

THE EVALUATION OF LECTURERS' COMPETENCE: IN THE CASE STUDY OF MIEN TAY CONSTRUCTION UNIVERSITY, VIETNAM

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Abstract:

Evaluation of the competence of lecturers has always played an important role in universities around the world and in Vietnam. This activity not only helps lecturers to be self-aware and improve themselves but also helps the University grasp the quality of the university's lecturers and have an appropriate fostering strategy in each period. The paper presents practical research results at the Mien Tay Construction University, Vietnam, from 2014 to 2024. Through the collection and descriptive statistics of available data in the lecturer evaluation process for the period from 2014 to 2024, the author points out the changes in the annual lecturer evaluation of the university and, at the same time, compares the results of the lecturer evaluation before and after there are specific criteria in the lecturer competency evaluation proposed by the author to be applied at the university. From there, it points out the limitations and causes of using these evaluation criteria. The findings also illustrate some recommendations to improve the evaluation of lecturer competence in the following years. This experience can also be used for universities with conditions similar to those of the Mien Tay Construction University.

Keywords — Evaluation of Lecturers, Competence, Lecturers, University, Vietnam.

I. INTRODUCTION

The evaluation of lecturers is a regular activity of the university. The influence of lecturer performance evaluation on improving the quality of learning (A Syahrir, 2024). An exploratory analysis of undergraduate students' perception of lecturers' effectiveness helps lecturers understand themselves and answer the question of whether they are good lecturers (ASN Hisham, HN Ruzman, NHM Noor, 2025). Also, the evaluation of lecturers aims to assess the impact of lecturer incivility on student academic performance and the role of social support (B Nguyen-Viet, PM Nguyen, 2024). The evaluation of the Higher Education lecturer's competencies can be conducted on the background of the pedagogical, professional, social and personality traits of the teachers (AAF Belo, 2017). There are many tools to evaluate lecturers, like the implementation of the LOPCOW Method (K Tomićić-Pupek & et al., 2024), Moving Towards Electronic Lecturer

Evaluation System (E-LEva) (KN Abd Halim, R Razali, 2008), and the use of sending an Evaluation Form online or directly.

Most universities have designed criteria to evaluate lecturers in the world and Vietnam. Mien Tay Construction University (Vietnam) applied many ways to evaluate lecturers' competence here. After a long time, there are changes in the evaluation results of lecturers here. Therefore, the article presents the changes and shows several recommendations.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Evaluation of lecturer's competence in generally

A study of F. Benjamin, H. Jessica, F. Yeoh (2012) shows the criteria for students to be able to evaluate lecturers at some universities in Malaysia, such as quality of lecturers, teaching assistants, courses. Research by R. Chireshe (2011) points out the influencing and non-influencing factors of lecturers on students in Zimbabwe; Y.F. Chan, O.

Shuhaily (2011) study of students' evaluation of university teaching;..... Khamphounvong Nouanphet (2017) points out the theoretical basis for evaluating university lecturers and the current status of lecturer evaluation activities in Laos in the direction of approaching human resource management. F. Korthagen (2004) has divided lecturer competencies into four groups of criteria, namely: methodological competency, subject-oriented competency, communicative/reflective thinking competency and organizational competence (organizational competency). Brian Colin Hemmings (2015) showed the results of the qualitative research to find effectiveness in teaching, which is defined as the belief in the ability to perform teaching tasks in the context of Charles Sturt University. The paper also considers the meanings of results for those designers who planned professional learning activities and proposes possible directions for future relevant studies. The research of Hoang Mai and Doan Van Dung (2020) showed criteria standards of evaluation lecturers who teach in post-graduation, including: Standards of political qualities, ethics and qualifications of lecturers; Standards of competence, professional qualifications and practical knowledge; Standards of teaching skills and experience; Standards of professional manners and attitudes.

