

Investigating the status of effective components on the evaluation of faculty members of Birjand University of Medical Sciences and its association with the faculties' demographic characteristics in the academic year 2017-2018

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Background: Faculty members are one of the main elements of the university, and their performance plays a critical role for the overall efficiency of the educational system. This study was conducted with the aim of evaluating the status of effective components on the evaluation of faculty members of Birjand University of Medical Sciences and its association with the faculties' demographic characteristics.

Methods: This is a descriptive-analytic study. The population comprised all faculty members of Birjand University of Medical Sciences (n = 278) in the academic year 2017-2018. All members were included using the census method. The faculty evaluation software program was used to collect data. The information obtained from the faculty evaluation form, consisting of 15 components, was extracted and analyzed using the Sama system software. The validity of the form was confirmed by experts, and its reliability was computed using the Cronbach's alpha method as 0.82. Data analysis was performed using SPSS-18 software, and the significance level was set at $p < 0.05$.

Results: In the present study the participants were 144 (48%) women and 155 (52%) men. The maximum evaluation score of the faculties was 5, and the mean total evaluation score was 4.49 ± 0.29 . There was no significant difference between the average evaluation status of faculty members based on their gender and academic degree. However, the evaluation scores were significantly different in terms of academic rank ($p < 0.001$).

Conclusion: Directing attention to teaching behavior and performance in the classroom can be an effective strategy to enhance the performance of faculty members. Therefore, it seems necessary to empower faculties (more specifically, lower-level teachers) in terms of effective teaching methods and teacher-student communication skills.

Key Words: Evaluations, Faculty Members, Gender, Academic Degree, Rank

بررسی وضعیت مؤلفه های مؤثر بر ارزشیابی اعضای هیأت علمی دانشگاه علوم پزشکی بیرجند و ارتباط آن با ویژگی های جمعیتی شناختی اساتید در سال تحصیلی 96-97

زمینه و هدف: اساتید یکی از ارکان اصلی دانشگاه محسوب می شوند و نحوه عملکرد آنها در بازدهی کل نظام آموزشی نقش اساسی ایفا می کند. مطالعه حاضر با هدف بررسی وضعیت مؤلفه های مؤثر بر ارزشیابی اعضای هیأت علمی دانشگاه علوم پزشکی بیرجند و ارتباط آن با ویژگی های جمعیتی شناختی اساتید انجام گرفت.

روش: این پژوهش یک مطالعه توصیفی تحلیلی می باشد. جامعه آماری تمام اساتید دانشگاه علوم پزشکی بیرجند (278 نفر) در سال تحصیلی 96-97 بودند. به روش سرشماری همه اعضا هیأت علمی مورد مطالعه قرار گرفتند. برای جمع آوری اطلاعات از نرم افزار ارزشیابی اساتید استفاده شد. اطلاعات از فرم ارزشیابی اساتید با استفاده از نرم افزار سامانه سما که دارای 14 مؤلفه می باشد، استخراج و مورد تجزیه و تحلیل قرار گرفت. روایی فرم به تأیید صاحب نظران و پایایی فرم با استفاده از روش الفای کرونباخ 0/82 بدست آمد. تحلیل داده ها با استفاده از نرم افزار SPSS18 در سطح معنی داری 0/05 انجام شد.

یافته ها: شرکت کنندگان در این مطالعه 144 نفر (44 درصد) زن و 155 نفر (56 درصد) مرد بودند. حداکثر نمره ارزشیابی اساتید 5 بود و میانگین نمره کلی ارزشیابی اساتید 4/0±49/29 بدست آمد. بین میانگین وضعیت ارزشیابی اساتید بر اساس جنس و مدرک تحصیلی تفاوت معنی داری وجود نداشت. اما بین نمره ارزشیابی اساتید براساس رتبه علمی تفاوت معنی داری وجود داشت ($p < 0/001$).

نتیجه گیری: توجه به رفتار و عملکرد استاد در کلاس درس می تواند به عنوان راهکاری برای ارتقاء عملکرد اساتید دانشگاه مؤثر باشد. بنابراین توانمند نمودن اساتید بر حسب رتبه علمی (یا اساتید با درجه علمی پایین تر) در زمینه روش های تدریس مؤثر و همچنین آموزش مهارت های ارتباطی با دانشجویان ضروری به نظر می رسد.

