Teachers' Performance Evaluation by Students: An Assessment of the Practices and Difference in Individually and in Groups Evaluation in Arba Minch University, Ethiopia

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Abstract: *The main purpose of this research is to investigate the practices and the existence of variation in results of teachers' performance evaluation by students in individually and in groups in Arba Minch University. A mixed method of both qualitative and quantitative design was employed in the study. Data for the study have been collected from 947 undergraduate regular students who selected through simple random technique, and from 55 heads of departments and 108 senior teachers who selected via availability sampling technique. A questionnaire, interview and document observation were used as tools to collect necessary information for the study. Qualitative description, percentage, and pie chart were employed to analyze the data collected through interview. Mean, standard deviation, and an independent t-test was employed to examine the difference in teacher's performance evaluation by students in individually and in groups. It was found that there was no consistency across departments in time of evaluation and feedback provision, student selection for teacher's performance evaluation work in the existing evaluation approach in the university. Based on the findings, it was recommended that detail and clear guideline should be prepared by Academic Affairs Vice President Office of the university together with Institutional Quality Enhancement Directorate and School of Pedagogical and Behavioral Sciences to establish a flatform for all departments and faculties to follow the same procedure in carrying out teacher's performance evaluation by students.*

Keywords: Teacher Performance, Individual Evaluation, Group Evaluation, Higher education

1. Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

Higher education institutions in Ethiopia have a responsibility to make multidimensional contributions to the achievement of the goals of the nation in terms of boosting the economy, democratic system and good governance. Higher education institutions play a vital role in changing the behavior of students and enabling them contribute to the social, economic, political and technological advancement of the country; conducting problem solving researches and providing community services as well [4]. The achievement of objectives of the higher institutions highly depends on the performance of teachers. Because teachers are the most responsible body for physical, intellectual, social and moral development of students [20].

Since teachers are the principal actors in the instructional process who strongly influence the quality of teaching and learning, their performance should be properly evaluated and needs to be given more emphasis. As [21] indicated, the major purposes of teacher evaluation can be summarized in two functions; improvement of teacher's own practice and ensuring teacher's performance at their best to enhance student learning. For this reason, the process of teacher evaluation has become an integral part of the educational practice in schools and universities. A properly designed teachers' appraisal system can help to enhance the quality of education by improving the moral and job satisfaction of teachers [13]. At present times, teacher's performance

appraisal is indispensable to meet teaching learning standards. Appraised and rewarded teachers perform better than their other counterparts and it creates motivation and urge for performing better. If teachers are motivated, they will produce effective learning of students which is the main goal of the educational institutions [10].

In line with this, [11] stated that evaluation of university faculty members which aims to improve teaching quality is performed through several methods. One of the most common and conflicting methods is evaluation of the faculty by students. In higher education system, students have a major role in the evaluation of teachers. [8] stated that student evaluation of teaching effectiveness remains the most important and frequently used measure. [18] identified the four common uses of student evaluation of teaching effectiveness; provide formative feedback to faculty for improving teaching, course format and content, and influence the professor's tenure, promotion and salary increases as well as to make student evaluation results available for other students to use in the selection of courses and faculty.

Overall, literatures support the view that student evaluation of faculty is appropriate, and that properly designed student evaluations can be a valuable source of information for evaluating certain aspects of faculty teaching performance [9] [17]. Students are regarded as the clients and consumers of the educational services; therefore, they have the eligibility and right to evaluate the quality of teaching and should become a major part of evaluation process [18].

These evaluations are important as feedback to students, teachers, departments, university administrators, governmental policymakers, and researchers. Hence, it is imperative to conduct a research on learners' evaluation of their teachers' performance addressing how the evaluation process carried out correctly, efficiently, timely and fairly to determine the level of teachers' performance and to identify the area where further development and improvement of skills are needed. More specifically, acquiring information on the evaluation procedure and the difference in the results of evaluation by students when evaluated individually and in group, which will help to prefer and implement the more effective approach of teachers' performance evaluation by students. In light of this, the present study focuses on the practices and the two alternative approaches of students' evaluation of their teacher performance in higher education. The investigation mainly intends to address the difference between the results of students' evaluation through two alternative approaches (evaluating individually and in groups).

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Students' evaluations of teaching are increasingly used by universities to evaluate teaching performance and universities have invested time, personnel, and money into the process of students' evaluation of faculty through the use of various forms of student ratings of teaching. But, the task of teachers' performance appraisal needs a sensitive responsibility. Various reasons could be cited as to why the task is considered to be sensitive and complex. Primarily, performance appraisal deals with measurement of human efforts, the degree to which they could conform to the group norms and how much effort they are putting in their jobs. However, there are instances where people are not clear about objectives of appraising performance and give it less of their time and attention. At other times, the measuring instruments could either be vague or might not contain the necessary construct that need to be measured; else, appraisal could be influenced by the behavior of the appraisee and the appraiser that might distort the real intension behind the appraisal process [13].

