
Perceptions of First-Year University Students on the Reliability and Validity of Student Evaluations of Teaching (SETs) in Ghana: A Mixed-Methods Study on Engagement, Bias, and Effective Teaching

Peter Eshun

University of Education, Winneba, Ghana

Abstract. This study investigates the perceptions of first-year university students regarding Student Evaluations of Teaching (SETs), exploring factors affecting their reliability and validity, engagement levels, and alignment with students' perceptions of effective teaching. Using a parallel convergent mixed-methods design, the study concurrently collected quantitative data through structured questionnaires from 540 randomly sampled first-year students and qualitative data from semi-structured interviews with 16 students. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative data underwent thematic analysis. Quantitative findings reveal that 65% of students perceive SETs positively, 70% highlight biases such as grade expectations and instructor personality as factors affecting SET reliability, 50% demonstrate high engagement, and 60% report alignment between SET criteria and their perceptions of effective teaching. Qualitative findings complement these results, emphasizing the importance of SETs in improving teaching, the influence of biases, and the role of anonymity in fostering participation. However, challenges such as cultural norms, skepticism about feedback utilization, and gaps in evaluating interpersonal qualities persist. The study concludes that while students recognize the value of SETs, biases and contextual challenges hinder their reliability, engagement levels and alignment with effective teaching perceptions suggest that SETs can be a useful feedback mechanism if refined to address gaps in interpersonal evaluation and cultural sensitivities. The study recommends refining SET tools to include interpersonal attributes, addressing biases, implementing orientation programmes, ensuring culturally sensitive evaluation processes, and enhancing transparency to improve trust and engagement.

Keywords: Evaluation, Teaching, Effectiveness, Biases, Culture, Improvement

Introduction

Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET) has become a critical tool in higher education for assessing instructional quality and fostering continuous improvement. SET is a crucial mechanism for enhancing learning experiences in higher education. SET practices in higher education is pivotal for fostering educational quality and institutional accountability. SET are widely employed across universities as a mechanism to assess teaching effectiveness, guide administrative decisions, and enhance the overall student learning experience. Across the globe, teaching evaluations provide valuable feedback to educators and contribute to institutional quality assurance systems (Spooren, Brockx, & Mortelmans, 2013). Research indicates that a lack of orientation and training in completing SET forms can lead to superficial or biased responses, particularly among first-year students who may not yet have the evaluative skills necessary for providing meaningful feedback (Aleamoni, 1999). Institutions that provide clear guidelines and explanations about SET often report more reliable and constructive feedback from their students (Benton & Cashin, 2014). Despite their widespread use, the effectiveness of SET in objectively measuring teaching quality remains contentious, as they are influenced by multiple biases, including course difficulty, grade expectations, and even instructor characteristics such as gender and age (Abdulkarim et al., 2023; Constantinou et al., 2022). Research highlights that effective teaching extends beyond content delivery to include

attributes such as teacher-student relationships, engagement strategies, and the ability to connect theoretical knowledge to practical applications (Abdulkarim et al., 2023). These aspects are particularly valued by students and serve as a basis for their perceptions of teaching quality. However, studies indicate that SETs often fail to capture the complexity of these attributes, raising questions about their reliability as a sole measure of teaching effectiveness (Abdulkarim et al., 2023; Constantinou et al., 2022). Moreover, the anonymity of SETs, while encouraging honest feedback, may also lead to responses driven by frustration or grade dissatisfaction (Constantinou et al., 2022).

In Western countries, SET is often perceived as an integral part of academic accountability, where student feedback is taken seriously and used to drive pedagogical innovation (Spooren et al., 2013). Conversely, in some regions, students express skepticism about whether their feedback is genuinely valued or acted upon, with concerns that SET is merely a procedural requirement (Richardson, 2005). Technological advancements have also transformed the SET landscape, with many institutions adopting online platforms for collecting feedback. While these platforms increase accessibility and convenience, they also present challenges such as reduced response rates and varying levels of student engagement, particularly among fresh students who are still acclimating to higher education systems (Marsh, 2007).

