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A UTAUT-based analysis of the Adoption Factors of Student Evaluations of Teaching

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Abstract

Student Evaluations of Teaching are an essential component of educational assessment that provides valuable feedback to instructors and their institutions. Indeed, their effectiveness depends on students' active participation and engagement with the assessment process itself. Identifying the factors that influence students' adoption of teaching evaluation systems is crucial for increasing response rates, which ultimately leads to better validity and utility of the assessment. However, adoption dynamics of course evaluations received little attention, especially in computer science disciplines. This paper presents the findings of a study aimed at identifying the factors that motivate and hinder students from participating in the course feedback process. To this end, we designed a survey using the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology and distributed it among college students to assess their experiences with the current evaluation system. Our findings show that while students perceive the importance of providing professors with feedback to improve their teaching performance, other extrinsic aspects, such as effort and facilitating conditions, together with the uncertainty of whether their input is acknowledged and acted upon, hinder them from filling out Student Evaluations of Teaching. Based on these insights, we offer actionable recommendations for improving SET.

Keywords: Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET), Educational assessment, Unified Theory of Adoption and Use of Technology, UTAUT Model.

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A UTAUT-based analysis of the Adoption Factors of Student Evaluations of Teaching

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1. INTRODUCTION

The significance of student feedback in shaping instructional quality, with specific regard to higher education, has been acknowledged in a large body of scholarly literature (Okogbaa, 2016). Given its effectiveness in decision-making on important issues, such as teaching quality, course organization, assessment, and learning resources (Okogbaa, 2016), different types of Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) systems have been designed to capture the value of ongoing, constructive feedback, which not only informs teachers about their practice but also stimulates reflection and dialogue between all stakeholders, including students, educators, and administrators (Mandouit, 2018). In fact, SET serves multiple purposes that contribute to the overall quality of teaching and learning, including providing faculty with useful feedback to improve their pedagogy (Boysen, 2016), supporting administrators in their annual faculty performance evaluations when making merit pay, promotion, and tenure decisions (Jaquett et al., 2017; Terry et al., 2017), and assisting students in course and instructor selection decisions, thanks to the possibility to provide students with information about the perceived teaching styles and course demands of different instructors (Stroebe, 2020).

Previous research explored instructors' perceptions of and reactions to SET based on various aspects of teaching. Several studies found that formal evaluations, particularly those using standardized instruments with multiple dimensions, raise awareness among teachers and encourage them to tailor their pedagogy and course design and delivery to meet students' preferences (Boysen, 2016). In the context of the review and tenure process, untenured instructors are more likely to use SETs to inform their teaching practice compared to tenured instructors (Omer et al., 2023). Also, previous studies found that, as instructors' practices are shaped by their beliefs about students' needs and capabilities, SET can be useful in reframing teachers' perspectives to align with their students better (Lee et al., 2016). However, the validity and reliability of SETs are subjects of ongoing debate due to their susceptibility to numerous factors beyond teaching quality. For instance, previous research identified significant variance in SETs attributable to differences among teachers, courses, and individual student perceptions (Feistauer, 2016; Quansah, 2024). This variability is further complicated by disciplinary differences, as (Yu et al., 2022) noted that students in STEM fields generally provide higher ratings compared to their peers in non-STEM disciplines. Consequently, instructors in non-STEM fields, who are more likely to face harsher evaluations, tend to view SETs more negatively than their STEM counterparts (Omer et al., 2023).

While extensive research has examined instructors' perspectives on SET, there remains a gap in studies exploring students' perceptions. Previous studies found that students perceive teaching evaluation as an important process for improving teaching and giving them a voice (Sullivan et al., 2024). Also, regardless of the type of institution, academic discipline, class standing, and respondent gender, students generally hold positive views about the evaluation process (Kite et al., 2015) and see themselves as qualified to assess teaching performance (Huxam et al., 2017; Suárez et al., 2022). Simultaneously, several studies reported overall low completion rates (Brown & Kosovich, 2015). Specifically, the factors motivating students' engagement with SET and preventing them from providing their teachers with feedback have received less attention. Indeed, understanding students' adoption of teaching evaluation systems is especially crucial to enhancing the quality of teaching and adapting to the evolving needs of students.

In addition to traditional official SET tools, third-party review platforms and websites offer students a more informal and, in many cases, anonymous means of sharing their feedback. For instance, RateMyProfessors.com (RMP) is a popular website where students can anonymously rate professors on difficulty, clarity, and overall quality. In addition, students

can leave public reviews about their experiences on this platform. RMP, active in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom, has quickly become a popular resource with millions of user-generated ratings and comments. RMP evaluations can significantly shape students' perceptions and self-efficacy in courses. For example, by accessing reviews from peers who have taken the course, students may rely on RMP to bridge an information gap, especially when official SETs are unavailable or difficult to access (Boswell, 2020). Therefore, addressing the lack of research on the adoption factors that motivate and prevent students from filling out SETs also involves a closer examination of the reasons why students engage with alternatives to official SETs.