According to the researchers' observation, Arba Minch University, as a higher institution with teachers teaching in various disciplines have problems in teacher performance evaluation. The evaluation was employed by students, colleagues and head of the department in each semester of the academic year. As evaluation of the teaching effectiveness, students' evaluation takes a lion share (50 percent). But, in most cases the practices of students' evaluation of their teachers' performance seems evaluation without having knowledge of the purpose, sense of responsibility and critically recognizing the evaluation criteria. Obviously, this type of evaluation results can affect annual performance evaluations, merit pay, advancement in faculty rank, and tenure opportunities. The researchers also perceived that in the study area there are some problems on students side that they may do the evaluation with less or no knowledge of the purpose, sense of responsibility and recognition of the criteria, and it was assumed that this problem may be solved if the students evaluate their

teacher's performance through small group discussion instead of evaluating individually. Because in this evaluation approach, the weakness in the evaluation practices of some students may be resolved by doing together with some others who may have better concern.

Therefore, proving this assumption by empirical study is the intention of the researchers and thus, it seems important to investigate whether there is a difference between the results of teacher's performance evaluation by students in individually and in group. To this end, this study attempts to answer the following basic research questions:
1) How do teachers' performance evaluation by students is being practiced in Arba Minch University?
2) Is there a difference between teacher's performance evaluation by students in individually and in group?
3) What is the perception of teachers and academic administrators about the appropriateness of teachers' performance evaluation mechanisms by students?

1.3. Significance of the Study

It is difficult to separate the overall teaching-learning process and its effectiveness from teacher performance evaluation. Therefore, this study will have the following significance:
1) It will disclose the characteristic of the existing practice of teachers' performance evaluation by students in the study area.
2) Initiate university leaders and Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the country to modify the existing approach of teachers' performance evaluation by students.
3) It will also help researchers in provision of information as secondary data for those who are interested to study the problem in wider scope and depth.

1.4. Scope of the Study

If the data for teachers' performance evaluation by students was collected from a representative of students both in regular and non-regular education program, the results of the evaluation and the research outcome would be more valid. However, due to lack of experience of evaluating teachers' performance by non-regular students in the study site as well as other higher institutions in Ethiopia, the study was restricted to the case of regular undergraduate students.

1.5. Limitation of the Study

In going through this study activity, some students were missed and carelessly responded the open-ended questions and a few of them did not respond completely. Because of frequent meetings and busyness, the faculty deans, department heads, and teachers showed reluctant to give adequate time for interview and absence from their appointment. Moreover, no empirical study carried out before regarding the variation of results of teacher's performance evaluation by students in individually and in groups and as a result inadequacy of a literature to discuss

and explain the current findings on the issue has encountered. However, the researchers have been able to manage the encountered limitation by extensive visit, communication and collecting relevant documents from the stakeholders, and thereby have completed the study successfully.

2. Review of Literature

In a simple way, performance can be regarded as a record of an outcome or accomplishment achieved by a person or a team [3]. It is about doing the work effectively so as to achieve the desired goals. Performance can also be perceived as a non-job specific behavior such as cooperation, dedication, enthusiasm and persistence that develop the effectiveness of the organization to enhance the working culture and climate of the organization. According to [6] performance evaluation is the assessment of an individual's performance in a systematic way, the performance being measured against such factors as job knowledge, quality and quantity of output, initiative, leadership abilities, supervision, dependability, cooperation, judgment, health, and all the like. Performance evaluation involves collecting and using information to judge the worth of something [19].

From the point of view of teacher performance, [1] defines performance evaluation as the process by which individual effectiveness is determined. As the author tried to put briefly, through evaluation whether the teacher has served the purposes for which he was employed. When properly conducted, performance evaluation not only let the teacher know how well he or she is performing, but should also influence the teacher's future level of effort, activities, results and task direction. Every teacher performance evaluation system must embody a definition of the teaching task and a mechanism to evaluate the teacher. A teacher performance evaluation system represents the incentive structure and mode of accountability adopted by an organization. It communicates conceptions of teaching and expectations regarding performance priorities, norms for behavior, and the nature of the work itself.