Contextually, some research in Ghana highlights that fresh students' evaluations are often influenced by factors unrelated to teaching quality, such as instructor personality, grading leniency, and course difficulty (Osei-Kuffour, 2018). These undermine the credibility of SET as an objective tool for improving teaching practices. Furthermore, many first-year students are unfamiliar with the evaluation process and its objectives, leading to superficial responses that fail to capture substantive insights into teaching effectiveness (Ankomah, Antwi, & Boateng, 2021). This lack of understanding compromises the potential of SET to contribute meaningfully to instructional improvement. Another critical issue is the perceived ineffectiveness of SET in driving tangible changes in teaching practices. Students, particularly fresh university students, often express skepticism about whether their feedback is considered or acted upon by faculty and administration (Mensah & Amponsah, 2020; Osei-Kuffour, 2018). This perception discourages active participation and reduces the overall impact of SET as a tool for fostering accountability and quality enhancement in Ghanaian universities. Moreover, the cultural context in Ghana adds another layer of complexity to fresh students' perceptions of SET. Ghanaian students are generally socialized to respect authority figures, including lecturers, which may inhibit them from providing candid feedback for fear of potential repercussions or being perceived as disrespectful (Osei-Kuffour, 2018). This cultural dynamic further limits the reliability of SET data collected from fresh university students.

Likewise, the traditional hierarchical nature of education, coupled with respect for authority figures, influences students' perceptions of teaching and their willingness to provide feedback (Donkor, 2020). These cultural norms may hinder the effectiveness of standardized teaching evaluations, which often rely on students' candid assessments of their instructors (Adams & Umbach, 2012). Furthermore, many teaching evaluation tools in Ghanaian universities are designed without adequately considering the unique needs and perspectives of first-year students (Gyamfi & Osei, 2022). This misalignment could result in feedback that is less representative of the student experience or actionable for educators. As well, the Ghanaian higher education system also faces challenges related to the transparency and impact of SET. Many students perceive that their feedback has little influence on institutional decision-making or teaching practices (Ankomah et al., 2021; Tinto, 1993). This perception is particularly pronounced among fresh students, who may be skeptical of the value of SET if they do not see tangible improvements based on their input.

Research indicates that while many students perceive SETs as a valuable mechanism for providing feedback, their engagement and the seriousness with which they approach the process often vary based on their academic level, institutional type, and field of study (Al Fryan et al., 2024; Kite et al., 2015). Moreover, the effectiveness of SETs is further complicated by contextual factors, including the learning environment and institutional culture, which can impact students' experiences and, consequently, their evaluations (Baker, 2014; Stein et al., 2012).

The unique needs and expectations of first-year university students further underscore the importance of understanding their perceptions of teaching. Transitioning to higher education involves navigating new academic and social environments, making students' initial experiences with teaching particularly influential. By investigating the perceptions of fresh university students, this study aims to provide insights into how teaching practices impact their learning and engagement during this critical phase. This research contributes to the broader discourse on improving teaching evaluation systems to support both student learning and faculty development.

The Study Context

Literature extensively discusses the use of SETs in assessing teaching in higher education, but there is limited focus on the unique perspectives of first-year university students. These students, who are navigating a new academic environment, often bring fresh but underrepresented views on teaching quality and evaluation practices. Understanding their perceptions is crucial for refining evaluation systems and aligning them more closely with the needs of diverse student cohorts.

In Ghana, the adoption of SET reflects a broader global trend where student feedback is used to enhance teaching practices and institutional accountability (Mensah & Amponsah, 2020). Despite its widespread use, understanding the perceptions of fresh university students regarding SET remains underexplored, especially within the Ghanaian context. In the Ghanaian context, fresh university students, who are transitioning from teacher-centered secondary education systems to more diverse and independent learning environments, the evaluation of teaching can be a critical aspect of their academic journey. They represent a unique demographic whose views on SET are shaped by their transition from high school to tertiary education. Unlike their senior counterparts, first-year students often have limited exposure to the pedagogical methods and evaluation standards prevalent in higher education (Ankomah, Antwi, & Boateng, 2021). As such, their perceptions of SET are influenced not only by their academic preparedness but also by cultural and institutional norms in Ghanaian universities.

Furthermore, existing teaching evaluation systems often fail to adequately reflect the unique perspectives and needs of fresh university students (Quansah et al., 2024; Quansah, 2022).

This study, therefore, addresses the gap by exploring the perceptions of first year university students towards teaching evaluations, with the aim of uncovering insights that could enhance the effectiveness and fairness of these systems. It seeks to contribute to the broader discourse on leveraging student feedback for improving teaching quality in higher education.

