



The Impact of Internal Evaluation on the Education Quality of Nursing Group of Zabol University of Medical Sciences

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Abstract: *This study has been conducted to examine and determine the impact of internal evaluation on education quality of nursing group in Zabol University of Medical Sciences, Iran. This is descriptive study with correlational approach. Statistical population of this study consists of all members of nursing college (students, faculty members, staffs) that their number is equal to 200 members and statistical sample size obtained to 132 members based on Cochran formula that has been chosen using simple random sampling method. Simple random sampling method was applied in this research to select members of nursing college (students, faculty members, staffs). Measurement instrument was a researcher-made questionnaire that consists of 35 questions in which, factors affecting education quality of nursing group of Nursing College of Zabol University of Medical Sciences have been examined. To determine validity and reliability of questionnaire, internal evaluation questionnaires were evaluated based on the analysis of a 30-member sample through SPSS software under the supervision of professional professors and Cronbach's alpha obtained to 0.89. Pearson Correlation Coefficient and regression were used for data analysis. Results obtained from data analysis show that there is a significant relationship between components of internal evaluation (scientific cooperation, objectives, creativity, program and bylaw, academic activities, information technology, and faculty members) and quality of education and of these components, objectives and creativity have the highest and lowest effect on quality of education, respectively.*

Keywords: *Internal Evaluation, Education Quality, Nursing Group Training*

INTRODUCTION

Educational activities of each country can be considered as investment of a generation for another generation. The main purpose of such investment is human development (Bazargan, 2009).

According to the vital role of higher education system in training expert human force, generating knowledge and providing specialized services over current decades and according to the upcoming challenges such as increasing enhancement of universities and higher education institutions to respond to social demand, knowledge-based economy, and IT development, it is necessary to pay attention to quality of universities and higher education institutions more and more (Eshaghi et al., 2011). These challenges have made it important

for higher education system of Iran to be responsible and accountable so that academic system has to modify its structure, objectives, functions, and processes (Rahmani, Fathi & Ajargah, 2008).

Hence, universities are increasingly expected to be responsible for their teachings and the major emphasis is on the quality evaluation in relation with educational procedures (Morte & Bird, 2010).

The concept of quality is not simply definable in case of higher education and there is not any consensus on definition of quality in academic education. Complexity of higher education system and unclear user and production of this system has brought challenges to definition of quality of this system. Bazargan (2009) expresses that quality of academic system is one of concerns that has been a bone of contention in majority of the world countries over the current decades. Evaluation not only contributes to improved quality of higher education system but also makes its responsible.

Undoubtedly, higher education system has a considerable contribution to acceleration and facilitating sustainable development of country due to its role in training expert human force and knowledge generation. Therefore, it is required to adopt efficient and effective solutions and strategies to enhance both quality and quantity of this system (Bazargan, 2006).

Quality has a specific position in educational system and its goal is optimal use of resources and facilities so that this component can identify factors affecting methods to achieve educational objectives and factors that prevent from realization of educational goals; in this regard, quality can determine the ability of educational system to identify these factors through a proper plan (Ghanepoor et al., 2010).

Results obtained from previous studies confirm the proper solutions of internal evaluation in this field, because internal evaluation determines performance level of an educational unit or an educational group making it possible to recognize and understand quality of that unit so that the unit can direct its activities and planning toward productivity and promotion of its performance quality (Mohammadi et al., 2007).

Evaluation is a significant element to recognize that to what extent the academic system has achieved its goals. One of the most common evaluations is internal evaluation or self-evaluation that has been taken into account in many of academic systems, particularly in Iran. Internal evaluation process not only evaluates performance of educational groups but also promotes academic quality. An internal evaluation aims at identifying strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and deterrent factors of optimal performance of each academic branch, especially education group. The data obtained from correct implementation of this process that is provided as the report of internal evaluation is a reliable source for strategic planning and improvement of performance quality of each academic and organizational unit (Naderi & Abdollahi, 2010).