While previous studies have highlighted various factors influencing students' participation in SET and suggested strategies to increase completion rates, it is important to acknowledge that students' adoption of SET is not only influenced by student motivations but also by a range of other factors, including institutional policies, faculty engagement, and administrative support. This, in turn, requires a comprehensive evaluation of intrinsic and extrinsic factors impacting students' adoption of the system. For instance, intrinsic factors may include students' perceptions of the relevance and usefulness of SET feedback and their understanding of how their input contributes to improving teaching quality. Extrinsic factors, on the other hand, could encompass institutional incentives or rewards for
participation, the clarity of communication regarding the purpose and use of SET data, and the ease of access to evaluation platforms.

To this end, theoretical frameworks such as the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) model (Venkatesh, 2003) provide a structured approach to highlight the multifaceted adoption factors of SET. This model identifies various dimensions, including performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, facilitating conditions, and intrinsic motivation, which influence individuals' behavioral intention to use any technology. As SET mostly rely on digital evaluations, by applying the UTAUT framework, institutions can gain deeper insights into the motivations and hindrances of students' adoption of SET and tailor interventions accordingly.

In this paper, we present the findings of a study in which we leveraged the UTAUT to survey students' adoption of SET and develop actionable recommendations for enhancing the SET process. By leveraging UTAUT's established constructs, including performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, facilitating conditions, and intrinsic motivation, this study aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the intrinsic and extrinsic factors influencing students' acceptance and utilization of course evaluation mechanisms. Utilizing this model could also provide comprehensive recommendations to improve the adoption and effectiveness of SET systems, ultimately enhancing teaching and learning experiences, especially in Computer Science. Based on our results, our recommendations include refining communication strategies to emphasize the importance of student feedback, providing training or support resources to faculty members to effectively utilize SET data for instructional improvement effectively, and enhancing transparent communication.

2. RELATED WORK

The significance and impact of SET have been extensively studied in various disciplines. For example, in medical sciences, SET reports influence teaching and administrative practices, with lecturers actively responding to student feedback (Safavi et al., 2012). Similarly, in engineering education, SET is linked to students' perceptions of faculty expertise and teaching abilities (Fawad, 2014).

SETs are particularly crucial in computer science disciplines where the rapid advancement of technology and evolving demands of the job market present significant challenges for educators and institutions. The introduction of new systems, languages, and innovations requires curricula to adapt and remain current. Also, educators face the constant challenge of identifying and addressing the changing needs of their students. In this scenario, although prior research has emphasized the need for a more integrated, relevant, and innovative approach to evaluating teaching, several studies found that even skill-oriented CS curricula often lack connection to real-world challenges students face after graduation (Weymouth et al., 2021) and computer science instructors struggle to continually adapt their course content and delivery with respect to a technological scenario evolving quickly (Hai-zhe, 2014). To this end, SETs and other types of evaluations, including mid-semester ones, can effectively address these challenges by providing valuable feedback to educators, enabling them to identify areas for improvement (Sozer et al., 2019).

Student teaching evaluations are crucial in computer science education, offering insights into course effectiveness and faculty performance. Research highlights that computer science courses often receive lower evaluations compared to other disciplines, underscoring the need for tailored teaching strategies (Wang et al., 2023). These evaluations, however, are subject to various influences such as course characteristics, level, and size (Wang et al., 2023). Additionally, in computer science departments, teaching-track faculty positions often heavily depend on student evaluations for career advancement, despite concerns about the inherent biases of these assessments (Glebova et al., 2024). Biases, including those related to gender, can skew evaluations, as found by (Santiesteban et al., 2022). Despite these issues, integrating evaluation practices with research in computing education is crucial for validating claims and strengthening empirical approaches in the field (Decker et al., 2018). As computer science education evolves, it is essential to develop more comprehensive and unbiased evaluation methods to ensure fair assessments and continuous improvement in teaching quality.

A study evaluated students' understanding of teaching quality and their assessment criteria, which can inform the design of SET tools and systems. Their findings revealed that most students recognize the importance of teaching quality evaluation and prioritize factors such as learning outcomes, teacher attitudes, and teaching ability. However, several other studies have raised concerns about the validity of SET, as the questions used in the evaluation are often teaching-oriented, non-specific, and satisfaction-based (Borch et al., 2020). Additionally, the accuracy of student evaluations in higher education is dubious due to multiple sources of measurement error (Quansah et al., 2024). To address this, researchers proposed a questionnaire that considers specific factors of teaching quality, such as the ability to transfer knowledge, instructor accessibility, and social skills, to obtain a more accurate and comparable assessment of teaching quality across universities (Vevere & Kozlinkis, 2011). Moreover, the study found that official course evaluations, which are typically conducted at the end of the term or semester, are not conducive to realizing immediate improvements. Thus, a comprehensive evaluation system that integrates multiple sources, such as student feedback, self-assessment, peer review, and teaching portfolios, is needed (Constantinou & Wijnen-Meijer, 2022).

Another concern is the effectiveness and outcome of SET. Student evaluations alone are insufficient for evaluating teaching effectiveness, and a refocus on outcome-based academic standards is needed (Cui et al., 2022). Therefore, SETs should be used cautiously to prove teaching effectiveness (Ali et al., 2021). Data generated by student evaluation systems should lead to genuine and lasting improvements in teaching quality and student learning (Palmer, 2012). They suggest making course evaluation outcomes publicly available to ensure the long-term impact of the evaluation process. Despite ongoing debates about whether SET results should be shared publicly, there is currently little evidence of implementing these suggestions and a lack of studies evaluating whether public availability of SET outcomes leads to better teaching and learning outcomes. However, several studies reported poor engagement with and participation in SET (Chapman & Joines, 2017).