Theoretical Framework

The attribution theory and the expectancy theory underpinned this study. The framework explores how students' attributional processes and pre-existing expectations shape their evaluations. Fresh students, transitioning into higher education, may possess distinct beliefs about teaching quality based on prior educational experiences. Understanding these cognitive processes can illuminate biases in SET and guide improvements in teaching evaluation practices. Attribution Theory posits that individuals seek to explain events by attributing

causes to internal or external factors. In the context of SET, Fresh students may attribute course difficulty or unexpected grades to the instructor's teaching abilities rather than to other factors (e.g., curriculum difficulty or personal study habits). These causal attributions can bias evaluations. For instance, a challenging course may lead to a negative evaluation if students perceive the difficulty as a flaw in teaching, even when it may be an intentional academic challenge. As newcomers, these students might be more prone to external attributions (e.g., linking poor performance to teaching quality) due to limited prior exposure to varied teaching styles. Expectancy Theory suggests that motivation and perception are influenced by the expectations of outcomes. Students often enter a course with anticipated standards of teaching quality, such as expecting supportive guidance or clarity in instruction. If the teaching performance diverges from these expectations (e.g., expecting a high grade or interactive teaching style), the evaluation may be skewed, either overly positive or negative. The theory mediates the relationship between the actual teaching performance and the evaluation score. A mismatch between expectation and experience can lead to an evaluation that reflects the gap rather than the intrinsic quality of teaching.

Integrating Attribution Theory and Expectancy Theory offers a robust framework to understand fresh university students' perceptions of teaching evaluations. By accounting for the ways students assign causality to academic outcomes and how their expectations mediate these perceptions, this framework provides a nuanced understanding of SET scores. It underscores the importance of considering cognitive biases in both research and the practical implementation of teaching evaluations.

Research Questions

The following questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What are the perceptions of first-year university students regarding the Students Evaluation of Teaching (SET) process?
2. What are the factors affecting the reliability and validity of SET as perceived by first year university students?
3. What are the engagement levels of first-year university students in completing SETs?
4. To what extent do students' perceptions of effective teaching and the criteria used in SETs align?

Fresh University Students' Perceptions of Student Evaluation of Teaching (SET)

Fresh university students, who are transitioning from high school environments with limited formal evaluation practices, often approach SET with a unique set of expectations and challenges. Literature suggests that these students typically have a rudimentary understanding of SET's objectives. For example, Chen and Hoshower (2003) note that many incoming students are unfamiliar with the feedback mechanisms prevalent in higher education, which can lead to misinterpretations of the evaluation process. Merritt (2019) further argues that the lack of familiarity may cause fresh students to undervalue the significance of their feedback or misinterpret its intended use. Despite recognizing the potential of SET to improve teaching effectiveness as indicated by Richardson (2005), many fresh students remain skeptical about its impact. This skepticism is often rooted in their limited exposure to higher education processes and the absence of visible changes following their feedback (Marsh, 2007). The gap between providing feedback and observing tangible outcomes diminishes trust in the SET process, a challenge that is particularly pronounced among first-year students.

Attribution Theory provides a lens through which we can understand how students assign causes to their academic experiences. In the context of SET, fresh students often interpret academic outcomes—such as a difficult course or an unexpected grade—by attributing them to the instructor's teaching quality. This causal reasoning may introduce systematic biases into

their evaluations. Fresh students might perceive a challenging course as evidence of poor teaching rather than a deliberate academic rigor, thereby negatively biasing their evaluations (Spooren et al., 2017). Since these students have limited comparative experience with diverse teaching styles, their attributions tend to lean toward externalizing faults to the instructor. When students attribute academic struggles solely to teaching quality, they may overlook other factors such as curriculum design or personal study habits. This tendency not only skews the evaluation scores but also questions the reliability of SET as an objective measure of teaching effectiveness (Marsh, 2007). In essence, Attribution Theory underscores the importance of understanding the cognitive processes that drive student evaluations. It suggests that fresh students' SET responses are influenced by how they assign causality for their academic experiences, which in turn affects the perceived credibility and fairness of the evaluation process.