Teachers' performance evaluation, according to [7] is an activity that follows certain logical steps. The implication of an effective teacher performance evaluation process requires commitment from participants who are engaged in appraisal. [13] states, a properly designed evaluation system can help to enhance the quality of education by improving the moral and the job satisfaction of teacher. [15] also argue that evaluation of teachers' performance should not be a responsibility of persons remote from the teaching profession. Considering Teachers' performance Evaluation as an essential outset to determine the performance of each and every faculty member, many institutions, whether public or private, have adopted various parameters to be used as performance measures to serve the desired purpose [2] [14]. The rigorous evaluation of teaching is one of the most significant characteristics of a healthy and conducive 'teaching environment' that leads to remarkable improvements in teaching practices [5]. In most of the higher education institutions heads of the department,

teachers/colleagues, and students are commonly involved in teacher's performance evaluation process and used as evaluators of the teachers' performance.

There is no doubt in the fact that students are daily observers of their teachers. Also, this observation is not limited to the classroom but teachers are also judged by their role as academic advisor and student counselor. [1] state that student's opinion on teachers' performance should be considered valuable, because it is students who feel that they have undergone changes in their behavior. He also expressed his belief that the appraisal feedback to the teacher could motivate teaching and develop a feeling of recognition in the teacher. Evidences suggest that students can make reliable responses about classroom instruction [16]. Thus, students are manifestly potential and valuable source of teacher evaluation which is inevitable [5]. There are many ways of taking students opinion on teacher performance like exit interview, discussion with students about teachers, student testimonial or student questionnaires. Generally, a questionnaire consisting of questions about teacher performance in class throughout the semester is dominant source of collecting student views [12].

It is understandable that the instruments used by students to rate teaching effectiveness do not rate teaching effectiveness, rather measure only a perception of teaching effectiveness. If this is true, it supports the lecturers who are reluctant to accept the application of students' evaluations of teaching either for assessment or for providing a basis to improve their teaching [22]. The critique of the researchers delivers more support for the opponents of students' evaluations of teaching than for the defenders. Criticism has also been delivered concerning the organization of the students' evaluations of teaching and the poverty of the instruments being used to measure teaching effectiveness [5]. Despite these criticisms on teacher's performance evaluation by students, it seems more appropriate way to have accurate information about the status of how teachers performed his/her teaching task in each day of week throughout the semester. Therefore, making research on procedures and approach of evaluation of teachers' performance by various stakeholders is useful to improve the quality of teaching.

3. Research Methodology

Design of the Study: the major purpose of this study is to assess the practice and the difference between teacher's performance evaluation by students in individually and in groups. To achieve this purpose, the research was undertaken by a mixed type of quantitative and qualitative research approach. A quasi-experimental design of quantitative method was used to show the differences of teacher's performance evaluation result by students in individually and in groups. Concerning the existing teacher's performance evaluation practice by students and the perception of teachers as well as academic administrators about the appropriate evaluation mechanisms by students, the narrative qualitative approach was employed. Because, the researchers believed that this method was a convenient to use various forms of data as well as incorporating human

experience which enabled to look the study in so many various aspects and can provide bigger overview about the subject matter.

Study Area Description: Arba Minch University is located in Arba Minch town, a capital of Gamo Zone which located at 505 km to the south west of Addis Ababa, capital of Ethiopia. Main campus of the university is situated at the eastern foot of Gamo mountain chains and adjacent to the vast low land stretching towards Lake Abaya and Lake Chamo which form part of the East African Rift Valley, and the two campuses of the university known as Abaya Campus and Chamo Campus are named by the names of these two lakes. Nech Sar, Kulfo and Sawla are the other three campuses. In this regard, currently the university consisted of six campuses with 6 colleges, 2 institutes, and 4 schools. As one of the biggest and first-generation public higher learning institutions of the country, it has undertaken a variety of outreaching activities to achieve its vision of being one among the most top ten universities in east Africa in the areas of teaching and learning, research and community services.

Study Population and Sampling: the target population under investigation was regular undergraduate students, teachers, and heads of departments who are responsible for running the core teaching-learning process of the University. To select students for the purpose of participating in teacher's performance evaluation in individually and in

groups an Institute of Technology from Main campus and College of Business and Economics from Chamo Campus were selected by using a stratified random sampling technique from the formed strata for Campuses, Colleges, Institutes, and Schools in the university, excluding Sawla campus for to use it for pilot study. Then, by using random sampling technique two campuses of five and two faculties (out of five) from the Institute of Technology and two departments (out of four) from the College of Business and Economics were selected.

Similarly, by using random sampling technique 245 (185 males and 60 females) students from faculty of Civil Engineering, 160 (105 males and 55 females) students from faculty of Electrical and Computer Engineering, 391 (239 males and 152 females) students from department of Economics, and 151 (79 males and 72 females) students from department of Accounting and Finance were selected to evaluate 8 (5 males and 3 females) teachers in individually and in groups (by creating 205 groups).