Practically, internal evaluation means collecting proper and update information from professors, students, and graduates about factors forming higher education system to judge quality and designs a plan for improvement (Vlasceanu et al., 2004); accordingly, evaluation of a program implementation is a major part of educational evaluation that helps assessors to reveal weaknesses of a program and provide effective solutions (Grammatikopoulos et al., 2007).

In this regard, various researches have been conducted on process and success of evaluation activities. Some of these researches have been done by Moosavi et al. (1999) (Semnan University of Medical Sciences), Kizori et al. (2008) (University Welfare and Rehabilitation Sciences), Mahmoodifar et al. (2009) (Islamic Azad University of Mahabad), Hazrati Tappeh et al. (2010) (Urumia University of Medical Sciences), Safavi Farrokhi et al. (2011) (University of Medical Sciences), and Karimian et al. (2011) (Taribiat Moalem University).

Internal evaluation of academic system begins from the lowest level (the most practical level) that has some tangible implications such as capacity and culture building for improvement of quality, self-criticizing, high successful implementation, and acceptance.

If evaluation is raised from concerns and interests within the university to determine given conditions and design plan to reach optimal conditions, it will be used as a useful tool to realize personal and organizational goals through a continuous process (Shahrakipoor & Jamali, 2010).

If the quality of higher education centers is not optimal, academic and technological future of country is not reliable.

The subject of internal evaluation was first done for Tehran University of Medical Sciences in Iran, 1997 and then Science Ministry considered the issue of internal evaluation and gave the responsibility to Education Organization of Iran then this organization implemented the program of internal evaluation for educational groups of several universities and obtained important achievements in case of quality of education. Although these measurements were done over the current years during fourth and fifth social development programs of Iran, it is the beginning point. Hence, the author of this study examined the subject of impact of internal evaluation on promotion of education quality of nursing group of Zabol University of Medical sciences due to the interest and conducted studies in this field; in this regard, scientific and practical recommendations of officials of nursing system of Iran have been provided.

Methodology

This is an applied research in terms of nature and is descriptive-analytical study in terms of data collection method. Statistical population of study consisted of all members of nursing college (students, faculty members, staffs) that their number was equal to 150 members and 132 members were chosen out of them through simple random sampling method based on Cochran formula. Data collection tool was researcher-made questionnaire so that after data collection through questionnaire, data were coded and inserted into SPSS software.

After collecting data from studied organization, scores of indexes and factors were calculated. According to these scores, weakness and strength points of studied part in each of factors were examined in comparison with optimum score (5) and minimum acceptable score (3); finally, internal readiness of university was determined based on levels of research model considering the obtained scores. Descriptive and inferential statistics were applied for data analysis so that at descriptive level, mean, med, mode, frequency table, chart,

and dispersion indexes such as standard deviation, variance, etc. were used and at inferential statistics level, a proper test such as Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used.

To draw charts and analyze data, SPSS-18 software was employed.

Findings

Internal evaluation indexes of educational group of nursing are as follows: scientific cooperation, objectives, creativity, program and bylaw, academic activities, information technology, faculty members, and educational quality.

Table 1. Statistical Indexes related to research variables

Variable	Central tendency indicators			Dispersion Tendency indicators			Distribution indicators		
	mode	med	mean	changes domain	variance	standard deviation	standard error	Skewness coefficient	kurtosis coefficient
scientific cooperation	23.00	25.00	25.8409	14.00	8.226	2.86817	0.24964	-0.363	0.336
objectives	19.00	19.00	19.0076	11.00	2.969	1.72320	0.14999	0.823	-0.312
creativity	9.00	11.00	11.0909	6.00	3.198	1.78823	0.15565	-0.651	0.553
program and bylaw	23.00	23.00	22.4318	11.00	7.423	2.72448	0.23714	-0.756	0.151
academic activities	19.00	19.00	18.6742	9.00	4.817	2.19471	0.19102	-0.624	0.112
information technology	21.00	22.00	22.4167	11.00	4.917	2.21736	0.19300	-0.214	0.151
faculty member	15.00	15.00	14.8106	8.00	2.491	1.57816	0.13736	-0.041	0.318
educational quality	124.00	134.00	134.4167	61.00	150.199	12.25557	1.06671	0.067	0.128

Table 1 shows general specification of statistical indicators of research variable and consists of central tendency indicators, dispersion tendency indicators, and evaluation indicators.