Expectancy Theory complements the attributional perspective by focusing on the role of pre-existing expectations in shaping perceptions of teaching quality. According to this theory, students enter courses with established expectations regarding instructional practices and learning outcomes. Fresh students often have idealized expectations about teaching quality and the learning environment. When the actual teaching performance falls short of these expectations, their evaluations may reflect disappointment rather than an objective assessment of the instructor's abilities (Richardson, 2005). The difference between what students expect and what they experience can lead to significant biases. If the anticipated interactive or supportive teaching styles are absent, students may assign lower evaluation scores, not because the teaching is inherently poor, but because it did not meet their high expectations (Spooren et al., 2017). The visible utilization of SET feedback in improving teaching practices is crucial. When students see no evidence that their feedback leads to meaningful changes, their initial expectations about the utility of SET are undermined, further eroding trust in the process (Marsh, 2007). Thus, Expectancy Theory helps explain why fresh students might react strongly, either positively or negatively to the teaching performance they experience, depending on how well it aligns with their pre-existing expectations.

In addition to cognitive theories, the cultural and institutional context plays a vital role in shaping students' perceptions of SET. For instance, in some Ghanaian universities, traditional hierarchies and deep-rooted respect for authority can significantly affect how students evaluate their lecturers (Oduro & Adams, 2020). Cultural values such as collectivism may discourage overt criticism, as students might fear retribution or believe that critical feedback could harm interpersonal relationships (Macfadyen et al., 2021). Individual characteristics—including prior academic experiences and personal confidence—also modulate the evaluation process. Studies suggest that students who have previously experienced more open and iterative feedback mechanisms are better positioned to provide constructive evaluations (Steyn et al., 2020). However, for many fresh students, the transition from high school to university is marked by uncertainty and limited confidence in their ability to critique teaching effectively.

Fresh university students face several practical challenges in completing SET forms. These include many first-year students struggle with the language and structure of evaluation questionnaires, which may be more complex than those used in high school settings (Chen & Hoshower, 2003). Lack of time and fears regarding confidentiality can further inhibit honest and thoughtful responses (Spooren et al., 2017). The absence of visible changes following their evaluations often leads to a diminished belief in the efficacy of SET (Marsh, 2007).

To address these challenges, researchers and practitioners advocate for several interventions like redesigning SET instruments to be more user-friendly and transparent to help mitigate confusion among fresh students (Spooren et al., 2017). Also, providing regular updates on how student feedback has been used to improve teaching practices to help bridge the

expectation-performance gap highlighted by Expectancy Theory (Richardson, 2005). Furthermore, actively involving students in the design and revision of SET processes can empower them and foster a culture of open dialogue (Macfadyen et al., 2021).

Methods

Participants Selection

The study adopted the parallel convergent mixed method design, where both quantitative and qualitative procedures were used concurrently. Particularly, the design was suitable for this study because it provides a comprehensive understanding of first-year university students' perceptions of teaching evaluations. With the quantitative phase, 540 students were sampled randomly from 5233 first year students' population. With regards to the qualitative study, a sample of 16 students were involved in the study when data saturation was established.

Measures

A structured questionnaire on perception was developed in line with teaching evaluation of a particular university and used to gather the quantitative data. It includes Likert-scale items to assess students' perceptions of teaching evaluation. Questions on factors influencing their feedback, such as cultural norms, prior experiences, and classroom dynamics were included. Again, a semi-structured interview guide was developed in line with the study objectives to explore students' perceptions on teaching evaluation. The students selected for both quantitative and qualitative aspects of the study were engaged in the data collection processes concurrently. The quantitative data collected lasted three weeks while that of the qualitative lasted one week, making it a total of four weeks.

Analysis

The quantitative data were retrieved from the students, sorted, coded, entered, and cleaned for the analysis. Specifically, descriptive frequencies and percentages were used as the analytical tools. With the qualitative data, thematic procedures by Braun and Clark (2015) were followed. The audio-taped data were transcribed manually and organised according to the six steps procedure: familiarization with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report (Braun & Clark, 2015).

Results of the Study

Question 1: What are the perceptions of first-year university students regarding the students' evaluation of teaching process?

Table 1: Undergraduates' perceptions on SET processes

Perception	Frequency (Percentage)
Positive View	351 (65%)
Neutral View	135 (25%)
Negative View	54 (10%)

Table 1 presents results on perceptions on SET processes. The results reveal that a significant majority (65%) of first-year university students perceive the teaching evaluation process positively. This indicates a broad acceptance of SETs as a useful feedback mechanism. However, a notable proportion of students (25%) remain neutral, suggesting uncertainty about

its effectiveness, while a minority (10%) view the process negatively, potentially pointing to dissatisfaction or perceived ineffectiveness. The qualitative analysis reveals that students generally view SETs as an important tool for providing feedback. Many students express a belief that their evaluations help improve teaching practices, with one student stating, *"I feel my feedback contributes to making the lectures better for everyone."* However, skepticism exists among a minority who question whether their input leads to actual changes. As another student noted, *"I don't think they even look at the results; it feels like a formality."*

Question 2: What are the factors affecting the reliability and validity of student evaluations of teaching (SETs) as perceived by fresh university students?