Through availability sampling, 55 (51 males and 4 female) heads of departments, and 108 (102 males and 6 females) senior teachers were selected as a source of data for the existing practice of teachers' performance evaluation by students in the study area. Therefore, the sample consisted of 947 undergraduate regular students, 55 department heads and 108 senior teachers. As indicated in the Tables 1 the total sample size of the study was 1,110 participants.

Table 1: Description of Study Participant Students, Teachers and Department Heads

Category		Dep't head					Senior teacher						Student				
		By sex			By qualification		By sex			By qualification			Dep't	Year of Study	By sex		
		M	F	T	MA/ MSc	PhD	M	F	T	BA/BSc	MA/MSc	PhD			M	F	T
Institute	Water Technology	4	-	4	4	-	8	-	8	-	7	1	Civil Eng.	1	87	38	125
	Technology	5	-	5	4	1	10	-	10	-	10	-		3	98	22	120
College	Agriculture	5	1	6	3	3	12	-	12	-	9	3	Electrical & Comp Eng.	2	45	18	63
	Medicine & Health Sciences	7	1	8	6	2	14	2	16	4	12	-					
	Natural and Computational Sciences	7	-	7	6	1	14		14	-	13	1		3	60	37	97
	Business & Economics	3	1	4	4	-	6	2	8	-	7	1	Economics	1	127	63	190
	Social Sciences & Humanities	8	-	8	8	-	15	1	16	-	16	-		2	112	89	201
School	Pedagogical & Behavioral Sciences	3	-	3	3	-	6	-	6	-	6	-	Accounting & Finance	2	46	44	90
	Law	1	-	1	1	-	2	-	2	-	2	-		3	33	28	61
Sawla Campus		8	1	9	8	1	15	1	16	7	8	1					
Total no of Participants		51	4	55	47	8	102	6	108	11	90	7			608	339	947

M=Male; F=Female; T=Total; BA/Sc= Bachelor of Art/Science; MA/Sc=Masters of Art/Science; and PhD=Doctor of Philosophy

Data Collection Instruments: there were primary and secondary data sources for this study. The instruments used to gather primary data are questionnaire and structured interview. Archival and document reviewing were part and parcel of collecting data from secondary sources.

A survey questionnaire was used to gather data from sampled undergraduate students. A tool was developed by Ministry of Science and Higher Education and used as a harmonized teachers' performance evaluation scale to be filled by students in all public Universities of the country. It was

already prepared in both English and Amharic /one of Ethiopian languages/ and consists 19 close ended items with four categories. The items of this instrument were a Likert scale type with a scoring range between 1 and 5 points, which correspond as 1 very low, 2 low, 3 average, 4 high, 5 very high, and NA not applicable. Sample students in individually first and in group of five or six students were requested to indicate their perceptions on the level of agreement with each item of the scale.

In addition, to improve the trustworthiness of data, structured interview was used to collect supplementary information. It was administered to collect qualitative data from sample department heads, and senior teachers. The interview consists 10 structured questions which was designed in Amharic/one of Ethiopian languages/.

Data Collection Procedure: after developing the instruments and getting permission from the responsible university personnel's, the first phase of the required data was collected from sampled students of Institute of Technology and College of Business and Economics via survey questionnaire. First, the sample students have filled a rating scale of teacher's performance individually and then after a while they filled it being in a group of five and Six students. Subsequently, the researchers developed the interview schedules and administered the interview sessions with department heads, and senior teachers at their offices. To handle large number of interview participants, the researchers hired 7 institutional quality enhancement coordinators as a data collector who are working at institutes and Colleges in the University.

Data Analysis Technique: in analyzing the data, both quantitative and qualitative techniques employed. Using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS V-20), the responses of close ended questions were analyzed by descriptive and inferential statistics such as frequency, mean, standard deviation and independent sample t-test were applied to show the results related to the difference between teacher's performance evaluation result using student's evaluation in individually and in groups. Whereas, the information collected through interview regarding the practices of teachers' evaluation, and the perception of teachers as well as academic administrators about the appropriate teachers' performance evaluation mechanisms by student's evaluation were qualitatively analyzed using descriptive words and pie chart.

Ethical Considerations: since academic writing does not occur in a vacuum, researchers are frequently interacting with a dynamic and demanding socio-political environment that influences their research decisions both formally and informally. To this end, this study is conducted in such a way that by considering ethical responsibility that is being honest about what exactly the study is all about and what it intended to measure. The respondents were assured that the information that they provided will be confidential and only be used for the intended purpose. All the collected data from participants were presented and analyzed anonymously.

4. Results and Discussion

Under this section of the study, the qualitative and quantitative results with a view to answer the major research questions undertaking, and discussion of the major findings in line with the previous related research outputs are presented.