In contrast to official course evaluations, platforms like Rate My Professors (RMP) offer publicly accessible ratings and potentially serve as a feedback loop between student opinions and academic performance. According to previous studies, exposure to positive RMP evaluations leads to higher ratings of instructor competence, increased student engagement, and better quiz performance compared to negative evaluations (Reber et al., 2017). Nevertheless, the influence of RMP on students' course selection decisions has been underscored: positive comments about professors on RMP can positively influence students' evaluations (Scherr et al., 2013), and students show a greater tendency to enroll in course sections taught by instructors with higher ratings (Brown et al., 2015). Considering the significant impact of RMP on students' decision-making, understanding the factors that incentivize their participation in the evaluation process could enhance the SET system, improving its validity, representation, and sustainability.

Whether through official SETs or alternative systems, understanding the factors that motivate or hinder students from contributing their feedback is key to identifying strategies that can drive engagement. In (Chapman & Joines, 2017), the authors surveyed faculty members to discover approaches for incentivizing students and increasing SET response rates. The study revealed three key tactics: (1) emphasizing the importance of class evaluations during lectures, (2) cultivating a classroom atmosphere of mutual respect between instructor and students, and (3)

informing students about how their feedback contributes to course modifications. For instance, previous research suggests that faculty members should review past evaluation results and highlight any changes to show students that their feedback is valued (Medina et al., 2019). This approach may motivate students to participate in future evaluations. Specifically, the study found that response rates increase when instructors demonstrate a strong interest in receiving evaluations (Young et al., 2019). Several studies emphasize the importance of continuous monitoring and communication with students throughout the evaluation process to motivate their participation. In particular, Gordon (Gordon et al., 2018) found that rewarding students with additional points toward an assignment or test can be an effective strategy.

While these studies have identified specific strategies to improve student participation in teaching evaluations, focusing on isolated factors may not be sufficient to fully address low response rates, especially considering that SET is a complex process influenced by multiple interrelated elements. Therefore, a more comprehensive, holistic approach is needed to understand and effectively improve SET adoption among students.

Researchers have suggested extending the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to gain a deeper understanding of the factors influencing students' intention to participate in computer-based or online course evaluations. Previous research found that perceived usefulness is a key factor driving individuals' intention to use technology, while perceived ease of use can affect intention directly and indirectly by shaping perceptions of usefulness (To & Tang, 2019). The study further enhances the original TAM by incorporating additional factors such as subjective norm—students' perceptions of whether their teachers, classmates, or parents expect them to participate in evaluations—and perceived relevance, which refers to the extent to which students view participation as important and relevant to their overall academic experience. However, this area remains underexplored in educational research, and to the best of our knowledge, this is the only paper that has applied the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) to understand the factors influencing course evaluation. While TAM has been widely used to examine technology adoption, it primarily focuses on perceived usefulness and ease of use, which may not fully capture the broader range of factors influencing SET. To address this limitation, we propose using the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) model (Venkatesh, 2003) in this paper, as it provides a more systematic and comprehensive framework for identifying key determinants of students' acceptance and use of tools for SET. UTAUT integrates multiple theoretical perspectives, including social influence, facilitating conditions, and performance expectancy, which makes it a more robust model for understanding technology adoption in educational settings. Despite its strengths, there remains a significant gap in the literature regarding the application of UTAUT in SET research, as no prior studies, to the best of our knowledge, have employed this model to examine students' acceptance of course evaluation tools. This study, therefore, aims to bridge this gap and provide new insights into the factors shaping students' engagement with SET technologies.

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The goal of our work is to provide an in-depth understanding of the specific adoption factors of SETs to ultimately aid the development of more effective strategies to incentivize students' participation in the evaluation process. Specifically, we are interested in the aspects that motivate students to fill out course evaluations as well as the factors that hinder them from participating in this process.

To this end, we utilized the UTAUT model (Venkatesh, 2003), a widely recognized theoretical framework for evaluating an individual's willingness to adopt new technology. This model has been extensively applied within educational contexts to analyze the adoption of various types of innovative systems in higher education, from social networking to communication tools and platforms (Lewis et al., 2013). Although it can be applied to evaluate students' willingness to engage with SETs, it has not been utilized for this purpose before. The UTAUT model characterizes user adoption using the following dimensions, described in Figure 1. The model dimensions can be categorized into extrinsic and intrinsic elements. The extrinsic elements include:

- *Performance Expectancy (PE)* indicates the degree to which an individual believes that using a particular technology will help them achieve gains in performance or accomplish specific tasks effectively. In the context of SET, performance expectancy relates to students' perceptions of how effective the evaluation process is in providing valuable feedback to instructors and improving the

overall quality of teaching and learning. Therefore, they may assess the usefulness of SET based on their expectations of how their feedback can enhance teaching practices and academic outcomes.

