

# Lecturer Performance Prediction Based on Student Evaluation Data Using a Hybrid K-Means and Random Forest Model

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**Abstract:** Using a quantitative correlational design, this predictive research was based on secondary EDOM data. The first episode of the school year 2024/2025 served as the data collection period. The target population of this research are the lecturer subjected to students' evaluations from Universitas Al-Irsyad Cilacap. After processing the data and cleaning and aggregating, a total of 594 records of the lecturer were analyzed with a census technique. K-Means was used to detect the presence of latent patterns of performance in the teaching, professional, personality and social dimensions of the lecturer. The Random Forest model was used to predict the performance category of the lecturer from both the baseline and hybrid models. The results of the study showed that the hybrid models were able to predict with a high measure of accuracy, and of the two, the hybrid model was the most robust when compared to the baseline model with a manual high-defined grouping of performance levels. The baseline model was able to completely and perfectly classify the group, the hybrid model with high performance was able to analyze the data in a general way, revealing a structure of performance that was hidden in the data. This means that, there is greater analytical value to the data. This analysis of EDOM data is of high analytical value. The developing of the hybrid model of lecturer performance analysis provides a positive contribution in data-driven quality assurance and decision-making to higher education. Objectives were met.

**Keywords:** Evaluation of teaching; Hybrid machine learning; K-Means clustering; Lecturer performance; Random Forest

## Introduction

Teacher performance significantly impacts the quality of instruction and effectiveness of higher education institutions. In addition to providing course content, teachers have the additional responsibility of guidance and creating opportunities for meaningful interaction with students, which ultimately impacts student success. Therefore, student evaluations of teaching (SET) are one of the main tools used by higher education institutions to evaluate teacher performance (Sánchez et al., 2021). The SET is also known in Indonesia as EDOM or *Evaluasi Dosen oleh Mahasiswa*. Through the SET/EDOM process, quantitative data are collected that reflect students' perceptions of their teachers' pedagogical skills, professionalism, personality, and

interpersonal skill set (Uttl, 2023). Although the data collected through the SET/EDOM process are extremely valuable, they are often utilized only for descriptive summary purposes (i.e., the average score), and very little effort is made to analyze the data to discover the underlying performance trends for individual teachers (Nancy, 2019).

Research shows a consistent correlation between the caliber of the lecturers and the quality of education offered. Education human resource management systems, including motivation of the lecturers, staff development, and systemized and ongoing evaluation of the performance of the lecturers, are necessary conditions that will lead to increased effectiveness of the lecturers and improved learners' outcomes (Muhamad, 2023). As Idrus et al. (2022) state, the lecturers'

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performance in unison is a determinant of the quality of the institution and impacts learners' satisfaction and academic success. This is supported by (Warizal et al., 2023), who state that there exists a strong relationship between education quality and lecturer performance. This shows the relevance of performance evaluation based on facts and objective measurements in the education of lecturers and the enhancement of higher education systems.

Lecturer-student engagement alongside institutional factors also matters for teaching effectiveness. Previous evidence illustrates the contributions of classroom conversations, lecturer feedback, academic direction, and student involvement to enhanced learning (Baashar et al., 2023; Hong et al., 2023). Active lecturer response to student questions and feedback fosters student learning and satisfaction (ELsaeed & Mahmoud, 2022; Siregar et al., 2023). Also, learning environments that combine technology with pedagogical strategies not only enhance learning but also promote sustained engagement (Donham et al., 2022; Goyal et al., 2023; Li, 2023). This means that lecturer-student interaction is an evaluative dimension that can be rigorously analyzed through student evaluations.