4.1. The Practice of Teachers' Performance Evaluation by Students

In order to address the issues related to the implementation practices of teacher's performance evaluation by students, an interview was conducted with department heads and senior teachers using structured interview items concerning about individuals who proceed the evaluation process, time of students' evaluation of their teachers, representation of students from various years of study and sections in evaluating teachers, the evaluation process for teachers who offer common courses across colleges, institutes and schools, the time and approach of feedback provision for teachers, and challenges encountered in the implantation of teachers' performance evaluation by students.

Regarding individual/s who proceed the teacher's performance evaluation by students, majority of the participant heads of the departments and senior teachers commonly reflected that in Arba Minch University, students evaluation of their teachers performance evaluation was run by office manager/secretary, head of the department, assigned teacher/colleague, formed ad-hoc committee, crisscrossing teachers, technical assistant teacher, invigilator teacher (at final exam time), academic affairs coordinator (in school of law), academic advisor of the class, students class representative, course teacher him/her self, and online via university SMIS. For the item about the time of students' evaluation of their teachers teaching effectiveness, 38 (23.3%) of interviewees said at the last week of the semester, 54 (33.1%) said at the date of class end of the semester, and 43 (26.4%) responded that evaluation was done at final exam time. The remaining 28 (17.2%) responded that students fill their teachers evaluation at the end of a block course, when the teacher announce the end of his/her class, at mid and final exam time (twice in a semester), after exam when students need to see their course grade through SMIS, and no specific evaluation time were additional responses of these participants on the item. Making students to participate in the evaluation activity of their teachers in general is in line with the idea stated by scholars [5] which indicates students are manifestly potential and valuable sources of teacher evaluation. But the finding which indicates irregularity in the cases of individual who proceed the evaluation and time of evaluation contradicts with the idea provided by [13] which states that properly designed and regulated evaluation system can help to enhance the quality of education by improving the moral and the job satisfaction of teacher.

This finding in general indicates that a concerned body who proceed or administer, teacher's performance evaluation by students vary across departments and also was not consistent within a department from semester to semester. This situation likely to have a negative influence on the validity and reliability of the evaluation results provided by the students. To improve the situation, it has to be a structurally concerned body, that is either head of the department or assigned section advisor should administer it, because his/her structural responsibility likely push him/her to orient and advise the students to fill the scale properly instead of doing it carelessly or without attention which is usually a point of criticism by various scholars and higher institutions' staff's on the use/implementation teachers' performance evaluation by students.

For the question related to the representativeness of student evaluators from years of study and sections for which a teacher deliver a course, the responses disclose that no uniform way of selection and representation of years of study and sections across departments in the university, that is; 69 (42.3%) of heads of departments, and senior teachers said yes, students' evaluation was collected from all years of study and sections in which a teacher offered a course whereas, 94 (57.7%) of these respondents said students evaluation of teachers' performance was collected from a randomly selected years of study and sections of students, depending on the preference of a teacher or assigned individual who run the evaluation, simply by taking the available students at evaluation time, by focusing on students who take major courses, and by considering a course in which highly related to a teacher specialization. In addition, heads of departments exclusively responded on the practices of students' evaluation for teachers who offer common courses across university. On their response in this case, 34 (61.8%) said yes the evaluation was done by his/her students and the filled papers send to the host department, and the remaining 21 (38.2%) respondents commonly said that no experience of evaluation done by students who took common courses, there were no teachers who offer courses to other departments, and the evaluation was done based on the interest of the department teachers in.

Teachers' performance evaluation by students to serve for its purpose effectively, there has to be adequate representation of all years and sections of students who took the course by the teacher under the evaluation. Doing in this manner helps to maintain validity and reliability of the performance evaluation result provided to a teacher. Here, it could be assumed that in a semester, a teacher might teach students of different years of study and sections at a various degree of effectiveness. In other words, the teacher might teach a one section at a good level and the other section of students might not taught at that level. Therefore, representing students from all his/her section students enable to have valid and reliable result of teachers' performance evaluation by students which in turn contribute to significant improvements in the teachers future teaching performance.

For the interview item which addresses the time of forwarding students' evaluation feedbacks and the approaches of feedback delivery, majority of the respondents commonly said it varies across departments in the university. Respondents, disclosed that, in most cases, feedback was given to teachers at the end of the semester, at the beginning of the upcoming semester, when teachers query to see own result, as soon as the evaluation result signed by authorized body, and within a month after evaluation. Concerning the approaches of feedback provisions, participants similarly responded that departments provide feedbacks by using written report which has quantified evaluation result, letting the teachers simply to see the details of their strength and weaknesses from the filled evaluation scale on the written paper and online through SMIS, presenting in department council, in some cases the feedback was provided based on the interest of the teacher, and when irregular or exaggerated evaluation as well as critical weaknesses observed, head of the department gives oral feedback and discuss with the respective teacher for improvement. Providing feedback properly encourages teachers to perform better towards goals of teaching in his/her future work in teaching. In line with this, [3] pointed out that performance evaluation with proper feedback lead to perform the work more effectively to achieve desired goals. Here, if teacher's performance evaluation to serve for its purpose effectively, which is obviously improvement of instruction, feedback for the teacher shall be immediate before he/she is going to begin the next semester teaching activity.