- *Effort Expectancy (EE)* refers to individuals' perceptions of how effortless it is to interact with SET tools. The goals are to (1) assess the perceived ease or difficulty of filling our course evaluation based on factors such as the accessibility of the evaluation platform, the user interface design, and the simplicity of the evaluation process and (2) discover if they influence students' willingness to engage with the system.
- *Social Influence (SI)* encompasses external factors, such as peer recommendations and social norms, that impact individuals' acceptance and adoption of technology. Given that students' decisions to participate in the evaluation process can be influenced by social factors, including reminders from instructors and peer interactions, they have the potential to shape students' attitudes toward SET participation.
- *Facilitating Conditions (FC)* focuses on the availability of resources, support, and infrastructure that facilitate the adoption and usage of a technology or system. In the case of SET, incentives (e.g., extra credits) provided by the instructors as well as clear instructions and guidance on how to navigate the system, can enhance students' participation in the evaluation process.
- *Intrinsic Motivation (IM)* is the component that is often fueled by individuals' inherent interest and enjoyment in the task. Some students might derive intrinsic satisfaction from the act of providing feedback and making a meaningful contribution to the academic community. They see value in the process itself, regardless of external or incentives. Unlike extrinsic dimensions, intrinsic factors in the context of SET emphasize the perceived impact of the importance of providing feedback per se, rather than because of its value or consequences. This distinction is crucial, as students generally have a positive perception of the value of their feedback.

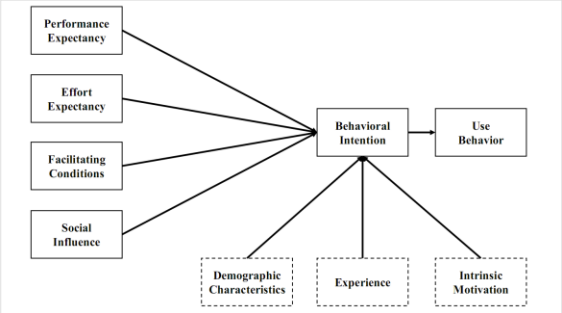


Figure 1 The UTAUT framework

We utilized the UTAUT model to design a survey consisting of 18 questions organized as follows. Questions 1-2 involved demographic and screening questions. We did not include questions about race and gender as they were deemed irrelevant descriptors for the objective of our study based on previous literature. Instead, we focused on factors such as class standing and GPA levels. Questions 3-5 indicated factors influencing their course selection process for both required and elective courses. Questions 6-10 asked participants to share factors influencing their adoption of SET and their preference for accessing SET results (Table 1).

In questions 11-16, participants were presented with a series of visualizations aimed at determining the types of information they wished to gain from SET and the preferred visual presentation methods. Questions 17-18 involved open-ended questions that enabled respondents to share additional thoughts, with the option for voluntary participation in follow-up interviews.
The survey was disseminated via email and social media to over 500 students primarily enrolled at one university in the United States, though respondents were invited to share the questionnaire with their contacts.

4. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

A total of 228 community college students from the Southeastern region of the United States, across various disciplines and primarily from undergraduate teaching populations, completed the survey in Spring 2024. The survey was self-reported. This school only uses online (computer-based) student teaching evaluations, which are sent out only at the end of the course to collect student responses. Responses from a number of students (i.e., 76) who completed less than 47% of the survey were excluded from the analysis. Most participants were juniors (35.57%), sophomores (30.20%), and seniors (22.15%), with the remaining 12.08% being freshmen, as shown in (see Figure 2). In terms

of GPA level, 43.62% reported that their GPA was higher than 3.75 on a scale of 4.0, 20.13% had a GPA from 3.50 to 3.74, 20.81% had a GPA from 3.00 to 3.49, whereas 7.33% reported that they had a GPA from 2.50 to 2.99. Two participants had a GPA below 2.50, and ten reported that they either did not know or did not want to share their GPA.

Our results are summarized in Figures 3 and 4, which show the ranked UTAUT factors facilitating and hindering adoption of SET, respectively. Our findings do not indicate a specific preference in terms of overall adoption. This is due to our discovery that specific dimensions of the UTAUT model act as opposing forces. Some dimensions, such as performance expectancy and social influence, positively contribute to students' willingness to fill out teaching evaluations. However, others, including effort expectancy, facilitating conditions, and intrinsic motivation, act as hindering factors.

4.1 Motivating factors

Subsequently, we analyzed individual responses to reconcile them with the UTAUT dimensions in order to categorize the adoption factors that motivate students to complete course evaluations. Specifically, respondents were asked to rank possible options that engaged them with SETs. The respondent's top choice was given the highest weight (i.e., 5), while their least preferred choice was assigned a weight of 1. Our analysis indicated that the strongest motivating factor for completing course evaluations is the belief that providing feedback will enhance the course, with a weighted average ranking of 3.65. This finding aligns with previous research (Chapman & Joines, 2017) highlighting students' motivation coming from the potential impact of their feedback on course improvement (i.e., performance expectancy). Following closely behind is the incentive to fill out evaluations (i.e., 3.13), suggesting that external rewards or recognition also play a significant role in motivating students. Additionally, the ease of completing evaluations and the sense of responsibility to provide feedback to instructors resulted in moderately influential factors, scoring 3.01 and 2.62, respectively. These findings underscore the importance of streamlining the evaluation process and students' perceived obligation to contribute constructively to instructional improvement. Finally, factors related to social influence, including the instructor prompting for their feedback and whether other students participate in SET, appear to have the least impact on the motivation to complete evaluations. This implies either a lack of effective influence from instructors, which was also emphasized in previous studies (Young et al., 2019) or that such encouragement does not impact student behavior significantly.