The self-assessment of lecturers, John G. Sharp et al. (2013) determined the results of the self-assessment of lecturers in the US and the UK through a self-assessment questionnaire divided into 3 fields: teaching, research, and other academic or service-related activities. The results showed that lecturers - those with doctoral degrees who spent more time on research than those who were new to the profession - did not have a doctoral degree or higher spent more time on teaching activities.

Factors influencing the quality of lecturers, Ulfah Mediaty Arief, Haryono, Dwi Yuwono Puji Sugiharto, and Achmad Rifai (2019) revealed the extent of influence on the effectiveness of the application of information technology by lecturers, organisational culture and motivation for the quality of lecturers' performance. The results of this study show that the application of information technology to the organizational culture and motivation of lecturers has a positive and significant impact on the quality of lecturers' activities. Frieda N. R. Hidayati;

Siswati (2017) provide research to determine that there is a correlation between the professionalism of lecturers and the learning effectiveness of students. The results showed that the hypothesis is accepted, that is, there is a correlation between the professionalism of lecturers and the learning efficiency of students. It illustrates that the professionalism of lecturers including competence in the field of study, understanding of learners, understanding of the learning process, and personality development of lecturers, affects students' self-efficacy. The role of lecturers is indeed an important component of the learning process. The learning conditions is designed by the lecturers, which build the educational interaction between two personalities, including the personality of lecturers – the adults and the personality of lecturers – the coming of age. In this case, the professionalism of the lecturers is expected to contribute, but not directly, to the development of student effectiveness. *Specifically criteria to evaluate lecturer's competence*: F. Korthagen (2004) suggested four groups of criteria lecturer competencies: methodological competency, subject-oriented competency, communicative/reflective thinking competency and organizational competence. D. Casey (1999) suggested competence lecturers with 7 groups criteria, including ability to collect analyses and organize information, ability to communicate ideas and information, ability to plan and organize activities, ability to work with others and in teams, ability to use mathematical ideas and techniques, ability to solve problems, ability to use technologies. J. Hornga, C. Lin, & L. ChanLin (2008), has divided the competence of lecturers into 5 groups of criteria, including: mental capability, interpersonal skills, management ability, professional capability and personality traits. In Vietnam, there is a lot of outstanding research about the content. The research of Nguyen Duc Chinh & Nguyen Phuong Nga (2006) designed criteria to evaluate lecturers' teaching activities and scientific research in Vietnam National University, Hanoi. The content of the research focuses on considering, analysing, and summarising experience lessons of some universities in the world; Analysing and designing a suitable model for evaluating teaching activities and scientific research of lecturers in Vietnam National

University, Hanoi in recent years. The research of Tran Xuan Bach (2010) illustrated the theory and practice of evaluation lecturers in universities with three tasks: teaching activities, scientific research, and other activities, including professional services for community service and civic responsibility. Besides, the research also suggested ways to classify lecturers and criteria for evaluating lecturers according to the trend at the time of research.

The research of Nguyen Thi Tuyet (2008) and Nguyen Van Thuy (2010) found out criteria of evaluation lecturers in 3 tasks: teaching, scientific research, and serving society and the community.

Hoang Thi Hoa (2020) studied to build a set of criteria for assessing the competence of lecturers of specialised English faculties, indicating the steps to develop a set of criteria including the following contents: teaching competence, language ability, specialised knowledge and research competence. Duong Minh Quang (2020) illustrated criteria to evaluate the scientific research competence of lecturers in VNUHCM and recommend contents to enhance the scientific research competence of lecturer here.

Process of evaluation lecturer's competence, The research of Pham Van Thuan, Nghiem Thi Thanh (2015) pointed out that the lecturer evaluation process needs to be combined with a 360-degree assessment model so that the assessment is more objective and systematic in 6 steps, including Step 1: Self-assessment; Step 2: Evaluation through direct superiors; Step 3: Evaluation by stakeholders (mainly student evaluation); Step 4: Evaluation by colleagues; Step 5: Evaluation by affiliated officials (if the lecturer also holds a leadership position); Step 6: Indirect superior assessment (compare the results of self-assessment with other lecturers, and at the same time need to discuss with the direct superior). Thereby, proposing evaluation proportion for teaching, scientific research, and social service activities based on the university's mission.

III. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The paper used the basic methods in social science to collect data and materials like analysis and comparative methods. A descriptive statistical method was used for secondary data.

Secondary data was collected from the results of lecturer evaluations at MTU, Vietnam, over a period of 11 years, from 2014 to 2024. This data has been published annually via email to every department at MTU to inform them about the evaluation results of each lecturer. After collection, the data was divided into two groups: the first group consists of lecturers, while the second includes office staff and service staff. In this paper, only the first group was selected for analysis. There are four levels of evaluation results: **Excellence, Good, Complete, and Not Complete**. In this study, the authors used only the lecturers' evaluation results and excluded those of individuals who did not participate in teaching.

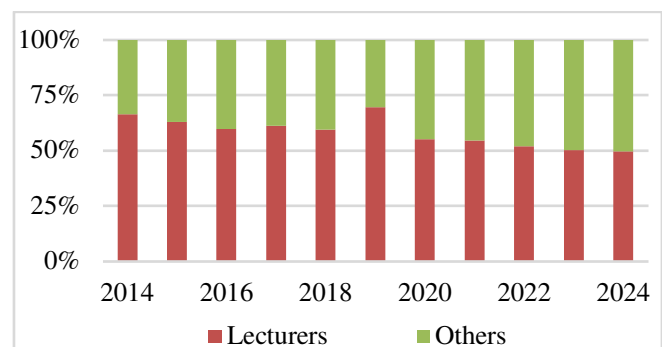


Figure 1. The percentage of lecturers and Others in total at MTU, Vietnam, 2014-2024

Source: Authors

The research process includes outlining the theory, collecting data, grouping data, analysing data, finding drawbacks, and recommending solutions.

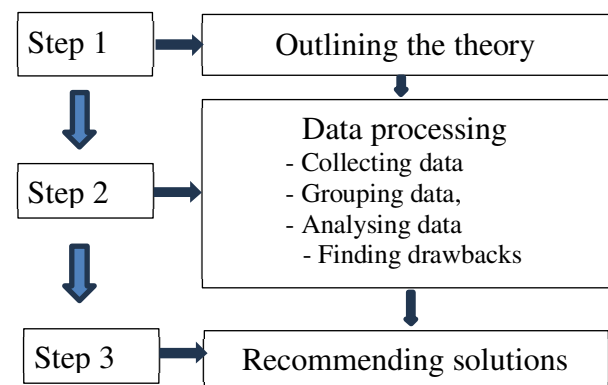


Diagram. The research process

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Theoretical background and practice of lecturer evaluation competency

a) Theoretical background

Lecturer evaluation competency

The concept of paper use keyword evaluation which are common in the educational field. There are many ways to define evaluation.

The process of judging or calculating the quality, importance, amount, or value of something. In the Vietnamese dictionary, evaluation is value recognition” (Dang Khoa, Ky Duyen, Dinh Chuong, 2013, p.231). Black, P. & Wiliam, D. (1998) gave a definition of evaluation (in a broad sense) that includes all the activities that teachers and students have carried out to collect information. This information can be used in a diagnostic sense to tailor teaching and learning. According to this definition, assessment includes teacher observations, classroom discussions, analysis of student activities, such as homework and tests.

Therefore, evaluation is the process of collecting and processing information about a certain object, thereby making a judgment on the value of that object (Huynh Kim Thua, 2020, p.9).

Competence is like ability.

Competence is the [ability](#) to do something well (Cambridge dictionary)

Competence is “responding effectively to complex requirements in a specific context” (OECD, 2019, p.12)

Competence is attributed to characteristics, qualities and attributes.

Competence “is a *characteristic* of an individual that demonstrates a level of proficiency - that is, being able to perform proficiently and reliably - one or some form of activity” (*Vietnamese encyclopedia*, 2002, p.41).

Competence is associated with activities.