Regarding challenges encounter in teachers' performance evaluation by students, eventually, the respondents uncovered different challenges in students' evaluation process of their teacher's performance. Commonly reflected challenges include carelessness of students in filling evaluation scale through paper and online, awareness gap among students on the importance and purpose of students' evaluation, online evaluation scale does not have open ended question to provide general statement about some major weaknesses need to be improved by the evaluated teacher. Delay in forwarding the feedback, lack of orientation to students on how to fill the online evaluation, lack of experience of some department heads on effective implementation of the evaluation tool, biasness of students when filling the evaluation of the scale after final exam, and absence of interest to get the evaluation feedback on teachers' side were another prevailing. In this study finding, the challenge carelessness of the students in filling the evaluation scale contradicts with the idea forward by [7] which indicates evaluation requires commitment of the participants who are engaged in evaluation. Thus, it seems useful to orient students adequately about the advantages of properly and accurately filling the performance evaluation format for their teachers during the time of administering. In this regard, it is reasonable that either the head of department or assigned section head teacher to administrate the evaluation scale to students. The existing practice of administering by the secretary/office manager as well as anyone who have no concern on the section students' affairs should not carry out the evaluation administration activity.

4.2. The Difference Between Teachers' Performance Evaluation Results as Evaluated Individually & in Groups

The second research question which guided this study addresses a variation in teachers' performance evaluation results as evaluated by students individually and in groups. To answer this question, the required data was collected from sample undergraduate students by administering the teachers' performance evaluation scale two times (in individually and in groups). In the students' evaluation process eight teachers who offered eight different courses from four departments of Institute of Technology and College of Business and Economics were involved as evaluated teachers.

To make more clear about the overall sample students evaluation differences, the researchers first preferred to present the individual level performance evaluation with the title of courses offered by evaluated teachers, no of

participant students who involved in individual and in groups evaluation and their specific evaluation results in individually and in groups evaluation are indicated in the Table 2:

Table 2: Description of Evaluated Teachers, Titles of the Courses Offered by Evaluated Teachers, No of Participants Involved in Individual and in Groups Evaluation, and the Evaluation Results

Teacher's Code	Title of the course	No of Students		Students Evaluation Result			
		Participated in Individual Evaluation	Groups Participated in Group Evaluation	Individual Evaluation		Groups Evaluation	
				M	SD	M	SD
ET_1	Development Economics	190	38	3.453	1.002	3.280	.917
ET_2	Macro Economics-II	201	36	3.927	.712	4.033	.474
AFT_1	Ethiopian Gov. Accounting	90	17	3.731	1.014	3.604	1.007
AFT_2	Auditing Principle & Practice-II	61	10	3.506	.990	3.831	1.303
CET_1	Reinforced Concrete-II	120	28	4.119	.649	4.056	.611
CET_2	Strength of Material	125	31	4.273	.579	4.431	.479
$ECET_1$	Computer Architecture	97	28	3.490	.734	3.691	.717
$ECET_2$	Electronics II	63	17	3.323	.654	3.233	.494

ET=Economics Teacher; AFT=Accounting and Finance Teacher; CET=Civil Engineering Teacher; and ECET= Electrical and Computer Engineering Teacher

Based on the descriptive statistics that indicates the average of students' evaluation results of their teacher performance in individually and in groups at the individual teacher level in Table 2 the researchers preferred to show the overall students evaluation difference. To this effect, the independent samples t-test has been used to test the difference between the evaluation results obtained by the two different approaches as presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Comparison of students' Evaluation Results of their Teacher's Performance as Evaluated Individually and in Groups at Institute, College and Total Participants Level

Category	Evaluation Type	N	M	SD	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	t-value	Sig (2-tailed)
College of Business and Economics	I E	542	3.681	.928	.02342	1.0015	.234	.815
	G E	101	3.658	.902				
Institute of Technology	I E	405	3.892	.755	.04287	.08218	.522	.602
	G E	104	3.935	.716				
Total Participants	I E	947	3.771	.864	.02703	.06603	.409	.682
	G E	205	3.798	.823				

IE= Individual Evaluation; GE= Group Evaluation; N= No of observations; M=Mean; and SD= Standard Deviation