4.2 Hindering factors

We analyzed the factors that represent a barrier to the adoption of SET. A significant portion (32.11%) highlighted aspects related to time constraints (i.e., effort expectancy), the non-mandatory nature of evaluations (i.e., facilitating conditions), or that SET was not a priority for them (i.e., intrinsic motivation). This was followed by 22.63% of students citing a perceived lack of impact or importance attributed to the evaluations (i.e., performance expectancy), signaling a potential gap in understanding the value of feedback and its potential influence on instructional improvement. Additionally, 18.96% of respondents expressed disinterest in providing feedback (i.e., intrinsic motivation), while 14.07% mentioned the absence of encouragement from professors or peer influence as barriers to participation (i.e., facilitating conditions and social influence), further underscoring the role of instructor engagement in fostering student involvement, but also partially in contrast with our previous findings. Usability concerns regarding the evaluation form (i.e., effort expectancy) were identified by a relatively smaller percentage of students (7.34%).

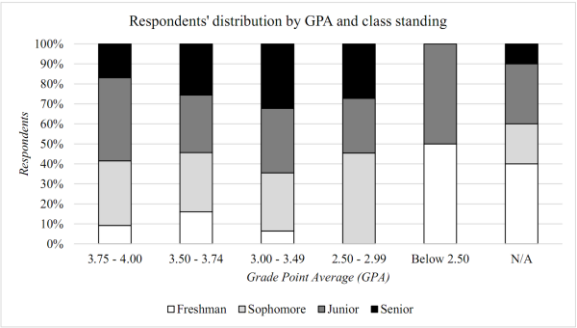


Figure 2 Distribution of respondents across class standings and GPA

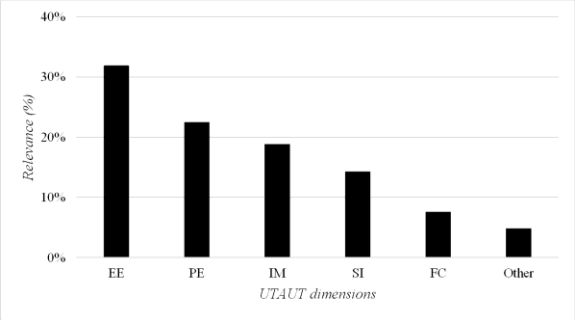


Figure 3 Ranking of factors facilitating the adoption of SET

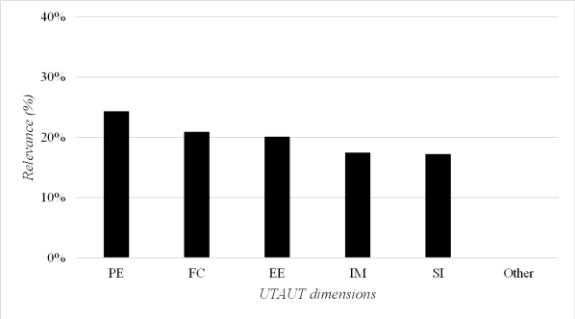


Figure 4 Factors hindering SET adoption

4.3 Behavioral intention model

After analyzing the factors that motivate and hinder students' adoption of SET, we used our results to create a behavioral intention model as specified by the UTAUT framework. Specifically, we utilized quantitative data from participants to estimate the sentiment and magnitude of each of the five UTAUT dimensions. The results are shown in Figure 5, where each latent construct is associated with its corresponding positive and negative sentiment, where the arithmetic sum yields a measure of the overall sentiment. In addition, the Figure also provides insight into the overall impact of each dimension on behavioral intention. This can be calculated by considering the absolute value of the positive and negative component of each latent construct and then by normalizing the results over a scale from 0 to 1, which can be interpreted as how each dimension impacts behavioral intention percentwise. Facilitating conditions, performance expectancy, and effort expectancy were assigned normalized weights of 0.25, 0.23, and 0.20, respectively. Intrinsic motivation and social influence scored 0.17 and 0.15, respectively.

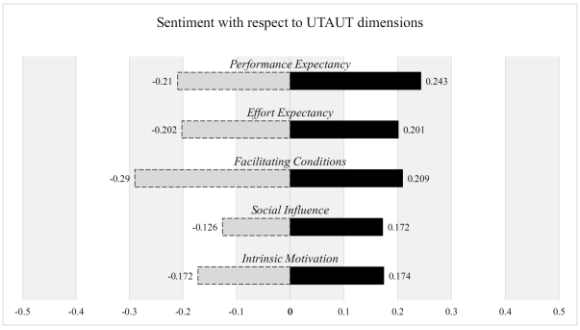


Figure 5 Factors facilitating (right) and hindering (left) SET adoption.

Performance expectancy, which reflects students' belief in the potential impact of their feedback on course improvement, plays the most significant role in driving adoption. With facilitating conditions having the second highest weight, this suggests that incentives that facilitate the participant process, such as the provision of extra credits, also play a crucial role in encouraging engagement with SET. Effort expectancy, ranking third, includes factors such as system accessibility, user interface design, and the simplicity of the evaluation process. Intrinsic motivation ranks slightly higher than social influence, indicating its relatively minor impact on adoption. While intrinsic motivation, which includes aspects such as making a meaningful contribution and perceiving value in the evaluation process itself, is present, it is not as pronounced as other factors. Finally, social influence was reported to play a minimal role in adoption, with participants mentioning factors such as reminders from instructors and peer interactions. While peer and instructor influence may serve as reminders, they are not significant drivers of student engagement with SET.

