International Journal of Engineering Research and Modern Education (IJERME)
International Peer Reviewed - Refereed Research Journal, Website: www.crystalpen.in
Impact Factor: 7.018, ISSN (Online): 2455 - 4200, Volume 10, Issue 2, July - December, 2025

EXAMINING THE INFLUENCE OF TEACHING QUALITY AND COURSE CONTENT ON STUDENTS' LEARNING OUTCOMES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

D. Rajasekar*, Harikumar Pallathadka & Yuhlung Cheithou Charles*****
* Post Doctoral Research Scholar, Manipur International University, Imphal, Manipur, India
** Senior Professor & Vice Chancellor, Manipur International University, Imphal, Manipur, India
*** Professor, Manipur International University, Imphal, Manipur, India

Cite This Article: D. Rajasekar, Harikumar Pallathadka & Yuhlung Cheithou Charles, "Examining the Influence of Teaching Quality and Course Content on Students' Learning Outcomes in Higher Education", International Journal of Engineering Research and Modern Education, Volume 10, Issue 2, July - December, Page Number 38-41, 2025.

DOI: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.16717382

Abstract:

This study examines the influence of instructional quality and course material on student learning outcomes in higher education. Amid the increasing focus on academic achievement and outcome-based education, it is essential to explore how pedagogical strategies and the relevance of instructional content affect student achievement, satisfaction, and knowledge retention. Adopting a mixed-methods approach, the research integrates student feedback, faculty performance metrics, and academic achievement data to assess critical dimensions of teaching effectiveness and content alignment. The findings indicate that interactive teaching methodologies, well-structured and industry-relevant course materials, and active, responsive instructor engagement significantly enhance learning outcomes. The study underscores the need for ongoing curriculum development and faculty training to foster a more engaging, dynamic, and effective learning environment. It highlights the role of instructional design not only in supporting academic performance but also in shaping a student-centered educational experience that prepares learners for real-world challenges.

Key Words: Teaching Quality, Course Content, Student Learning Outcomes, Higher Education, Academic Performance, Instructional Effectiveness

Introduction:

In contemporary higher education, students increasingly expect not only high-quality instruction but also well-designed, engaging course materials that enrich their academic experience. Instructors who communicate effectively, demonstrate approachability, and incorporate interactive learning strategies significantly contribute to enhanced learning outcomes. Likewise, course content that is logically organized, up-to-date, and aligned with students' academic and career goals is essential for maintaining engagement and deepening comprehension.

This study investigates the impact of instructor effectiveness, course structure, and content relevance on student learning outcomes in higher education. By exploring these interrelated factors, the research aims to provide insights into how pedagogical practices and curriculum design can be optimized to support student success.

Globally, higher education institutions are experiencing rapid transformation, driven by evolving educational paradigms, technological advances, and rising expectations from students, employers, and policymakers. Within this dynamic environment, learning and teaching effectiveness depend heavily on both pedagogical efficacy and curricular quality (Biggs & Tang, 2011). Effective instruction goes beyond content delivery; it incorporates active student engagement, timely feedback, adaptability, and accessibility-elements that collectively influence academic motivation and achievement (Hattie, 2009). At the same time, well-structured and contextually relevant course materials promote cognitive development, critical thinking, and the ability to apply knowledge in real-world contexts (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020).

Recent research underscores the importance of aligning teaching methodologies and course content with both student needs and industry demands. For instance, Chaudhary and Singh (2024) identified teaching effectiveness and curricular relevance as key determinants of academic success in higher education institutions. Similarly, Stracke, Burgos, and Tlili (2023) argue that instructional design and teaching quality-particularly in professional programs-must reflect evolving trends and learner expectations to yield meaningful and applicable learning outcomes.

This study centers on higher education institutions in India, aiming to evaluate the extent to which teacher quality and course content relevance impact student learning outcomes. By analyzing student perceptions, academic performance indicators, and levels of faculty engagement, the research seeks to uncover critical areas for enhancement. Ultimately, the study aspires to offer evidence-based recommendations for improving instructional practices and curriculum design to better align with both academic and professional success goals in the Indian context.

Review of Literature:

Recent research highlights the growing need to align teaching practices and course content with evolving student needs and industry expectations. For instance, Chaudhary and Singh (2024) found that both teaching competence and curricular relevance are significant predictors of academic achievement in higher education. Similarly, Stracke, Burgos, and Tlili (2023) argue that instructional design and teaching quality, especially in professional programs, must reflect current trends and learner expectations to generate meaningful and applicable learning outcomes.

This study focuses on higher education institutions in India and seeks to examine the extent to which teacher quality and course material relevance influence student learning outcomes. By analyzing student perceptions, academic performance, and faculty engagement, the research aims to identify key areas for improvement. The findings are expected to inform evidence-based recommendations that enhance teaching effectiveness and curriculum design, ultimately contributing to the overall quality and relevance of higher education in the Indian context.