Table3 reveals that the comparison of teachers' performance evaluation results when evaluated individually and in groups has no significant difference in both College of Business and Economics (t= .234, P > 0.05) and Institute of Technology (t= .522, P > 0.05). Similarly, the overall comparison of students' evaluation result of their teacher's performance as evaluated in individually and in groups has no significant difference (t= .409, P > 0.05). From these findings, it is possible to conclude that teacher's performance evaluation results using students' evaluation in individually as compared to in groups evaluation have no difference. Therefore, if the result of teacher's performance by students in group is similar to the evaluation result by individually (all students individually), the university shall think about and revisit the time, material, and human resources wastages Plus, delays exist in providing feedback as effect of compiling response sheets of large no of students in the existing approach (evaluating teacher's performance using individually where large number of students participate). Thus, it seems advisable to employ teacher's performance evaluation using a group containing a good representation of students from sections and years of study, considering gender, academic achievement status, and students with special needs plus students who have no disciplinary problem record.

4.3. Perception of Teachers and Academic Administrators about the Appropriateness of

Teachers' Performance Evaluation Mechanisms by Students

To address the third research question and to substantiate the first two questions department heads and senior teachers were involved in the interview to provide information about the appropriateness of the existing students' evaluation approaches and to forward their suggestion about which approach of students' evaluation is appropriate to be used. First, interviewees responded on the appropriateness of the current students evaluation approaches such as evaluation of teachers performance using all years of study and section students for whom a teacher offered courses, by simply taking the available one or two sections of students during evaluation time, by randomly selecting one or two section students, based on the preference of a teacher and assigned individual to dispatch and collect evaluation papers, and by focusing on students who took major courses. On their response, majority of the respondents agreed that among the existing evaluation approaches, the one which uses all years of study and sections students who take the courses participating in the evaluation is appropriate and a representative. And about the non-uniform approaches across departments in the university, respondents said it was not representative, effective and valid approach of students' participation on their teacher's performance evaluation. This finding is in line with the principle followed in data collection for a research or any other purpose in order to

maintain validity and reliability of the result. Similarly, teachers' performance evaluation results to have good degree of validity and reliability, the non-uniform manner of students' representation in teacher's performance evaluation work across departments has to be avoided.

Regarding perceptions and preferences of the respondents about the appropriate students' representation to evaluate their teacher's performance, different mechanisms are suggested by the respondents as summarized in Figure 1:
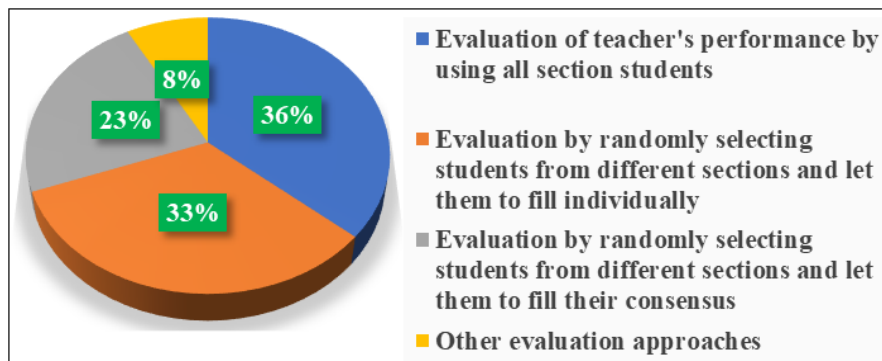

Figure 1: Proportion of Participants in their Preference of Student Representation Approach to be used in Teacher's Performance Evaluation

As it can be seen from Figure 1, 59 (36.2%) respondents suggested to let all years of study and section students to evaluate, 54 (33.1%) respondents preferred the random selection of students from different sections and let them to fill individually, 37 (22.7%) respondents preferred to randomly taking students from different sections and let them to discuss in group and fill groups consensus, and the remaining 13 (7.9%) respondents suggested that evaluation of teachers' performance should be going on by taking students from different sections based on their level of academic achievement (like high, medium, and low), diversified groups like gender, simply taking half /average no of students from all sections, by taking only high achievers or critical thinkers from all sections, by arranging evaluation sessions twice in a semester, that is, after mid and final exams, by continuing the current practices, that is, online SMIS evaluation approach, by using leaders of 1 to 5 students study group, by taking 10 to 15 representative students from each section, and by filling the evaluation scale after discussion on the main statement points were additionally suggested approaches of student representation for teacher performance evaluation work. Therefore, most of the respondent's preference is in line with the data collection principles to maintain validity and reliability of the results to be obtained through including representative sample or participants to get a necessary information [5]. In this regard, one can understand that making all or adequate representative number and variety of section or years of study students' participation in the teacher's performance evaluation by students enables to have more accurate and valid result about teacher's performance. Able to provide accurate and valid performance evaluation result to the teacher is valuable to motivate the teacher to improve his future teaching performance and vice versa.