Table 2. Results of Pearson correlation test between research variables

Variable		scientific cooperation	objectives	creativity	program and bylaw	academic activities	information technology	faculty member
educational quality	Pearson	0.85**	0.71**	0.81**	0.76**	0.88**	0.79**	0.85**
	significance	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	number	132	132	132	132	132	132	132

The obtained results indicated that internal evaluation components including scientific cooperation (R=0.85), objectives (R=0.71), creativity (R=0.80), program and bylaw (R=0.76), academic activities (R=0.88), information technology (R=0.79), and faculty member (R=0.85) have a significant relationship with educational quality at confidence level of 99%. Therefore, it can be stated that there is a significant relationship between internal evaluation variables and educational quality.

Table 3. Status of nursing group in each of internal evaluation indicators

Variable	t	df	sig	Test value	Rank
scientific cooperation	33.41	131	0.000	17.5	5
objectives	43.38	131	0.000	12.5	1
creativity	23.07	131	0.000	7.5	7
program and bylaw	42.66	131	0.000	12.5	2
information technology	32.23	131	0.000	12.5	6
faculty member	35.02	131	0.000	10	4
educational quality	38.42	131	0.000	15	3

To investigate the status of nursing group in internal evaluation indicators, one-sample t test was used. According to significance level and t value, all internal evaluation indicators are effective in quality of education.

Findings show that all considered indexes have effect on quality of education. In viewpoint of sample group, objective and creative have the highest and lowest effect on quality of education, respectively. In comparison with t value, it is observed that of internal evaluation indicators, objectives have the highest effect on educational quality. Components of “program and bylaw”, “faculty member”, “information technology”, “scientific cooperation”, and “academic activities” are at next ranks, respectively. Also, “creativity” has the highest effect on educational quality.

According to ranking of indexes and considering high mean of indicators’ scores compared with average level, educational quality of nursing group has been evaluated at an optimal level.

Discussion and Conclusion

Results obtained from this research indicated that there is a significant relationship between internal evaluation variables and educational quality. Also, components of internal evaluation including scientific cooperation, objectives, creativity, program and bylaw, academic activities, information technology, faculty members have a significant relationship with educational quality at confidence level of 99%. Results of this study are in line with results obtained from the study conducted by Mohammadi (2002) in which some factors were introduced as necessary factors for internal evaluation; these factors include importance and position of quality, mental occupation, constant improvement process in all sections and group activities, development of cooperative activities, objectives review, and being volunteer to reconsider these objectives. Also, the results of this study are matched with the results of study conducted by Kizori et al. (2008) in which, factors affecting educational quality consists of organizational structure of management and organizing, faculty committee, educational courses, students, teaching and learning of graduates, supportive facilities and services.

Findings show that all of considered indicators can affect quality of education. According to opinion of sample group, objectives and creativity have the highest and lowest effect on quality of education, respectively. Results of this research are in line with results obtained from the study of Shahrakipoor et al. (2010) in which, objectives obtained rank one, management and development programs of group obtained rank 2. Result obtained from this study indicated that educational quality of nursing group is at optimal level. This result is matched with results obtained from studies conducted by Farzianpoor et al. (2010) and Hazratitappeh et al. (2010) that showed optimal status of educational quality.

Finally, it is recommended to conduct similar study with a broader range approach of practical effects of educational quality and more variables. Also, it is recommended for further studies to use questions using in questionnaire of this study considering alpha obtained from these questions. In case of educational quality, it is recommended considering effect of this variable on performance of responsible persons and nurses.

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