Table 2: Undergraduates' perceptions of factors affecting SETs

Factor	High Impact	Moderate Impact	Low Impact
Bias and Grade Expectations	(378) 70%	(108) 20%	(54) 10%

Table 2 presents results on perceptions of factors affecting SETs. The findings indicate that the majority (70%) of students believe that biases, including grade expectations, significantly affect the reliability and validity of SETs. This emphasizes concerns over external influences on the evaluation process. A smaller group (20%) considers these factors moderately impactful, while only 10% perceive them as having little influence. Students identify several factors impacting the reliability of SETs. Grade expectations emerged as a dominant theme, with one participant explaining, *"When I'm expecting a good grade, I tend to give better evaluations."* Instructor personality and course difficulty were also highlighted. *"Charismatic instructors always get better ratings, even if their teaching isn't the best,"* one student remarked. Similarly, courses perceived as challenging were often associated with lower evaluations, as another student explained, *"Hard courses make us more critical, even if the teacher is good."*

Question 3: What are the engagement levels of first-year university students in completing SETs?

Table 3: Undergraduates' engagement levels in completing SETs

Engagement Level	Frequency (Percentage)
High Engagement	270 (50%)
Moderate Engagement	162 (30%)
Low Engagement	108 (20%)

Table 3 shows results on engagement levels of students in completing SETs. Undergraduate engagement in completing SETs varies, with half of the them (50%) demonstrating high engagement levels. This group likely values the evaluation process as an opportunity to provide meaningful feedback. However, 30% report moderate engagement, possibly reflecting indifference or a lack of understanding of its purpose, and 20% show low engagement, indicating disconnection or disinterest. Engagement levels vary among students, with many citing anonymities as a reason for their active participation. One student commented, *"I can be honest because no one knows it's me."* However, others expressed apathy, with one saying, *"I just tick through it because I don't think it changes anything."* This divide underscores differing attitudes toward the perceived impact of their feedback.

Question 4: To what extent do students' perceptions of effective teaching and the criteria used in SETs align?

Table 4: Undergraduates' perception of level of alignments of SETs criteria and effective teaching

Alignment Level	Frequency (Percentage)
High Alignment	324 (60%)
Moderate Alignment	135 (25%)
Low Alignment	81 (15%)

Table 4 shows results on levels of alignment of SETs criteria and effective teaching. Most students (60%) perceive a high level of alignment between SET criteria and their understanding of effective teaching, suggesting that the evaluation questions resonate with their expectations. However, 25% of students report moderate alignment, and 15% perceive low alignment, indicating areas where SETs may fail to fully capture student perceptions on teaching effectiveness. Students largely perceive that SET criteria align with their perceptions of effective teaching, emphasizing attributes such as clarity, fairness, and knowledge. One student shared, *"The questions usually reflect what I think makes a good teacher."* However, some gaps were noted, particularly regarding interpersonal qualities like empathy and approachability. As one participant put it, *"They don't ask about how approachable or understanding the teacher is, which matters a lot to us."*

Points of Convergence

The quantitative data show that a significant majority of first-year university students perceive the teaching evaluation process positively. This indicates that most students recognize the value of Student Evaluations of Teaching (SETs) as a feedback tool. The qualitative findings complement these trends, revealing that many students view SETs as an essential tool for improving teaching practices. Quantitative analysis reveals that majority of students believe that biases, including grade expectations, significantly impact the reliability and validity of SETs. This suggests that external factors strongly influence evaluation outcomes. Qualitative data provide deeper insights into these perceptions. Grade expectations emerged as a prominent theme.

Half of the respondents (50%) reported high engagement levels in SETs, reflecting a belief in the importance of providing meaningful feedback. Qualitative findings reveal contrasting attitudes toward engagement. Some students attributed their active participation to the anonymity of the process. Quantitative results indicate that 60% of students perceive a high alignment between SET criteria and their understanding of effective teaching, suggesting that most evaluation questions resonate with their expectations. Qualitative analysis adds depth to these findings, with students emphasizing attributes such as clarity, fairness, and knowledge as essential components of effective teaching.