Recent scholarship has raised critical concerns regarding the disconnect between the conceptual understanding of teaching effectiveness and its empirical assessment. Taylor and Thion (2023) critique the persistent inconsistency in how teaching effectiveness is defined and measured, advocating for greater theoretical clarity and improved alignment of evaluation methodologies. Complementing this perspective, Stracke et al. (2023) provide an in-depth synthesis of instructional quality within Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), emphasizing the importance of learner-centered design. Key components such as clear course organization, interactive learning activities, and analytics-informed feedback are identified as critical to enhancing comprehension and knowledge retention.

Together, these studies underscore the need for higher education institutions to go beyond merely adopting high-quality instructional practices and well-aligned content. As Kember and McNaught (2007) argue, maximizing student learning outcomes also requires the development of robust administrative systems, coherent educational frameworks, and innovative pedagogical approaches across both face-to-face and digital learning environments. This integrated approach is essential for fostering effective, equitable, and future-ready higher education systems.

Recent research highlights the critical role of teacher attributes, curriculum development, and instructional quality in shaping student learning outcomes in higher education. Nguyen et al. (2023) conducted a comprehensive review of 52 studies published between 2010 and 2022, concluding that clarity of instructional materials, subject matter expertise, and emotional intelligence in educators significantly enhance instructional effectiveness and student engagement. Their findings underscore the need for faculty development programs that foster both pedagogical proficiency and interpersonal competencies.

In parallel, Kapoor and Sinha (2023) performed a meta-analysis of 37 studies conducted between 2005 and 2022, revealing that student-centered teaching practices-such as interactive instruction, personalized engagement, and structured feedback-consistently yielded superior outcomes compared to traditional lecture-based methods. These improvements were observed in both cognitive learning and affective dimensions such as motivation and satisfaction.

Collectively, these findings reinforce the imperative for higher education institutions to prioritize educator training, innovative curriculum design, and learner-focused pedagogy to foster meaningful, lasting student success.

Emerging research underscores the critical role of curriculum alignment, instructional coherence, and effective online delivery in improving student outcomes in higher education. Jansen and Leeuwis (2022) found that students highly value the real-world relevance of course content, noting that a disconnect between academic curricula and industry standards can diminish student motivation and engagement. They recommend regular curriculum evaluations and active stakeholder collaboration to ensure that programs remain aligned with professional expectations.In a related study, Singh and Pillai (2021) demonstrated that instructional coherence-the logical sequencing and integration of course material-has a direct and measurable impact on student achievement. Their findings support the implementation of Outcome-Based Education (OBE) models to promote clearer alignment between instructional goals, learning activities, and assessment outcomes.Focusing on online learning environments, Alkhateeb and Idrees (2022) highlighted the importance of structured content delivery, interactive platforms, and timely feedback as key drivers of student satisfaction. However, they also identified persistent challenges, including variability in content quality and limited opportunities for real-time interaction, which continue to affect the overall effectiveness of digital instruction.

Objectives of the Study:

- To determine the quality of educational and course content related influence students learning results and opinions in higher education.
- To Identify realistic solutions for improving teaching effectiveness and curricula design.

Research Methodology:

This study used a quantitative survey approach to look into the effects of teaching quality and course content relevance on the learning results of students in logistics and shipping management programs. A structured questionnaire was distributed to enrolled learners, measuring three key dimensions: perceived quality of instruction (faculty competence, adaptability, educational clarity), educational relevance (industry alignment, useful validity), and student learning consequences (academic performance, satisfaction, engagement) on a 5-point Likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree). Convenience sampling provided representation at all academic levels. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques (mean, SD) to summarize views, Cronbach's Alpha for reliability testing, and correlation analysis to investigate connections between the quality of instruction, content their significance, and results for students, offering actionable insights for pedagogical improvement in the field.

Data Analysis and Interpretation:

Table 1: Mean & Standard Deviation of Variables

Variables	Mean	S.D
Quality of Course Materials	4.24	1.489
The Course Content would be relevant to the shipping and logistics management.	4.13	1.57
Faculty would be responsive and provide timely feedback on assignments.	4.73	1.639
Teaching abilities and subject matter expertise of the faculty.	4.6	1.545

The descriptive analysis indicated students' perspectives on the quality of instruction and course content in logistics and shipping management programs. Faculty responsiveness and prompt response earned the highest ratings (mean=4.73, SD=1.639), demonstrating strong agreement with instructors' availability, but with some variation in experiences. Teaching abilities and topic expertise were closely followed (mean=4.6, SD=1.545), indicating consistent acknowledgment of faculty ability. Course materials were rated positively (Mean=4.24, SD=1.489), but content relevance to the field was rated slightly lower (Mean=4.13, SD=1.57), indicating space for improvement in curriculum alignment with industrial applications, as indicated by the broader response variation. These findings reflect overall satisfaction with the quality of instruction while also pointing to potential improvements in making course content more useful for the shipping and logistics industry.