According to the workshop documents, the overall general education program in the new general education program of the Ministry of Education and Training in 2015 classifies capacity in the category of *operation*. Competence is explained as “is the mobilization of knowledge, skills, and other personal attributes such as interest, belief, willpower, etc. to do a certain type of work in a certain context” (Ministry of Education and Training, 2015, p.5)

Lecturer capacity evaluation is an activity that includes evaluating lecturers' performance in all aspects of activities according to the tasks of lecturers annually, including Teaching tasks,

scientific research tasks, community service tasks and other activities (Huynh Kim Thua, 2020).

Criteria for evaluating lecturers

Most universities in the world offer criteria for evaluating lecturers based on 3 aspects of activity: teaching, scientific research and community service, or 4 aspects: teaching, scientific research, service and civic responsibility. However, lecturers are evaluated through developing a set of questions related to personal information such as gender, qualifications, personal experience, etc, combined with the criteria for research, teaching, and academic and service-related activities, which also demonstrate effectiveness. This evaluation design by John G. Sharp et al. (2013, p.643) can help teachers self-review their own competence in the fields of activity and, simultaneously, self-affirm their own time distribution for teachers' tasks. The questionnaire is designed in 3 parts: Part 1, provides general information about individual teachers, such as qualifications, gender, and self-determination of their own research capacity; Part 2 requires teachers to self-evaluate the criteria they have performed for the following aspects of work: research (32 criteria), teaching (22 criteria), and activities related to academics and professional service provision (16 criteria); Part 3: Answer as required questions about: The percentage of time (in percentage) teachers spend on research, teaching, and academic or service-related activities; Assessment of the work aspect considered by teachers to be the most important and least important in the types of research, teaching, and academic or service-related activities. Assess the work aspect that teachers are most satisfied with and least satisfied with in the types of research, teaching, and academic or service-related activities (J. G. Sharp, B. Hemmings, R. Kay & C. Callinan (2013), pp. 671-674).

Objectives of lecturer evaluation

Firstly, motivate lecturers by rewarding (with material and spiritual value) when they make efforts to create positive effects to meet the goals of the school, faculty and department, in order to serve the school, students and social needs.

Secondly, lecturer development: that is, to optimally exploit the abilities and potentials of *lecturers* by encouraging and facilitating the improvement of professional qualifications,

scientific research and application of applications, as well as the application of overall lecturer development measures in accordance with the needs and desires of students. Employers and schools (Tran Xuan Bach, 2010, 62).

In fact, lecturer evaluation often proceeds towards goals such as: Personal development: Identifying individual training needs; feedback on achievements; identifying transformations and work tasks; identifying the strengths of each individual and their development needs; Administrative decision-making: Salary, promotion, retention or dismissal, recognition of individual achievements, temporary resignation, identification of weak lecturers; Maintain and develop the organisation: Plan human resources, determine the training needs of the organisation, evaluate the achievement of the organisation's goals, provide information for the creation and determination of goals, evaluate human resource systems, consolidate and maintain the development needs of the organization (Tran Xuan Bach, 2010, 63)

b) Lecturer competency evaluation in practice

Lecturer competency evaluation in some universities

In Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States

All universities review and evaluate the performance of lecturers according to the standards applied throughout the country. All staff and lecturers must undergo a professional review every year (or once per 2 years) based on the self-review. This self-review is guaranteed to be kept confidential. In the absence of an agreement to keep the review and a specific instructor, the review may be redone by a third party. Much emphasis is placed on assessing the quality of teaching in the UK today mainly thanks to establishing a national accreditation body. This unit is a quality control mechanism that conducts quality accreditation to ensure that schools have an appropriate quality control mechanism and conducts quality assessments and organised external reviews to review the quality of teaching and learning at a university.

Take Queensland University (UQ) as a good example in Australia. UQ is a multi-disciplinary university, ranked 3rd in the group of the top 8 Australian universities for the quality of training and

scientific research. Lecturer evaluation aims to commit UQ to high educational quality for students. Teaching and Educational Development Institute of UQ conducted independently at the end of each semester or upon request. The assessment information is collected from the following 4 main participants: students, lecturers, colleagues, and others (employers, independent assessment units, and other training institutions).