واژه های کلیدی: ارزشیابی، اعضای هیأت علمی، جنس، مدرک تحصیلی، مرتبه علمی

تقييم العوامل المؤثرة على تقييم أعضاء هيئة التدريس بجامعة بیرجند للعلوم الطبية وعلاقتها بالخصائص الديموغرافية للمعلمين في السنة الدراسية 97-96 شمسية

الخلفية والهدف: يعد الأساتذة أحد العناصر الرئيسية للجامعة، ويلعب أداءهم دوراً أساسياً في كفاءة النظام التعليمي بأكمله. كان الغرض من هذه الدراسة هو دراسة حالة العوامل الفعالة في تقييم أعضاء هيئة التدريس لجامعة بیرجند للعلوم الطبية وعلاقتها بالخصائص الديموغرافية لهم.

الطريقة: هذه الدراسة هي دراسة وصفية تحليلية. كان الإحصائيون جميعهم من أساتذة جامعة بیرجند للعلوم الطبية (278 شخصاً) في العام الدراسي 96-97 شمسية. تمت دراسة جميع أعضاء هيئة التدريس عن طريق العداد و استخدام برنامج تقييم المعلمين لجمع البيانات و استخراج المعلومات من نماذج تقييم المعلمين باستخدام برنامج نظام "سما" مع 14 مكوناً. أكد الخبراء صحة النموذج وتم الحصول على موثوقية النموذج باستخدام طريقة ألفا في كرونباخ. تم إجراء تحليل البيانات باستخدام SPSS18 على مستوى كبير من 0.05.

النتائج: كان المشاركون في الدراسة 144 (44%) من الإناث و 155 (56%) من الذكور. كانت درجة التقييم القصوى 5 و كانت النتيجة 4.49 ± 0.29 . لم يكن هناك فرق كبير بين متوسط تقييم المعلمين على أساس الجنس والخلفية التعليمية. ولكن كان هناك فرق كبير بين درجة تقييم المعلمين على أساس الدرجة العلمية ($p < 0.001$).

الخلاصة: يمكن أن يكون الاهتمام بسلوك المعلم وأدائه في الفصل الدراسي استراتيجياً فعالة لتعزيز أداء أساتذة الجامعات. لذلك، يبدو من الضروري تمكين أعضاء هيئة التدريس من حيث المستوى الأكاديمي (أو المعلمين ذوي الصف الأكاديمي الأدنى) في مجال أساليب التدريس الفعالة وكذلك تدريس مهارات الاتصال للطلاب.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التقييم، الكلية، الجنس، الدرجة، الدرجة العلمية

بیرجند یونیورسٹی آف میڈیکل سائنس میں اکیڈمیک کونسل کے اراکین کی توانائیوں کا جائزہ لینے والے عوامل پر ایک نظر اور ڈیموگرافک خصوصیتوں سے

بیک گراؤنڈ: کسی بھی یونیورسٹی کے اساتذہ اس کی بنیاد ہوتے ہیں، اساتذہ ہی نظام تعلیم میں پیشرفت کا سبب بنتے ہیں۔ یہ تحقیق ایسے عناصر کا جائزہ لینے کے لئے انجام دی گئی ہے جو اساتذہ کی توانائیوں کو پرکھنے میں مؤثر واقع ہوتے ہیں، اس تحقیق میں یہ بھی دیکھا گیا ہے کہ ان عناصر کا ڈیموگرافکس کے ساتھ کیا تعلق ہے۔

روش: یہ ایک تجزیاتی تحقیق ہے، اس میں بیرجند یونیورسٹی آف میڈیکل سائنس کے دوسو ائمہ اساتذہ نے شرکت کی۔ یہ تحقیق دوہزار سترہ اور اٹھارہ میں انجام دی گئی۔ ڈیٹا کے حصول کے لئے اساتذہ کی توانائیوں کو جانچنے والے سافٹ ویئر سے استفادہ کیا گیا، اس سافٹ ویئر کو سما سسٹم کہا جاتا ہے ان میں چودہ کیٹیگریز ہیں۔ سوالنامے کی اہل نظر نے تائید کی ہے

تجربے: اس تحقیق میں شرکت کرنے والی ایک سوچالیس خاتون تھیں اور ایک سو پچپن مرد تھے۔

جنس اور ڈگریوں کے لحاظ سے اساتذہ میں کوئی خاص فرق نہیں دیکھا گیا بلکہ علمی مدارج کی اساس پر اساتذہ میں خاصہ فرق پایا جاتا تھا۔

سفارش: کلاس میں اساتذہ کی گفتار و رفتار ان کی کارکردگی کو بہترین بنانے کا معیار ہوسکتی لہذا اساتذہ کی توانائیوں میں اضافہ کرنے کے اقدامات کئے جانے چاہیں اور ان کی روش تدریس کو مؤثر بنانے کی کوشش کی جائے۔

کلیدی الفاظ: جانچ، رابطہ، مہارت

INTRODUCTION

In today's world, universities and higher education institutions are infused with the three main missions of education, research, and service delivery. Given the important role played by these institutions in the economic, social, cultural, and political sectors of society, it would be an undeniable necessity to ensure the quality of their performance in order to avoid wasting human and material of the organization and to have the ability to compete in future where quality is the most crucial component of any organization's survival. Alongside this, a consideration of the human resource performance status through student evaluation of faculty members can help improve the health system of the country (1).