To sum up the findings regarding the approach of evaluation of teacher's performance by students, the results from the students responses on the rating scale and academic administrators and teachers preferences seem to suggest that students have to be represented by random or purposeful selection from all the years of study and sections where a

teacher has taught and thereby make them to fill the scale. In this regard, variety of the existing approaches and the group approach looked in this study are seeming to be not used. Representing the students from all the years of study and sections where a teacher has taught using stratified purposeful selection technique to include males and females, variety academic achievement status group, students with special needs and students who have no a record in disciplinary problems and thereby making them to fill the scale individually seems advisable approach to be employed in order to have a valid, reliable, and useful results of teachers' performance by students evaluation.

5. Conclusion

Teachers are principal actors in the teaching process as well as one of its major constituents when quality is concerned. In most cases their teaching effectiveness is evaluated by their students, colleagues, and administrative-heads and there is diversity of views about the validity and reliability of evaluations by these stakeholders in general and student's evaluation in particular. In this study different findings were identified regarding the practice of teachers' performance evaluation by students, difference between teacher's performance evaluation by students in individually and in group, and the perception of teachers and academic administrators about the appropriateness of different approaches of teachers' performance evaluation by students.

The result of this study revealed that time of evaluation by students in Arba Minch University seems inconsistent across all the departments. Such inconsistencies might lead to a problem of validity and reliability in teacher's performance evaluation results among teachers in various departments. It seems useful to fix time schedule of evaluation centrally at Academic Vice President Office level. Similarly, there was inconsistency across departments in representing students who taught by a teacher to participate in his/her performance evaluation. The manner a teacher teaches in various courses and in various sections might differ from one to the other. Therefore, excluding representation of some sections from

participating in evaluating a teacher's performance likely have an influence on the validity and reliability level of the result given to the teacher by the students. The manner of feedback provision on evaluation results to teachers in the university varies among departments in respect to time and way of provision. There was prevalence of delay in providing feedback to teachers after teaching work accomplishment of a semester. This likely have negative influence on the extent of value a feedback gives for the improvement of teacher's performance in the next semester teaching.

Regarding variations in the evaluation results due to the practice of students' evaluation individually and in group, the study disclosed that there is no significant difference in the teacher's performance result. Therefore, without any advantage carrying out the evaluation process using more resources and time in managing to evaluate through individually which involves large number of students seems a wastage and not economical. The perceptions and preferences of academic administrators and senior teachers in the university suggest that students representation to participate in teachers' performance evaluation should be represented through a random selection in a stratified manner considering variety of students' academic and other important backgrounds from all years of study and sections students who taught by the teacher under the evaluation. On the other hand there are various challenges included in conducting teachers' evaluation by students such as no space for qualitative comment in online system evaluation, students lack of awareness about the ultimate value of teacher's performance evaluation by students, colleagues, and heads of departments which mainly address improvement of teaching performance in the coming semester among other values. The same awareness problem seems to be true for teacher colleagues and academic administrators which could be understood from the prevalence of delay in feedback provision to serve for performance improvement in the next semester teaching.

6. Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of the study, the researchers forwarded the following recommendations:

- Academic Affairs Vice President Office together with Institutional Quality Enhancement directorate shall study and fix appropriate time of evaluation of teachers' performance by students to be used across all departments in the university.
- To minimize the awareness gap in students about the value of their evaluation of their teacher's performance, heads of departments should give adequate orientation to students in dispatching the scale to be filled by the students. To do this, it is not the secretary of the department, but the head of the department him/herself or appropriate delegate teacher or a section advisor teacher has to administer the scale to the students.
- Clear guideline has to be designed by Academic Affairs Vice President Office together with Institutional Quality Enhancement Directorate for similar representation of

students shall be used in all departments in evaluating teacher's performance.

- Academic Affairs Vice President Office together with Institutional Quality Enhancement Directorate and School of Pedagogical and Behavioral Sciences shall design a guideline which can help to regulate and achieve effective implementation of feedback to teachers on their semester job accomplishment evaluation result. Specifically, the time and way of providing feedback should be well regulated. In this regard, teachers who received a very low evaluation results shall be orally advised by heads of departments addressing the major weaknesses of the teacher.
- Academic Affairs Vice President Office together with Institutional Quality Enhancement Directorate shall design a regulation addressing how and who should facilitate the teacher's performance evaluation by students.

7. Future Research Implication

An experimental research shall be conducted to examine the variations in teacher's performance evaluation results by students in respect to students' academic achievement background (high, medium, and low academic achievers).

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