UNIVERSITY of GUELPH

COLLEGE *of* ENGINEERING AND PHYSICAL SCIENCES

SCHOOL OF COMPUTER SCIENCE

MSc Defence

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The Role of Gendered Language and Performance Rating in Teaching Evaluation Across Ontario University Economics Professors

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Chair: Dr. Fangju Wang
Advisor: Dr. Luiza Antonie
Advisory Committee Member: Dr. Gary Grewal
Non-Advisory Committee Member: Dr. Dave Calvert

Abstract:

Student evaluation is widely being recognized across universities and colleges for professor evaluation, but there are many underlying trends or bias occurring that can influence the interpretation. RateMyProfessor.com is becoming an increasingly popular publicly accessible web-based evaluations, due to widespread usage by students for course selection and high quantity of data available for analysis. Professor performance is assessed on teaching and research. The teaching component is based on students' ratings and comments. However, comments and ratings are highly subjective, thus making the assessment difficult. We use this large corpus to answer the following questions: 1) What words do students use to describe their professors? 2) Is there any correlation between the words used and the rating that is given? And, are there significant differences between the groups analyzed? To answer these questions, we model the reviews using Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) and we run several regression modelsto analyze if there are statistically significant factors that influence the overall rating.