

Accreditation: Non-governmental and Voluntary?

Tavakoli S, Mirzazadeh A, Golshahrad 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 (519 individuals). 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 +12.31 and 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

all of the possible factors affecting the educational attendance of faculty members were extracted. This list of factors was completed by the ideas generated in brainstorming sessions. Viewpoints of the students, residents and hospital staff were also gathered. Letters and testaments, newspaper articles and abstracts from the 4th national medical education seminar were also scrutinized for relevant data. To define the most important factors, several structured and deep interviews were held with stakeholders and the resultant factors were incorporated in the previous list. The factors thus elucidated were categorized in 8 major categories and the stakeholders were asked to give their relevant points of importance regarding different criteria.(matrix prioritization). Expert idea was used to develop related strategies to increase the educational attendance of faculty members. The experts prioritized the strategies using predefined criteria. Results: 13 major strategies were prioritized as below Solving management problems in university managers and managerial systems Increasing motivation in the university (students, staff, faculty members) Renewal of appointment and appraisal methods of faculty members Increasing faculty members' dignity Redesigning payment methods of faculty members Correction of cultural attitudes regarding faculty members Amending the selection methods of faculty members Supplying suitable infrastructure for research and education Increasing the involvement of faculty members in university administration Implementing proper evaluation system for faculty members and giving feedback Increasing the quality and quantity of recreational facilities for faculty members Defining the exact responsibilities and authorities of faculty members Increasing the scholarships and correction of the methods for their appointment

Conclusion. The current decrease in the effective attendance of the faculty members is one of the crucial defects of our higher medical education system and needs a comprehensive survey to elaborate the proper strategies. This qualitative study used experts' idea method to elucidate the 13 most appropriate strategies to solve this problem. The operational plans will be developed by the related departments of the deputy of ministry for education and university affairs.

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Surveying active time of clinical education of nursing student in university of medical sciences, Rafsanjan

Taleghani F, Rafiei GhR

Introduction. The clinical education is one of the most perspectives of nursing education. Fifty percent of the time spent in nursing school is for education in clinical field. Clinical education is "heart" instruction in nursing profession.

Methods. From each clinical group of students, twenty percent were randomly selected, then the students were asked randomly (one day per week) to record the time spent for clinical activities in a check list. The period for data gathering was four months.

Results. The mean time of theory activity from the first week to the fourth week was: 34,35,50,and 63 minutes, respectively. The mean time of practical activity was: 88, 79, 63 and 60 minutes, respectively, and the mean time for nursing assessment was: 31, 28, 27 and 27 minutes, respectively. In intensive wards the mean time of activity of students was more than other wards.

Conclusion. The total time of clinical education was two hour and thirty minutes every day, this is about fifty percent of the time in clinical field. In this research, time losing was greater than two hours. For a better use of time, the time table of program in clinical field must be revised.

Address. EDC, Rafsanjan University of Medical Science, Rafsanjan, Iran.

Evaluation of faculty members from viewpoint of medical students of Lorestan University of Medical Sciences .

Tarhani F

Introduction. Evaluation as one of the university management functions plays an important role in correct planning, successful execution of educational programs and improvement of educational quality in universities. Since continuing evaluation of the faculty members by students is one of the duties of the evaluation unit and on the other hand, knowledge of students about the importance of evaluation makes them to fill out the related forms carefully, we decided to study students viewpoints about evaluation of the faculty members.