Discussion

The findings from this study provide a detail explanation of first-year university students' perceptions of teaching evaluation processes, factors affecting their reliability and validity, engagement levels, and alignment between perceptions of effective teaching and SET criteria. These findings are supported by existing literature and contextualized within the broader academic discourse. The study revealed that first-year students hold positive perceptions of the teaching evaluation process, suggesting widespread recognition of SETs as a valuable feedback tool. This aligns with global findings, where SETs are seen as critical mechanisms for

enhancing instructional quality and fostering continuous improvement (Spooren, Brockx, & Mortelmans, 2013). However, skepticism among some students, which reflects a gap in trust that has also been identified in other contexts (Richardson, 2005). This lack of visible action on feedback underscores the importance of institutions demonstrating how evaluations influence teaching practices, a point emphasized by Marsh (2007).

Again, the study found that students believe biases significantly impact SET reliability and validity, with grade expectations, instructor personality, and course difficulty being dominant factors. This supports findings by AbdulKarim et al. (2023) and Constantinou et al. (2022), who identify similar biases in SET processes. This bias aligns with studies that show higher evaluations are often correlated with lenient grading practices and lower course difficulty (Stein et al., 2012; Kite et al., 2015). Furthermore, the influence of instructor personality, as reflected in the comment raises questions about the objectivity of SETs, a challenge also noted by Hejase et al. (2013).

Furthermore, 50% of students demonstrated high engagement. This finding mirrors findings by Spooren et al. (2017), who emphasize the role of institutional orientation in fostering student participation. Conversely, others expressed apathy due to perceived ineffectiveness, and this reflects broader concerns about the perceived impact of SETs on teaching practices, a point also noted in Ghanaian contexts (Mensah & Amponsah, 2020). The study found that majority of the students perceive high alignment between SET criteria and their understanding of effective teaching. This suggests that SETs generally resonate with student expectations, focusing on clarity, fairness, and knowledge. However, qualitative feedback highlights areas for improvement, such as interpersonal qualities. This gap aligns with findings by AbdulKarim et al. (2023), who observed that effective teaching extends beyond content delivery to include teacher-student relationships and engagement strategies. Addressing these omissions could make SETs more comprehensive and reflective of the quality's students' value most in the teaching-learning process or engagement in classroom situations.

Finally, these findings underscore unique challenges within the Ghanaian context. Cultural norms, such as respect for authority, may inhibit candid feedback, as noted by Osei-Kuffour (2018). Additionally, first-year students' limited familiarity with SET processes can lead to superficial responses, compromising the quality of feedback (Ankomah, Antwi, & Boateng, 2021). These challenges highlight the need for targeted orientation programmes and culturally sensitive evaluation tools to enhance the reliability and effectiveness of SETs in Ghanaian universities.

Conclusions

The study concludes that most first-year university students view Student Evaluations of Teaching (SETs) positively, recognizing them as a vital feedback tool for improving teaching practices. This perception underscores the potential of SETs in contributing to the enhancement of instructional quality and fostering accountability in higher education. Despite their acceptance, SETs face significant challenges related to reliability and validity. The student related factors inhibiting objective neutrality in their evaluation could be minimised by re-orienting them through pre-evaluation talk and confidence building. When this is done the tendency of compromised evaluation will be minimised or removed.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following measures are recommended to enhance the validity and reliability of SETs in higher education in Ghana.

1. Higher Education Institutions should refine SET tools to ensure they capture the comprehensive attributes of effective teaching, including interpersonal qualities such as

empathy and approachability. Incorporating these dimensions can enhance the alignment between SET criteria and student expectations.

2. Steps should be taken to address biases that compromise SET reliability. For instance, including questions that focus on specific teaching behaviours rather than overall impressions can reduce the influence of factors such as grade expectations or instructor personality.
3. Orientation programs should be implemented to educate students, particularly first-year students, on the purpose and importance of SETs. These programmes can help students develop evaluative skills and understand the impact of their feedback on teaching practices.
4. Recognizing the cultural dynamics in Ghanaian universities, institutions should design evaluation tools that address local norms and encourage candid feedback. Ensuring anonymity and emphasizing the constructive purpose of SETs can help overcome barriers related to respect for authority.
5. Lastly, establishing mechanisms to periodically review SET tools and provide feedback to students about the outcomes of their evaluations can enhance the credibility and impact of the system. Visible changes in teaching practices resulting from SETs can reinforce their relevance and importance to students.

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