Across all subgroups, it is evident that while certain competencies remain universally important, their expressions and priorities evolve with the learner's stage of academic and personal development. Basic Education emphasizes emotional support and character formation; College prioritizes critical thinking, academic preparedness, and professionalism; Graduate School demands scholarly mentorship, intellectual rigor, and research excellence.

Conclusion:

This study sought to explore and analyze qualitative feedback provided by students across different academic subgroups—Basic Education, College, and Graduate School—during the Academic Year 2023–2024, with the aim of assessing faculty performance and identifying areas for professional development. Through a systematic thematic analysis, the study identified six dominant themes that characterize students' perceptions of effective teaching: Student Engagement and Support, Instructional Delivery and Effectiveness, Classroom Management, Time Management and Punctuality, Professionalism and Attitude, and Feedback and Assessment.

The findings reveal that while these themes are universally valued across all academic levels, their relative importance and manifestations vary considerably depending on the learners' developmental stages, academic maturity, and professional aspirations.

In Basic Education, the results underscored the importance of nurturing environments where emotional support, patience, and character modeling are critical. Teachers at this level are expected to foster curiosity through engaging instructional strategies and provide immediate positive reinforcement that motivates young learners. Classroom management and structured routines play a vital role in supporting students' focus and behavioral development. For the College subgroup, the emphasis shifted toward intellectual stimulation, academic rigor, and real-world application of knowledge. Students expressed higher expectations for instructional competence, critical thinking facilitation, and timely academic support. Faculty professionalism was particularly associated with fairness in evaluations, respect for diversity, and preparation of students for future career roles.

In the Graduate School subgroup, the findings highlighted the need for faculty members to serve as academic mentors and research leaders. Graduate students expect faculty to demonstrate advanced content mastery, facilitate complex scholarly discourse, and provide detailed, constructive feedback on research outputs. Professionalism, at this level, is measured by faculty's ability to guide students through rigorous academic processes and support their development as scholars and professionals.

The study further concluded that faculty development initiatives must be differentiated and strategically designed to address the unique instructional demands and relational expectations of each academic subgroup. A uniform

approach to professional development fails to address the specific competencies required to meet the evolving needs of diverse student populations. Institutions must, therefore, develop targeted programs that enhance not only instructional effectiveness but also emotional intelligence, classroom management, research mentorship, and professional conduct appropriate to each educational level.

Finally, the study affirms the value of qualitative feedback as a powerful tool for faculty evaluation and continuous improvement. When systematically analyzed, student feedback offers actionable insights that can inform institutional strategies for enhancing teaching effectiveness and improving the overall quality of education. By placing the authentic voices of students at the center of faculty development efforts, institutions can foster a culture of continuous growth, responsiveness, and excellence in education.

Implications for Practice and Research

The results of this study present significant implications for institutional leadership, academic affairs offices, and faculty development units. The clear distinctions in student expectations across academic subgroups underscore the importance of designing differentiated faculty development programs that are responsive to the specific teaching competencies required at each level of education.

For Basic Education, faculty training should prioritize strategies that foster emotional support, classroom engagement, and the development of age-appropriate instructional methods. Programs focusing on child psychology, creative pedagogy, and behavioral management techniques would greatly enhance teacher effectiveness in this context.

In the College setting, faculty development initiatives should emphasize advanced instructional design, facilitation of critical thinking, and integration of real-world applications into the curriculum. Workshops on active learning strategies, inclusive classroom practices, and assessment literacy will help instructors better meet the diverse learning needs of undergraduate students.

For Graduate School faculty, professional development must go beyond pedagogical training to include research mentorship, academic leadership, and scholarly publishing guidance. Faculty members must be equipped to supervise complex research projects, provide constructive feedback on scholarly work, and mentor students toward professional and academic success. Institutional policies should also support faculty participation in research capability-building programs and collaborations with external research institutions.

Additionally, institutional leaders should recognize the value of systematically incorporating qualitative feedback into faculty evaluation systems. Student feedback, when analyzed rigorously, provides actionable insights that quantitative measures alone cannot capture. Embedding such feedback into performance appraisal processes can promote a culture of continuous improvement and accountability.

This study highlights the need for continued exploration of how qualitative feedback can inform faculty evaluation and development. Future research may focus on developing standardized qualitative evaluation frameworks that allow for consistent analysis of open-ended feedback while minimizing subjectivity in interpretation.

Longitudinal studies are also recommended to assess the impact of faculty development programs designed based on student feedback. Such studies could determine whether targeted interventions lead to measurable improvements in teaching effectiveness and student learning outcomes over time.