5. EXTRINSIC AND INTRINSIC FACTORS

In this section, we provide a detailed analysis of each of the extrinsic and intrinsic factors contributing to SET's low adoption level.

5.1 Performance Expectancy

While most participants reported that providing feedback will contribute to course improvement, our data shows a prevalent skepticism regarding the actual utilization of feedback results. Many participants expressed disillusionment, stating that they have never witnessed course improvements despite completing course evaluations. Moreover, the survey results indicated the importance of perceived faculty quality in students' decision-making processes. A significant majority (42.28%) cited the perceived quality of the faculty as the most crucial factor

influencing their choice of courses to enroll in, surpassing other considerations such as instructor difficulty (9%). However, concerns about course quality emerged as a significant deterrent for students when considering specific classes, underscoring students' expectations that course evaluations should serve as a mechanism for enhancing educational offerings. Importantly, participants expressed a desire for greater transparency regarding the utilization of evaluations by institutions and whether feedback is acted upon. This sentiment reflects students' skepticism about the efficacy of the feedback process and their desire for more information on its outcomes. This indicates a need for institutions to provide more information and demonstrate the value placed on student feedback.

5.2 Effort Expectancy

Effort expectancy emerged as the third important determinant shaping students' motivation towards embracing SET systems, a conclusion drawn from examining survey responses employing quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Our data showed the presence of a pattern where many students perceived completing SET evaluations as straightforward, thus confirming the simplicity of the process. Our findings reveal that only 7.34% of respondents considered platform usability as a potential hindrance. This observation not only highlights the positive sentiment among students regarding the user-friendliness of SET platforms but also hints at the efficacy of their design in facilitating accessibility. The data suggests that, from a usability standpoint, the SET systems are largely well-crafted and user-friendly, creating an accessible environment for student engagement.

5.3 Social Influence

Reminders from instructors and peer interactions were mentioned as factors influencing participation in the SET process but not as significant drivers. This suggests that while social influence may encourage students to complete evaluations, they are not the primary motivators for engagement. On the other hand, the data revealed interesting patterns when examining factors influencing students' choices in selecting classes. Only a modest percentage (12.75%) cited friend recommendations or enrolling in sections with recommended instructors as influential factors for required classes. However, the landscape shifts when considering elective courses. Positive feedback from other students emerged as the most influential factor, surpassing the reputation of the instructor and the course format in importance. Despite the reported insignificant role of social influence in adoption, students consistently expressed the importance of making evaluation results available in their open-ended comments. Additionally, a high percentage (91.78%) indicated varying degrees of perceived helpfulness of course evaluations. This disparity in the influence of social factors underscores a complex interplay between individual decision-making and collective feedback. While students may not be socially influenced to fill out evaluations per se, they are influenced by the feedback of their peers in making course choices. Therefore, it is important to consider both individual motivations
and social dynamics in designing effective evaluation systems and increasing student engagement.

5.4 Facilitating Conditions

Facilitating Conditions resulted the UTAUT dimension with the highest weight and, thus, playing the most important role in students' adoption of SET. Specifically, our findings indicate that facilitating conditions had the most negative impact on adoption (-0.081) compared to other dimensions that hinder adoption. This suggests that the absence of facilitating conditions poses a significant barrier to student engagement with course evaluations. To compensate for the perceived lack of student incentives, encourage student participation, and enhance the quality and quantity of responses, instructors should provide tangible benefits such as extra credits, recognize participation with some form of acknowledgment or feedback, and allocate class time for students to fill out SET forms could increase response rates. Furthermore, 32.11% of students reported a lack of time and availability as their primary concern. The timing of course evaluations, typically distributed at the end of the semester, coincides with the busiest period for students. This poses challenges for students in prioritizing the task of completing evaluations among their other end-of-semester commitments. To address the challenge of time constraints, institutions could explore flexible scheduling options for evaluations, allowing students to complete them at a time that better aligns with their availability. Also, allocating class time for students to fill out SET forms could increase response rates.

5.5 Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic factors accounted for a relatively minor impact on adoption. Only 18.96% of respondents expressed disinterest in providing any feedback. However, students reported a high sense of personal responsibility to provide feedback to

instructors. Analyzing open-ended comments revealed that the reasons for this disinterest vary among respondents. Some expressed contentment with either the course content or the instructor's performance, feeling no imperative need to provide feedback; others indicated a sense of dissatisfaction or disinterest, leading to a reluctance to offer constructive input. Although intrinsic motivation may not be the primary driver for providing feedback, it still shapes respondents' attitudes toward providing feedback. Our findings show that students prioritize their intrinsic motivations, such as personal satisfaction or a genuine desire to contribute to the improvement of the course. As a result, external factors alone are insufficient to compel students to engage in course evaluations, except for receiving assurance that their feedback is read and taken action upon. Regarding students' sentiments toward sharing SET results with future students while maintaining anonymity, the majority (61.64%) expressed being moderately to highly willing to fill out course evaluations, whereas a high proportion (32.19%) indicated that this would not impact their behavior, as reported in Figure 8. In contrast, when questioned about the perceived helpfulness of accessing course evaluation results before enrolling in a course, the responses leaned significantly toward positive sentiments. Approximately 91.78% of participants indicated varying degrees of perceived helpfulness, ranging from moderately helpful (21.23%) and slightly helpful (27.4%) to extremely helpful (43.15%). These results, shown in Figure 7, underscore a strong endorsement of the publication of course evaluation results. Furthermore, the disparity between the two scenarios highlights the importance of perceived personal benefit in shaping students' attitudes toward evaluation processes. While the potential impact on future students may motivate some students to participate more actively, the direct benefits of accessing evaluation results for informed decision-making appear to resonate more strongly with most students.