Table 2: Cronbach's Alpha

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha
Quality of Course Materials	0.848
The Course Content would be relevant to the shipping and logistics management.	0.856
Faculty would be responsive and provide timely feedback on assignments.	0.842
Teaching abilities and subject matter expertise of the faculty.	0.883

All four variables have strong reliability (Cronbach's Alpha values greater than 0.84), indicating that the survey items used to assess views of the quality of instruction and the subject matter are valid in statistical terms and consistent. This reinforces the survey results' validity and the confidence of future data analysis and conclusions.

Table 3: Correlation

Variables	Teaching & Course Content	Higher Education	Student Life & Support	Administrative Services
Teaching & Course Content	1	0.456*	0.557*	0.587**
Higher Education		1	0.405**	0.639*
Student Life & Support			1	0.574**
Administrative Services				1

The correlation study demonstrates substantial positive correlations across important variables, indicating interrelated gains across institutional dimensions. Teaching and course content have moderate-to-strong correlations with the Administrative Services category ($r = 0.587$, $p < 0.01$), Student Activities & Support ($r = 0.557$, $p < 0.05$), and the Higher Education Experience ($r = 0.456$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that high-quality teaching and relevant content align with strong institutional support and enriching student experiences.

Higher Education Experience is substantially correlated with managerial services ($r = 0.639$, $p < 0.05$) and somewhat with Student Activities & Support ($r = 0.405$, $p < 0.01$), indicating a link between academic fulfilment and operational efficiency.The substantial correlation between Student Affairs & Support and administration services ($r = 0.574$, $p < 0.01$) emphasizes the importance of administrative success in promoting student involvement and well-being. Collectively, these data show that holistic institutional improvements-encompassing pedagogy, systems of support, and administration processes-are mutually supporting in terms of improving overall educational quality.

Findings:

The study revealed that students consistently provided positive evaluations of faculty quality, with notably high mean scores for instructor responsiveness (Mean = 4.73) and teaching expertise (Mean = 4.60). These results reflect strong student appreciation for timely feedback and instructors' subject matter mastery. While the overall course content was rated favourably (Mean = 4.24), content specifically related to the shipping and logistics industry received comparatively lower scores (Mean = 4.13) and showed greater variability. This suggests a potential misalignment between curricular offerings and industry expectations.

All measurement scales demonstrated high internal consistency, with Cronbach's Alpha coefficients exceeding 0.84, indicating strong reliability in assessing the study's constructs. Correlation analysis revealed significant positive relationships between teaching quality and several dimensions of institutional support, including administrative assistance ($r = 0.587$, $p< 0.01$), student life support services ($r = 0.557$, $p< 0.05$), and the overall educational experience ($r = 0.456$, $p< 0.05$). These findings underscore the interconnectedness of academic quality and institutional infrastructure in shaping student satisfaction and learning outcomes.

Suggestion:

To elevate the quality of education in logistics and shipping management programs, higher education institutions must prioritize curricular alignment with evolving industry standards. This can be achieved through regular syllabus updates, strategic collaborations with industry stakeholders, and the integration of experiential learning opportunities, such as guest lectures, site visits, and real-world applied projects. Simultaneously, investment in faculty development initiatives is essential to ensure pedagogical excellence. This includes specialized training in instructional strategies, integration of digital learning technologies, and the promotion of effective feedback mechanisms to enhance classroom engagement and instructional clarity.Given the strong correlation between academic outcomes and institutional support systems identified in this study, universities should adopt a holistic educational model. This model must combine high-quality teaching with robust student support services, such as academic advising, mental health counseling, and streamlined administrative processes. Furthermore, the implementation of structured and iterative feedback systems is vital. These systems should systematically capture student perceptions regarding course content relevance and instructional quality, thereby enabling continuous program refinement and responsiveness to both learner expectations and industry needs.

Conclusion:

This study underscores the critical role of instructional quality and course content relevance in enhancing student learning outcomes within logistics and shipping management programs. Students reported high levels of satisfaction with faculty competence and responsiveness (Mean = 4.6-4.73), highlighting the value placed on subject expertise and timely feedback. However, slightly lower ratings and greater variability in responses regarding the relevance of course content (Mean = 4.13) point to a disconnect between curriculum offerings and evolving industry expectations. Furthermore, the strong correlations identified between instructional quality and institutional support services ($r = 0.456$-0.587) emphasize the interdependence of academic and administrative systems in shaping overall student experience. These findings call for a comprehensive quality enhancement strategy focused on four key areas:

- Curriculum refinement through active industry collaboration to ensure real-world applicability,
- Ongoing faculty development in digital pedagogy and instructional innovation,

- Seamless integration of academic and support services to address diverse student needs, and
- Robust feedback mechanisms to maintain program responsiveness to both student expectations and sectoral demands.

Adopting such a holistic and interconnected approach can significantly strengthen educational outcomes and institutional effectiveness in this specialized field.

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