Education is a complex process and a simplistic approach which can lead to wasted resources and efforts so that it can result in failure. Therefore, the development of education and its transformation requires an understanding of the education process and an awareness of new ways of its implementing (2). In order to meet these challenges, higher education needs to direct attention to maintaining, improving, and enhancing the quality of the higher education environment (1). It needs to continually assess its processes and performances via valid criteria and tools (1).

Quality in higher education is a dynamic and multifaceted issue that its perpetual promotion should be planned by policy-makers (3). In recent decades, attention to quality improvement in higher education has increased dramatically, and to achieve quality improvement, the role of evaluation is undeniable. Accordingly, academic systems in different countries seek to continually improve the quality of their system by applying evaluation methods (4). Attention to the indicators of effective teaching is one of the key issues for the Evaluation Committee of Education Development Centers in universities of medical sciences. One of the most critical methods to determine these indices is student opinion polls (5). The teacher is the most important contributor leading educational goals to success. S/He can provide students with a better learning environment by controlling various variables (6). Therefore, faculty members are the most crucial element in the higher education system, and their words and behaviors are reflected in the way they teach, as well as their teaching methods (7). The teacher is the creator of a space in which the student acquires vision, recognizes and develops his/her talents, and moves towards mastering professional and personal abilities. These changes will be based on the teacher's desirable characteristics (8).

Therefore, preparing and developing a faculty member evaluation program is an essential priority of an educational institution (9). Evaluation refers to a structured process for collecting and interpreting information that determines the fulfillment of the program's purpose and its extent (10). In this regard, educational evaluation is a formal activity designed and implemented to determine the quality and efficiency of an educational program or process (11). Fesharakinia et al. (12) believed that students are the only people who are directly trained by faculty members, so the students suit as best evaluators of faculty members.

According to some researchers, student evaluation is the only tangible source and the best type of evaluation, because the behavior and performance of teachers in the educational environment are judged by different groups of students. Given their direct presence in the educational setting, students have a more closer relationship than other judgmental agents, and their attitude to the characteristics of a good teacher can have a significant impact on learning process (13). The official use of the student evaluation of faculties initiated in 1960s and has expanded ever since. It is nowadays used as a major resource for faculty evaluation in the teaching practice (14).

Despite the importance of this issue and the prevalence of this method of evaluation in Iranian medical universities, and given the widespread concerns and objections of teachers to the forms available in universities, it is necessary for universities to re-design the current forms by considering students' expectations of faculty members. They should identify the factors that influence teacher evaluation from the students' perspective and develop evaluation forms in line with this information to bring teachers' assessment results closer to reality and pave the ground for fulfilling the goal of improving the educational system quality. To this end, they should first gather information about students' views about qualified teachers and then develop new or redesign the available forms (15). Therefore, it is important to consider students' characteristics, subjects, environmental conditions, facilities, and the phenomenon of score inflation in the process of evaluating students' learning to increase accuracy in the evaluation of teaching quality, as well as to improve faculty evaluation. The impact of these issues on all stakeholders, students, faculty members, and administrators is undeniable. Therefore, evaluation as one of the functions of academic management that plays a vital role in proper planning, successful implementation of educational programs, and improvement of the quality of education in universities. One of the tasks of the evaluation unit is the continuous evaluation of faculty members from students' perspective. On the other hand, the students' awareness of the importance of evaluation can encourage them to complete the relevant forms with greater precision. Accordingly, the present study investigated the status of effective factors on the evaluation of faculty members of Birjand University of Medical Sciences using the Sama system in the academic year 2017-2018.