Although SET/EDOM enhances transparency and student participation, several studies have identified inherent limitations related to subjectivity, bias, and variability across disciplines. While transparent evaluation systems promote accountability, subjective perceptions and inconsistent evaluation criteria may reduce the reliability and objectivity of performance assessments (Ceelen et al., 2022; Wut et al., 2022). These limitations become more pronounced when EDOM data are analyzed solely with descriptive or threshold-based approaches, which may fail to capture latent, multidimensional patterns embedded in complex evaluation data. As a result, reliance on average scores alone may oversimplify the assessment of lecturer performance and limit the potential of EDOM as a decision-support tool.

Studies such as those in (Hariguna et al., 2024) show that hybrid machine learning can capture more complex interactions, leading to better accuracy across more dimensions of the dataset. This is because the most recent applied machine learning results point to more dependence on a hybrid model approach to complex and high-dimensional data structures (Saputra et al., 2025). This data is often the most realistic data analysis cases that require better feature representation and predictive accuracy. Thus, it is now clear that the more complex machine learning frameworks are needed to go beyond basic evaluations.

To support this view, educational analytics have been seeking less traditional evaluation methods and

have increasingly adopted data mining and machine learning techniques. Among the techniques, K-Means clustering has been most widely used to group entities based on their similarity across several performance measures, thereby revealing the hidden structures of complex datasets. Clustering techniques in the lecturer evaluation context enable the institutions to figure out those performance patterns that remain invisible even when one uses descriptive analyses. Dewi et al. (2022) proved that the implementation of the Knowledge Discovery in Database (KDD) framework and K-Means clustering on EDOM data was very effective in grouping lecturers based on competencies in teaching, professional, personality, and social areas, which brought the internal quality assurance processes a lot of new insights. Unfortunately, the research has only an exploratory focus and did not extend the clustering results to predictive modeling or classification of lecturer performance categories.

Such use of K-Means clustering in educational contexts is also indicative of its efficacy in identifying underlying performance patterns among students, institutions, and educators (Faisal et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2023). However, a common methodological limitation of such studies is that clustering results are treated as endpoints in most cases and not incorporated into predictive models for proactive, evidence-based decision-making.

Meanwhile, Random Forest has shown remarkable predictive performance across different educational areas, such as student achievement forecasting and teacher quality assessment. Its strength for handling high-dimensional and non-linear data leads the PSWQ to be appropriate in analyzing complex educational datasets (Doz et al., 2023; Kim et al., 2025; Maulana et al., 2023). However, to our knowledge, the RF has still been used directly with raw features or handcrafted ones in most applications, and it is unclear how we can exploit structures that might have significant relations among patterns when available.

Recent studies show that combining unsupervised clustering with supervised classification makes it easier to analyze complex, multidimensional data, even with these limitations. Hybrid models that use both K-Means clustering and Random Forest classification can identify hidden data structures by clustering them and then exploiting those structures to make predictions more accurate. (Sehhati et al., 2022) demonstrated that incorporating K-Means clustering results into a Random Forest model improved its classification accuracy by enhancing feature representation and reducing noise in high-dimensional datasets. Anand et al. (2023) similarly asserted that hybrid clustering-classification methodologies yield greater prediction robustness than independent classifiers, especially in scenarios

characterized by heterogeneous data patterns and class overlap. These results highlight the methodological benefits of hybrid frameworks in connecting exploratory pattern discovery with predictive modeling.

Speaking to the analysis of lecturer-student interaction patterns, existing research in EDOM has mainly focused on descriptive analysis and standalone clustering. However, classification is often poorly integrated with clustering-based patterns. It is difficult to find a unified analytical framework that can comprehensively analyse latent lecturer-student interaction structures and leverage classification to predict lecturer performance.

The problem of getting to know them, and in turn, getting to know how they interact with their students, becomes a major hurdle when analysing the performance of lecturers in higher education. This problem is addressed in the present study with a hybrid machine learning framework that employs K-Means clustering and Random Forest classification.

The proposed framework uses multidimensional EDOM indicators across pedagogical, professional, personality, and social domains to provide a comprehensive understanding of the interaction patterns between a lecturer and their students. Plugging the results of the cluster analysis into a predictive model is the study's goal. Making the forecast more accurate and providing a more objective, systematic analysis of the lecturer's performance.