A specific university in the United States is River University. Role of lecturer apply through 5 tasks, lecturer evaluation based on the 5 tasks with clear criteria, including: Effective teaching (50%-70%), scientific research (05-25%), Professional capacity development (10% - 30%), Contribution to the University (10%-25%), Serving the social community (05-10%).

Some countries in Asia are China, Korea, Hongkong, Taiwan, and Thailand. Universities used criteria of USA, UK and Europe to evaluate lecturer. However, criteria can be edited to suit every stage of development at their university.

Lecturer competency evaluation in Vietnamese universities

In Vietnam public universities, the lecturers' competence evaluation has followed the Law on cadres and civil servants, the Law on public employees, the Law of Higher Education, and other documents of Government. Now, the evaluation of lecturers in universities as employees follows The Decree of Government, including: The Decree No. 90/2020/NĐ-CP, 13th August 2020 and The Decree No.48/2023/NĐ-CP, 17th July 2023. There are 5 evaluation criteria including: politics and ideology; lifestyle ethics; working manners and practices; sense of discipline, results of performance of assigned duties and tasks. With ratings of Excellence, Good, Complete, not complete.

The evaluation process is carried out in the way of evaluating public employees and employees in general to summarize emulation and commendation titles, including: Step 1. Officials self-assess and rank quality; 2. Comment and evaluate officials 3. Collect comments and evaluations of the Party committee at the same level where the cadres work; 4. To consider and decide on the assessment and grading of cadre quality; 5. Notification of quality assessment and grading results.

Evaluation of lecturers in private universities of Vietnam. Private universities have evaluated lecturers according to the supervision of training staff or inspectors on the time of going to class and the progress of program implementation. At the same time, after each subject, students receive a questionnaire about students' teaching (students' comments on lecturers). The results will be handled if the lecturer makes some non-serious mistakes; he or she will continue to be invited to teach in the next courses. If most students object, the lecturer will not be allowed to continue to be invited or sign a contract to continue. There are also a number of universities that have developed a Lecturer Evaluation Card through self-assessment. Typically, there are two cases of evaluating lecturers through lecturers' self-assessment, such as Thu Dau Mot University and Dai Nam University for teaching and scientific research activities. An example here is Thu Dau Mot University, where lecturers conduct self-assessment on the following standards: Standard 1: Teaching activities (15 criteria); Standard 2: scientific research activities (5 criteria); Some other activities (3 criteria). Another typical case of developing an Evaluation Card can be mentioned is that Dai Nam University through lecturers' self-assessment and faculty leaders' evaluation on teaching, scientific research, student support and management activities and some advanced criteria are similar to the above criteria and some advanced criteria in surpassing or publish specialized newspapers, scientific reports, scientific research topics, write books (textbooks).

B. The evaluation of the lecturer at MTU

Evaluation background

MTU is located in the province of Mekong Delta, Vinh Long province. It was upgraded in 2011 from the college. This is the public university that educates many fields of engineering and architecture. From 2011, the evaluation of the lecturers was performed with the criteria and procedure of evaluating officials and civil servants at public universities. In 2020, there are changes in the criteria evaluation for the lecturers. With lecturers, the particular time for three tasks in one school year is 530 hours, including teaching 350 hours, scientific research 130 (doctor) and 120 (master); and community service 50 (doctor) and 60 (master).

In 2022, the evaluation of lecturers enclosed with the Competency Assessment Form with 10 criteria for teaching activities: Strictly comply with the general standards of professional ethics of teachers according to the University's regulations; Go to class on time according to the school's regulations; Comply with the detailed outline of the module; Adhere to the teaching schedule; Applying information technology in teaching; Marking and returning students' tests and assessments on time; Innovating teaching methods; Sharing teaching experiences with colleagues; Teaching results in the school year; Results of implementation of standard teaching hours in the school year. Scientific research activities with 4 criteria focusing on the rate of implementation of the normative time in the task. Criteria for community service activities and other professional activities focus on the standard hourly volume performance rate of the task.