METHODS

This is a descriptive-analytical study. The statistical population comprised all faculty members of Birjand University of Medical Sciences ($n = 278$) in the academic year 2017-2018, being incorporated via the census method. Inclusion criterion was all faculty members of Birjand University of Medical Sciences, and exclusion criterion included faculty members working part-time in the university. The teachers' evaluation software was used for data collection using the 14-item teacher evaluation form in the Sama software. The items/components included timely presence and observance of class time; attention to student attendance; ability to manage, controlling and running

classes; being mastered in course content; applying new scientific resources in teaching and encouraging students to study these resources; outlining the objectives of the lesson by presenting a lesson plan; applying the course materials and using appropriate and varied teaching methods (with appropriate examples) to convey the concepts of the lesson; the ability to convey the contents of the lesson intelligibly; the order and logical continuity of the material presented; employing teaching aids within the scope and proportionate to the lesson; motivating the students to study more and participate more actively in class discussions; encouraging students to participate in the discussions (if needed); summarizing the presented contents at the end of the class; assessment of student learning during the semester through appropriate questions; and using teaching aids if needed. The validity of the questionnaire was confirmed by medical education experts, and the reliability of the questionnaire was determined by Cronbach's alpha method as 0.82. Data were analyzed by SPSS-18 software using descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, and frequency), independent t-test and analysis of variance.

RESULTS

The participants in the present study were 144 (44%) women and 155 (56%) men. Frequency distribution of faculty members in terms of academic degree involved 49 master's (17.6%), 89 PhDs (32.1%), 87 specialists (31.2%), and 53 sub-specialists (19.1%). The frequency distribution of faculty members in terms of academic rank included 49 instructors (17.6%), 153 assistant professors (55.5%), 61 associate professors (21.9%), and 15 professors (5%). One-sample t-test was used to determine the factors affecting

the evaluation of faculty members. The results showed that all the components of evaluation of faculty members from the students' point of view were in a desirable status, and the average score obtained was higher than the hypothetical average score 3. Therefore, it can be maintained that the factors influencing the evaluation of the faculty members of Birjand University of Medical Sciences from the students' point of view were at a desirable level or higher (Table 1).

Independent t-test was used to compare the mean score of faculty members' evaluation based on gender. The results showed that there was no significant difference between the total score of faculty members' evaluation in terms of gender ($p > 0.05$) (Table 2).

Analysis of variance was applied to compare the mean score of faculty members' evaluation based on their degree and academic rank. The results showed that there was no significant difference between the total score of faculty members' evaluation in terms of their academic degree ($p > 0.05$). However, there was a significant difference between the total score of faculty members' evaluation based on their academic rank. According to the Tukey post-hoc test, a significant difference was found between the mean total score of faculty members with the ranks of instructor and full professor and those with the ranks of assistant and associate professor ($p < 0.05$) (Table 3).

DISCUSSION

In educational systems, evaluation and its development are among the most widespread issues in the educational process and is one of the most critical priorities of educational institutions. Improving the planning of educational activities and enhancing the quality of the

Table 1. Mean scores of effective factors on faculty members' evaluation based on single-sample t-statistic

Row	Component	Mean	Standard deviation	Significance
1	Timely presence and observance of class time	4.56	0.31	0.0001
2	Attention to student attendance	4.60	0.24	0.0001
3	Ability to manage, control, and run the class	4.56	0.29	0.0001
4	Mastery of course content	4.54	0.30	0.0001
5	Applying new scientific resources in teaching and encouraging students to study these resources	4.48	0.30	0.0001
6	Outlining the objectives of the lesson by presenting a lesson plan	4.51	0.29	0.0001
7	Applying the course materials in an applied manner and using appropriate and varied teaching methods (with appropriate examples) to convey the concepts of the lesson	4.49	0.31	0.0001
8	The ability and skill to convey the contents of the lesson intelligibly	4.49	0.32	0.0001
9	The order and logical continuity of the material presented	4.50	1.30	0.0001
10	Employing teaching aids within the scope of and proportionate to the lesson	4.48	0.30	0.0001
11	Motivating the students to study more and participate more actively in class discussions	4.46	0.35	0.0001
12	Encouraging students to participate in the discussions (if needed)	4.46	0.35	0.0001
13	Summarizing the presented contents at the end of the class	4.48	0.31	0.0001
14	Assessment of student learning during the semester through appropriate questions	4.52	0.37	0.0001
15	Using teaching aids if needed	4.40	0.37	0.0001
16	Total score	4.48	0.30	0.0001

Table 2. Comparison of the mean score of faculty members' evaluation based on gender

Variable	Dimension	Mean score	Standard deviation	T	Significance
Gender	Woman	4.47	0.30	1.09	0.275
	Man	4.51	0.28		

Table 3. Comparison of the mean total scores of faculty members' evaluation based on their academic degree and rank