The ultimate aim is to make the analysis of EDOM data in higher education more efficient, and to provide the impetus for a more data-driven approach to quality assurance.

## Method

### *Research Design*

This study employed a quantitative research design with a correlational-predictive approach. The design was selected to analyze measurable relationships between lecturer performance indicators and lecturer-student interaction patterns derived from Student Evaluation of Teaching (EDOM) data. Rather than examining causal interventions, the study focused on identifying latent performance patterns and predicting lecturer performance categories using a hybrid machine learning framework. This approach is appropriate for handling large-scale numerical data and evaluating predictive model performance in an objective and systematic manner.

### *Population and Sample*

The study included all lecturers at Universitas Al-Irsyad Cilacap. These lecturers received student evaluations using the *Evaluasi Dosen oleh Mahasiswa*

(EDOM) tool during the odd semester of the 2024/2025 academic year. Initially, the study focused on EDOM data gathered at the item-response level. This data shows how individual students rated their lecturers on various performance indicators logged in the institutional quality assurance system.

The dataset included 17,777 EDOM records that represented student evaluations of teaching, professional skills, personality, and social abilities. However, these individual records were not the main focus of the analysis. This study aimed to evaluate lecturer performance instead of examining individual student responses.

After the data preprocessing stage, which included cleaning the data, removing incomplete records, and calculating scores, the EDOM data were summarized at the lecturer level. Aggregation involved calculating the average score for each performance dimension for each lecturer. As a result, the dataset was reduced from 17,777 item-level records to 594 lecturer-level records, which became the final dataset for analysis.

The study used a census method. All lecturers with complete and valid EDOM data were included as research samples. As a result, the final sample consisted of 594 lecturers. This group represented the entire population that met the necessary standards for data completeness and representativeness. The criteria for inclusion in the sample were: lecturers had complete EDOM data across all evaluated indicators, including pedagogical, professional, personality, social, and interaction-related items; each lecturer had enough student respondents to meet the minimum requirement for reliable and representative aggregated evaluation scores.

### *Data Collection Instrument*

Data were collected using the *Evaluasi Dosen oleh Mahasiswa (EDOM)* instrument. This tool is regularly administered as part of the university's internal quality check process. It includes several items that measure lecturer performance in four main areas: pedagogical competence, professional competence, personality, and social competence. Each item was rated on a five-point Likert scale, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

The EDOM instrument was developed by the institution and applied consistently across all study programs. In this study, the collected data were treated as secondary data from official institutional records.

### *Validity and Reliability*

In order to assess the reliability of the instrument, the internal consistency of the EDOM items was measured using Cronbach's Alpha. Acceptable reliability was established with Cronbach's Alpha

coefficient of greater than 0.70. The constructs were theoretically aligned and the EDOM indicators were in accordance with the established dimensions of lecturer performance in higher education evaluation frameworks. Utilization of secondary data in this study from an evaluation system of the particular institution meant that there was no item-level modification or revalidation.

*Data Preprocessing*

Before the model construction, data processing involved data pre-processing in order to check data quality, relevance, and usability for the analysis. Data pre-processing involved data cleaning, data normalization, and aggregating item-level data into lecturer averages. Data pre-processing led to the creation of a data structure that comprises four numeric variables of performance in pedagogics, profession, personality, and social ability of each of the lecturers.

*Data Analysis Technique*

*K-Means Clustering*

K-Means clustering was used to group instructors according to different behavioural patterns demonstrated across all four performance metrics in the EDOM data set. As such, the defined number of clusters was three depicting different behavioural patterns, namely low, moderate and high performance. Outcomes of the clustering were understood by looking at the centroid value for each cluster, indicating the mean performance traits for each cluster. The labels of the cluster were then converted to digits, which were used in the predictive models for added functionality.