Evaluation results

Through statistics on lecturer evaluation data in the period 2014-2024, there is a great change in classification based on evaluation results (Figure 2) when applying specific criteria for lecturer evaluation and after application.

From 2014 to 2019, when specific evaluation criteria have not been applied for lecturers with the standard number of hours for each task, lecturers can use teaching hours to compensate for other activities to complete the general standard hours for the academic year. The percentage of lecturers who have successfully completed their tasks from 2014 to 2019 has always accounted for over 50%, with an average of 53.9%.

However, in the period of 2020-2024, there are specific regulations regarding the standard hours for 3 specific tasks of lecturers; the classification and evaluation of lecturers have changed in the direction of distribution in 3 levels: excellence, good, complete with the corresponding average rate of these 3 levels is 14.2%, 19.2%, 18.4%. Particularly, the level of lecturers who do not complete their tasks only accounts for a small percentage.

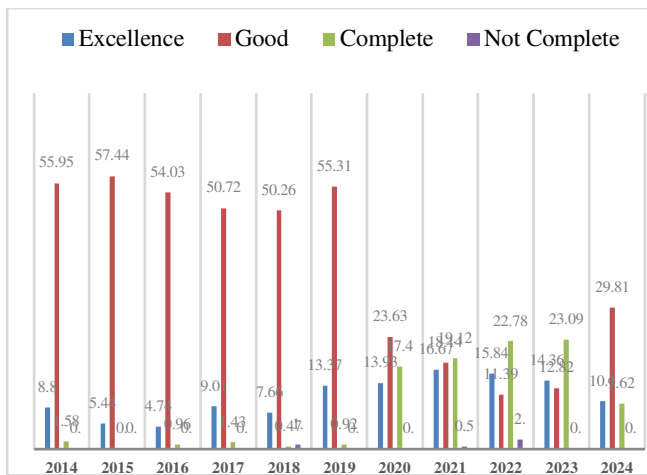


Figure. 2 The result of lecturers' evaluation at MTU (2014-2024)

Source: Authors

Advantages: Applying specific criteria for evaluation makes it easier to classify lecturers in achieving their tasks. Evaluation according to criteria helps lecturers recognize their strengths and limitations in performing tasks, helping the school have a way to allocate lecturers according to these strengths.

Limitations: There is an imbalance in the performance of 3 tasks of lecturers, which means that the number of lecturers who cannot meet all the criteria of all three tasks is still low. The majority of lecturers focus on teaching activities. The tasks of serving the community have not yet shown the prominence of the role of lecturers in the community. That is, they should focus on the research products of lecturers to be included in the community to serve the community based on the professional activities of lecturers.

Reasons: Lecturers also appreciate the role of teaching activities more than scientific research and community service activities. The number of lecturers with doctoral degrees is still low, not meeting the capacity to conduct research activities. Lecturers have not yet focused on community activities in the early years of applying the specific criteria of these three tasks.

Recommendations: There should be a policy on fostering and arranging appropriate activities for lecturers who do not have the strength to carry out scientific research activities and community service activities. Making maximum conditions for lecturers with research strengths to focus on research

activities. Organizing research guidance sessions for lecturers with research capacity and experience to share with lecturers who are still limited in research activities.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The article focuses on analyzing the evaluation of lecturers in the past time in MTU, Vietnam in the period 2014-2024. There are certain changes in this assessment activity when changing the evaluation criteria, from assessments based on general criteria to assessments based on specific criteria of 3 tasks of teaching, scientific research and community service. The article also presents strengths, limitations and some recommendations for this, however, the study has not been able to conduct a survey of the implementation of the evaluation of the participants. That is a research gap for further research in the near future.

The results of this paper can be applied to universities with similar conditions to MTU, especially those that are transitioning from general evaluation.

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