Moreover, future research could expand the scope of inquiry to include other stakeholder perspectives, such as peer evaluations, alumni feedback, and employer assessments of graduates. This multi-perspective approach would provide a more holistic view of faculty effectiveness and the long-term impact of instructional practices.

Finally, comparative studies across different institutional types—public and private, large and small institutions—could yield valuable insights into how institutional context influences both faculty development needs and the effectiveness of various faculty evaluation practices. Exploring these areas will contribute to the advancement of more responsive, evidence-based approaches to faculty performance management and educational quality assurance.

Limitations

While this study provides valuable insights into the use of qualitative feedback for assessing faculty performance and informing professional development programs, several limitations must be acknowledged.

First, the study relied exclusively on secondary data gathered through existing institutional feedback mechanisms. As such, the feedback was limited to the information voluntarily provided by students in response to open-ended

survey questions. The absence of direct engagement with participants through interviews or focus group discussions restricted the researcher's ability to probe deeper into the underlying reasons behind certain feedback statements. This may have limited the richness and contextual depth of the data.

Second, the feedback collected was primarily focused on students' immediate experiences with faculty performance during a specific academic year (2023–2024). As a result, the data may reflect short-term perceptions rather than long-term evaluations of instructional effectiveness. Students' emotional states, recent classroom experiences, or specific incidents may have influenced their feedback at the time of evaluation.

Third, the study did not account for potential variations in feedback quality across academic programs and departments. Some areas may have had more comprehensive and detailed feedback, while others may have provided limited or generalized responses. This imbalance may have affected the consistency of thematic analysis across academic subgroups.

Fourth, while thematic analysis is a robust method for organizing and interpreting qualitative data, it is inherently subject to researcher interpretation and potential bias. Although measures were taken to ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the analysis through peer validation, the subjective nature of coding and theme identification remains a methodological limitation.

Lastly, the findings of this study are based on feedback from a single private higher education institution and may not be fully generalizable to other educational settings with differing institutional cultures, faculty profiles, and student populations. Caution should be exercised in applying these results beyond the context of the institution studied.

Recommendations for Future Research

Building on the findings and recognizing the limitations of this study, several important directions for future research are proposed to advance the understanding and application of faculty evaluation practices. These recommendations aim to strengthen the use of qualitative feedback in guiding faculty development and improving instructional effectiveness across academic levels.

First, it is recommended that future studies adopt mixed-methods research designs. While this study focused on qualitative feedback, integrating quantitative approaches would provide a more comprehensive understanding of faculty performance. Quantitative data can offer measurable trends and general patterns, while qualitative feedback provides the contextual depth needed to interpret those trends meaningfully. Together, these methods can offer a more holistic evaluation of teaching effectiveness.

Second, there is a need for longitudinal studies that examine the long-term effects of faculty development programs informed by student feedback. Tracking changes in faculty instructional practices and evaluating the impact of development initiatives over multiple academic years would provide stronger evidence of their effectiveness. Such studies would also help determine whether improvements in teaching practices are sustained and whether these lead to measurable enhancements in student learning outcomes.

In addition, future research should explore the perspectives of multiple stakeholders, including alumni, employers of graduates, academic peers, and institutional leaders. Relying solely on student feedback provides only one dimension of faculty performance. Gathering insights from those who interact with graduates and faculty members beyond the classroom can offer a more balanced and comprehensive evaluation of teaching competencies and professional effectiveness.

Developing standardized qualitative feedback instruments is also a critical area for further exploration. Ensuring that feedback is consistently structured and clearly articulated across departments and academic programs would improve the quality of data collected for analysis. Standardized tools can help reduce variability in the depth and relevance of feedback, making it easier for institutions to systematically analyze qualitative responses and apply the results to faculty development strategies.

Furthermore, research examining the influence of institutional culture on faculty evaluation processes is recommended. Different governance structures, leadership practices, and organizational climates may affect how feedback is collected, interpreted, and integrated into faculty development efforts. Understanding these institutional factors could help identify best practices for creating supportive environments that encourage faculty engagement with evaluation processes.

Comparative studies across diverse types of institutions—such as public and private, large and small, and faith-based and secular—would also provide valuable insights into how contextual factors shape the implementation and

outcomes of faculty evaluation systems. Identifying effective practices that can be adapted to varying institutional environments would contribute significantly to improving teaching quality across the broader educational landscape.

Lastly, future research should explore faculty perceptions of student feedback. Investigating how faculty members view and respond to qualitative evaluations could reveal important factors that influence their willingness to engage in reflective practice and professional development. Understanding potential barriers, such as perceived biases in student feedback or resistance to critical evaluations, is essential for designing effective feedback systems that faculty members view as constructive and actionable.

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