*Random Forest Classification*

Predicting lecturer performance categories using the Random Forest classification algorithm was conducted using two modeling approaches: a baseline Random Forest model which solely used the original EDOM performance features; a hybrid Random Forest model that added the results of the K-Means clustering as an extra input feature.

A stratified split was used to divide the dataset into training and testing subsets in order to maintain the class distribution. Metrics of accuracy, precision, recall, and F1-score were used to assess model performance to give a holistic evaluation of predictive performance, particularly with regard to imbalanced data conditions.

*Software and Tools*

The utilized the Python programming language for all data preprocessing tasks, including clustering, classification, and evaluations. For the analysis, I chose the most common Machine Learning libraries such as `pandas` for data handling, `scikit-learn` for clustering

and classification, and `matplotlib` and `seaborn` for visualization. I chose Python for its reproducibility and flexibility, as well as for the rich ecosystem it provides in support of Machine Learning research.

*Ethical Considerations*

This reseach followed ethical guidelines. To protect the identity and confidentiality of lecturers, all the EDOM data were anonymized before analysis. The data were accessed from the institutional records with the necessary permissions, and the data were used strictly for educational and research purposes. Since the study used secondary data and involved no direct contact with any participants, informed consent was obtained at the institutional level, and all research activities were conducted in accordance with relevant ethical guidelines.

**Result and Discussion**

*Dataset Characteristics*

This study utilized Evaluation of Lecturers by Students (EDOM) data consisting of 594 lecturer records after preprocessing and aggregation. Each record included four numerical performance dimensions, namely pedagogical, professional, personality, and social. An overall average score was calculated from these dimensions to derive lecturer performance categories.

The distribution of performance categories was highly imbalanced, with most lecturers classified as having high performance. Due to the extremely limited number of low-performance observations, the low category was merged into the moderate category to ensure statistical stability during model training and evaluation.

**Table 1.** Features of the Dataset

| Description            | Value  |
|------------------------|--|
| Total Lecturers        | 594  |
| Performance dimensions | Pedagogical, Professional, Personality, Social |
| Clustering approaches  | Manual (rule-based), K-Means                   |
| Performance categories | High, Moderate                                 |
| Class imbalance        | High-dominant                                  |

*Random Forest Baseline Results*

For a fair comparison with the hybrid model, the Random Forest baseline used a manually defined cluster feature that was based on rule-based thresholds. The manual grouping was based on the average EDOM score. Lecturers were categorized into low, moderate, or high performance groups according to established cutoff thresholds.

The baseline model incorporated five input features: four EDOM dimensions and one manually defined cluster feature. The classification results indicated that the manually constructed cluster provided robust deterministic information consistent with the target variable. However, this strict agreement indicates that the baseline model relies more heavily on predefined scoring criteria than on uncovering latent performance patterns within the data.

*Outcomes of K-Means Clustering*

Using K-Means clustering to uncover latent performance patterns across lecturers without using any set thresholds, all four EDOM dimensions were used. The clustering method made three groups, which were then split into low, medium, and high performance levels based on the average scores of each group.

K-Means clustering, on the other hand, used data to construct groupings that demonstrated how similar teachers were in different areas of their work. We translated the cluster labels that came out of this into numbers and put them to the hybrid classification model as a new feature.