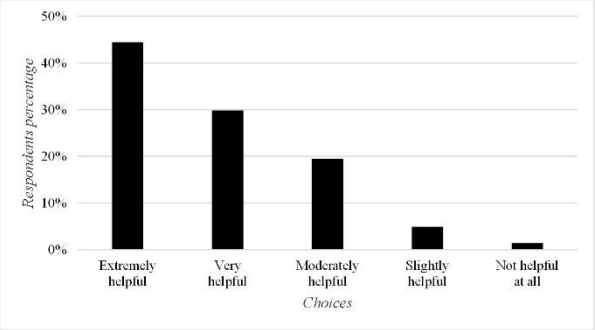


Figure 7 Perceived sentiment towards making the results of SET publicly available.

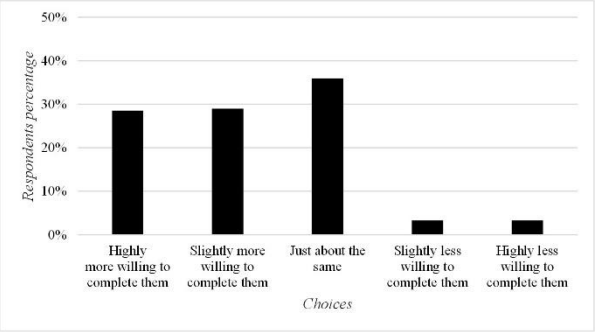


Figure 8 Perceived impact of SET's public availability on students' adoption.

6. DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Our study suggests that targeted interventions are necessary to improve students' sentiment toward SET and, consequently, their behavioral intention to adopt feedback collection tools. To this end, we analyzed specific responses, comments, and motivations from participants. In this section, we present detailed feedback garnered from students via 90 responses to the open-ended question "What is missing or could be improved in teaching evaluations?" along with recommendations on addressing the dimensions that act as opposing forces hindering course evaluation adoption.

6.1 Performance Expectancy

Students reported high skepticism on how their feedback is used. R1 questioned whether "*[SET feedback] is actually used or considered*". Transparency regarding the feedback process and its outcomes is crucial to enhance students' trust in the effectiveness of SET. This is confirmed by R2 and R3, who stated "*I wish there was more transparency that the professors actually read and use the evaluations*", and "*Overall, I feel like I do the evaluations, but my*

voice is not heard", respectively. Institutions should address students' skepticism by showing examples of how evaluations have led to improvements in courses. One recommendation, also highlighted in a student's comment, could be to publish reports summarizing student feedback and subsequent actions taken by the department.

6.2 Effort Expectancy

Students generally find the evaluation process straightforward, yet they offered suggestions for enhancing its user-friendliness, such as more concise questions and optional sections. Also, several aspects could be refined, including the format and length of the evaluation (two comments), the rating system (two comments), and visualization (three comments). For instance, R4 suggested adding "*a more visual way of representing evaluations*", while R5 advocated for "*more charts and fewer words*". Additionally, two respondents referenced RateMyProfessors, a popular website where students can anonymously rate professors, as a preferred format for course evaluations.

6.3 Facilitating Conditions

Noticeably, 16.7% (16/90) of the responses indicate a desire for the results to be published, particularly to assist with class enrollment. According to R6, "*students should be able to see [the evaluations] when enrolling in their classes. We are blindly choosing which classes to enroll in, specifically with a teacher that may just read off a Power-Point when some need more than that*". In accordance with previous literature, respondents suggested that institutions should consider publishing the results of SET to provide prospective students with information for enrollment purposes. By making evaluation results accessible, students can make more informed decisions about their course selections. Also, tangible incentives should be implemented to encourage student participation in SET. Offering extra credit or acknowledgment of participation can motivate students to engage with the evaluation process. R7 suggested providing "*incentives to fill out optional boxes. Most of the time, people just skip all optional parts*", whereas R8 noted that "*only people with highly positive or highly negative opinions are likely to fill out SET*" without incentives.

Additionally, some students raised concerns that SET questions are often "*too similar and repetitive or don't really apply to the course*". R9 suggested adding "*specific questions about [the instructor's] teaching abilities*". This indicates a need to develop a set of SET questions that are more relevant, specific, and comprehensive.

6.4 Social Influence

Among those respondents who demanded course evaluation results to get published, the majority of them also wanted future students to have access to the evaluations and "*include advice for future students*" (R10). When students know that their evaluations will be visible to their peers, they may feel a greater sense of responsibility and motivation to provide honest and constructive feedback. This social visibility can act as a powerful motivator, encouraging students to engage more actively in the evaluation process.

