Accreditation: Non-governmental and Voluntary?

Tavakoli S, Mirzazadeh A, Golshahirad Sh

Accreditation, as an approach to quality assurance and improvement, has a hundred-year history in the United States. Other countries have started to establish such systems in the past twenty years. Recently, we have witnessed numerous discussions and some practical steps toward establishing accreditation systems in Iran.

A major practical challenge for such newer accreditation systems is that although such systems are traditionally non-governmental and voluntary, some of the systems that are established based on the accreditation model, in countries like Iran, are governmental and participation of programs and institutions in their evaluation process is mandatory. This has led to the question whether such systems essentially could be referred to as accreditation systems.

In this article, we have reviewed the history of accreditation systems, and their background, origin and evolutionary process. Based on the existing literature and also expert opinion in this field, we tried to explore the hypothesis that the non-governmental and voluntary characteristics of such accreditation systems are as much a product of dominant tradition and cultural backgrounds of their countries of origin than being essential characteristics of an ideal accreditation system. In addition, we explored the notion that in these countries, recent policies that affect financial support of accredited programs and institutions might have reduced the importance of these features.

Address. EDC, Tehran University of Medical Sciences, Tehran, Iran.

A survey of residency and board scores in the entrance exam in educational groups of Shiraz University of Medical Sciences ,1993-1998

Taghavi SA, Haghnegahdar A, Rezaie R

Introduction. Considering the difference between the resident's entrance exam scores in different majors and the difference between this prioritization for selecting their majors, this study attempted to have a survey of the relationship between the entrance scores and national board scores. The scores of residency entrance exam is an index of educational condition of the student on his / her entrance and the scores of their board exam as an index of his / her educational condition after graduation. These scores can be used as a criterion for recognition of the educational group's condition.

Methods. All the scores of residency and board exams in different majors (18 majors) entering the university in 1993-1998 were obtained (519individuals). The scores were categorized into 3 levels of high, intermediate and low, based on standard deviation. The correlation between these two scores was statistically determined both generally and individually.

Results. The scores of residency and board exams showed a normal distribution. The mean score of the residency entrance exam was 100.6 +12.31and in board exam, 109.2+11.95, respectively. There was a significant relationship between the scores of board and entrance exam. There was also a significant difference between the males' and females' scores (residency $P<0.000$, board $P<0.05$). The females' scores were reported to be lower than males'. The results of this study revealed a gradual drop in the scores of both exams. There was a positive correlation between the scores of residency and board exams. The change in residency rank in different educational groups was surveyed.

Discussion. 1-There is a relationship between the scores of the two exams. 2-A change in rank both positively and negatively was observed in different groups.

Address. EDC, Shiraz University of Medical Sciences, Shiraz, Iran.

Developing strategies to increase faculty members effective attendance in educational activities in medical science universities.

Tavkkoli M, Khorgami J, Danaei G, Damari B, Sharifi Rayeni.

Introduction. Several studies have shown that the effective educational attendance of faculty members have been substantially decreased. This is due to many different factors. Lack of a comprehensive analysis of this issue has led the university managers to implement ineffective, arbitrary strategies to force the faculty members to increase their attendance in the educational activities. In order to find the most suitable way to increase faculty attendance, we have chosen a problem-solving method and have involved various stake-holders from small and large universities. The aim of the study was to find the factors affecting this attendance and to develop strategies to reduce their effect.

Materials and methods: In literature review, relevant studies both inside and outside Iran were reviewed and