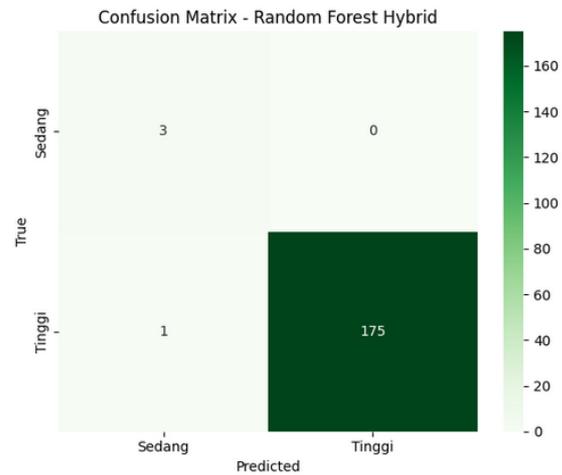
*Results of the Random Forest Hybrid*

The Random Forest hybrid model added the K-Means cluster labels as a fifth input feature to the four initial EDOM dimensions. The hybrid model got about 0.994 accuracy on the test dataset. The confusion matrix showed only one incidence of misclassification, in which a professor who was doing well was expected to be doing okay. The hybrid model was not as accurate as the baseline model, but it was more robust because it didn't rely as much on manually set criteria and used unsupervised clustering information.

**Table 2.** Data of baseline and hybrid models

| Model                            | Cluster Source      | Number of Features | Accuracy | Macro F1 | Interpretation                       |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|----------|----------|--------------------------------------|
| Random Forest Baseline           | Manual (Rule-based) | 5                  | 1.000    | 1.000    | Deterministic, potential overfitting |
| K-Means + Random Forest (Hybrid) | K-Means             | 5                  | 0.994    | 0.93     | More robust and generalizable        |

The results of this study demonstrate that incorporating clustering information can influence the robustness of lecturer performance prediction models. Manual clustering yields highly accurate results but inherently includes pre-existing assumptions that may limit generalizability. The hybrid model, on the other hand, uses unsupervised learning to discover hidden performance trends, which makes the evaluation process more flexible and based on data. These results suggest that hybrid learning frameworks that combine both supervised and unsupervised methods may provide more reliable insights for institutional quality



**Figure 1.** (Confusion Matrix of the Hybrid Model)

*Last Model Comparison*

When you compare the baseline and hybrid models side by side, you can see that the hybrid approach has a methodological edge. Both models used the same number of input features, which made the comparison fair. The baseline model used rule-based manual clustering, while the hybrid model used data-driven clustering through K-Means.

The baseline model got 100% accuracy, which could mean that it overfitted because manual clustering criteria are deterministic. The hybrid model, on the other hand, was a little less accurate but gave a more realistic and generalizable way to make predictions by finding hidden performance structures that weren't clearly specified by score criteria.

assurance systems. The hybrid model isn't more accurate than the baseline model, but it's more resilient and doesn't rely on deterministic rules as much, which makes it better for real-world use.

Incorporating unsupervised clustered information in the classification not only improved performance with the baseline model but also made the hybrid method rational, as the baseline model relied on manual performance categorizations. While baseline achieved perfect classification consistency, the hybrid model achieved more realism as well as more generalizable performance as it unearthed unrecognized elements of

the data, as well as reduced the dependence on pre-defined scoring systems.

This study underscores the merit of combining unsupervised and supervised learning methodologies to add analytical depth to EDOM data. Furthermore, the model can help universities establish transparent, data-informed quality assurance and performance evaluation systems for their teaching staff. On the other hand, the study illustrates that the use of features generated from clustering can improve predictive abilities and, in doing so, integrates the use of machine learning in educational data mining and the provision of the hybrid approach. Perhaps future studies will help improve generalizability of the model in the use of additional contextual data and cross-institutional datasets.

## Conclusion

This research developed a combination of clustering and classification methodologies that utilize the K-Means and Random Forest algorithms to examine and forecast the performance of instructors based on Students' Evaluation of Teaching (EDOM) data. The study indicates that the performance of instructors can be effectively evaluated using a range of indicators that assess the instructors' pedagogy, professionalism, personality, and social attributes. The K-Means clustering algorithm successfully detected the hidden patterns of performance that were obtained from the interactions of the instructors and students, and the Random Forest classification algorithm was able to predict the data with a considerable degree of accuracy.

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## Author Contributions

Conceptualization and Methodology, H.S.; Validation, and Formal analysis, T. H. Verification, and Editing, D. I. S. S; All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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## Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest

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