6.5 Intrinsic Motivation

Although intrinsic factors appear to have a relatively minor impact on adoption, enhancing these factors is crucial due to the statistically significant relationship between SET scores and students' perceived value of SET practice (Spooren, 2017). Students are more likely to engage seriously with SET if they believe their evaluations will lead to tangible improvements in teaching quality and their overall learning experience. By effectively communicating the value of SET in improving course quality, institutions can enhance students' sense of responsibility. This approach not only increases the fill-out rate but also boosts the validity of SET.

7. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE WORK

In this paper, we utilized a novel approach to understanding the key adoption dynamics of SETs. Specifically, we applied the UTAUT model, which is widely utilized in many different contexts, to identify factors that influence the willingness of individuals to engage with any product or system. The model, which has not been employed before in this context, can provide additional insight into the adoption factors of SET. By leveraging UTAUT's established constructs, including performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, facilitating conditions, and intrinsic motivation, this study aimed to offer a more in-depth understanding of the specific dimensions of adoption influencing students' willingness to participate in the evaluation of teaching. Our results do not indicate a specific preference in terms of overall adoption. This is because our findings show that specific dimensions of the UTAUT model act as opposing forces, with some (i.e., performance expectancy and social influence) positively contributing to students'

willingness to fill out teaching evaluations and others (i.e., effort expectancy, facilitating conditions, intrinsic motivation) acting as hindering factors. Therefore, our study suggests that specific interventions are needed on the latter dimensions to skew students' behavioral intention toward the positive side of the adoption spectrum.

Our findings reveal that while students generally recognize the importance and relative ease of completing course evaluations, they remain skeptical about the actual utilization of their feedback by faculty and institutions. This, coupled with a lack of incentives and transparency, negatively impacts students' motivation to engage meaningfully with SET. On the other hand, factors such as perceived helpfulness of SET results for future course selection and the potential for social influence through peer interactions positively contribute to students' willingness to participate in evaluations. These answers align with the Facilitating Conditions, Performance Expectancy, and Intrinsic Motivation of the UTAUT model. Based on these insights, we recommended several actionable strategies, including (1) increasing transparency by communicating how student feedback is utilized and sharing examples of course improvements resulting from SET, (2) providing tangible incentives, such as extra credit or acknowledgment of participation, to boost response rates and engagement, (3) refining SET questions to be more relevant, specific, and comprehensive for each course, (4) considering publishing SET results to assist students in making informed decisions about course enrollment and to encourage a sense of social responsibility among students, and (5) effectively communicate the value of SET in improving course quality to enhance students' intrinsic motivation. The insights gained from this model can help develop comprehensive strategies to enhance student participation and improve the overall effectiveness of SET. Our future work will address the limitations of our study. Specifically, we will collect additional data to avoid unequal representation among students' class standing and GPA.

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Questions	Options	UTAUT
For a REQUIRED course offered in multiple sections, rank the factors you use to choose which section to enroll in.	Perceived instructor quality	PE
	Perceived instructor difficulty	EE
	Course environment and requirements (e.g., attendance, group projects, class activities, atmosphere, etc.), if the information is available	FC
	Flexibility of course format and schedule (e.g., lecture, seminar, online, AP, etc.)	FC
	Friends recommending the instructor or enrolling in that section	SI
Pick the FIVE most important factors when enrolling in a course section (whether required or elective).	The reputation of the professor	SI
	How much I expect to learn about the topic	PE
	Previous experience with the instructor or similar courses	EE
	Positive feedback from other students	SI
	My friends are taking the same class	SI
	Favorable course structure and material (e.g., presence of projects, discussions, additional activities, etc.), if the information is available	FC
	Flexibility and convenience of the course format/schedule (e.g., online, time matches my schedule, attendance is not required, etc.)	FC
	I believe the course will help me get a job in that field	PE
	Strong interest in the subject matter	IM
	Perceived "easiness" of the professor (e.g., they are friendly, approachable, responsive, offer extra credit, are an easy grader, etc.)	PE
	Perceived easiness of the course in general (e.g., assignments, exams)	PE
Rank the following factors based on how much they discourage you from enrolling in a course section. (1 being the most important and 6 being the least important)	Concern about the quality of the course and experience of the professor	PE
	Lack of previous experience with the instructor or similar courses	EE
	None of my friends are taking or recommending the professor/course	SI
	The course does not have a convenient format, does not match my schedule, or has limited activities	FC
	I have little interest in the course subject or it's useless jobwise	IM
	Perceived difficulty of the course/professor (e.g., assignments, exams, etc.)	EE

Questions	Options	UTAUT
What motivates you the most to fill out course evaluations? Rank the following factors (1 being the most important and 5 being the least important)	Providing feedback will improve the course	PE
	It's easy to fill out the evaluations	EE
	I will receive an incentive for filling them out (extra credit, rewards, etc.)	FC
	My instructor asked me to fill them out or other students are also doing it	SI
	It's my responsibility to provide the instructor with feedback	IM
What usually prevents you from filling out teaching evaluations? (Check all that apply)	Lack of perceived impact or importance	PE
	Usability of the evaluation form	EE
	Lack of time/ it's not mandatory/ it's not a priority	FC
	The professor didn't mention it, or nobody else completed it	SI
	Disinterest in providing feedback	IM

Table 1. The list of the survey questions associated with the UTAUT dimension.