Variable	Dimension	Mean score	Standard deviation	f	Significance
Degree	Master's	4.36	0.309	1.023	0.126
	PhD	4.41	0.321		
	Specialty	4.32	0.289		
	Subspecialty	4.42	0.321		
Rank	Instructor	4.21	0.312	2.033	0.03
	Assistant professor	4.63	0.314		
	Associate professor	4.52	0.325		
	Full professor	4.23	0.286		

educational system are based on the teacher evaluations (16). In general, the evaluation of faculty members is a form of educational evaluation that determines the degree to which the faculty members have succeeded in achieving educational goals. Using students' opinions is a common practice in universities of medical sciences. The teacher evaluation process is influenced by several factors, and various scholars and researchers have mentioned several factors in their studies. In this study, the triple factors of students' scores in the relevant course, gender of the teacher, academic degree and rank of the faculties were investigated. The results showed that the components affecting the evaluation of the faculty members of Birjand University of Medical Sciences from the students' perspective have an appropriate status. In their study, Turk Zadeh et al. (15) showed that the most essential characteristics of any good teacher from the students' perspective are his or her academic mastery of the subject matter, good expression, and lesson organization and arrangement. Therefore, teachers with higher educational degrees and specialty generally tend to be more proficient in class and will also be successful in creating a positive attitude of students toward themselves. Fesharakinia et al. (12) showed that the most crucial priority of the quality of a faculty's teaching from students' perspective is the ability to convey and make understood the contents of the lesson.

The teacher's personality traits have also been emphasized among influencing factors on student evaluation of the faculties. This finding indicates that in addition to scientific mastery, self-confidence, good temperament, personality and manner of the teachers are other important variables that influence students' evaluation of the faculty members. Accordingly, it can be proposed that the personality, manner, and behavior of the teacher in the classroom are highly conducive to increasing students' enthusiasm and motivation

for learning, education, and ultimately improving the quality of learning and teaching. Therefore, when the teacher has a good behavior but is considered scientifically weak and inadequate, s/he cannot be accepted by the learners. It is because academic discipline, the teacher's expertise, and mastery of the subject and contents of the course are considered to be the most essential characteristics of every teacher. Dargahi et al.'s (17) research determined the criteria of a capable teacher for students as mastery of the subject matter, the ability of expression and conveyance of educational materials, respect for the student's personality, patience, good temperament, conscientiousness, and accountability.

In students' evaluation of the faculty, the interrelationship between faculty members and students is important. According to the literature, the interactions between faculty and students will also affect intellectual development, quality of learning, and overall student satisfaction. These interactions will also affect learners' scientific achievements, such as problem-solving skills, as well as their efforts to achieve educational goals. In a study by Abedini et al. (18), the major characteristics of a good faculty were evaluated on a 5-point Likert attitude scale, and comprised good expression, good temperament, and mastery of the subject matter.

According to a research study by Ghorbani et al. (19), the most significant characteristics of an empowered faculty member from the students' perspective were the mastery of the subject, the manner of expression, organization and arrangement of the lesson, and interest in teaching, while determination and rigor, interest in research, and teaching history were among the characteristics that the students rated the least.

From the students' perspectives, classroom management is considered as an effective factor in teachers' evaluation.

Faculties usually apply a particular type of management style, depending on the requirements and circumstances of each class, so that learners can react to it because of their personality traits and motivational principles and their perceptions of the teacher and the classroom. Consequently, classroom management becomes a process of interactive action and reaction from which learners do not see themselves as separated. This effect, in turn, manifests itself in their behavior and reaction to the teacher.

Classroom attendance is another component of classroom management evaluation from the students' perspective. Turk Zadeh et al. stated that teacher's strict and excessive control of the classroom is contributory to lowering his/her score. Jamshidi et al. (20) stated that rigor and strict control of students is not a confounding factor for the analysis of faculty evaluation results, but instead it leads to the students' disinterest in the course being taught. Another element that is evaluated by students in the classroom is the ability to control and manage the classroom. A group of researchers have found that the ability to control the class increases student engagement in classroom activities. It will also affect the attitude of the students towards the teacher.

The results also showed that there is no significant difference between the teachers' evaluation scores based on their gender and degree. The results also showed that there was a significant difference between the teachers' evaluation scores in terms of academic rank. This finding is inconsistent with the results of Amini et al. (21) and Arbooni et al. (22)'s studies. Numerous studies have shown that the scientific abilities, teaching experience, proper education, and high qualifications of teachers are important contributors to the teaching quality. Teachers with high educational quality are also appropriately evaluated by students, meaning that there is a logical relationship between the two. Teachers with longer tenure and high academic background are more experienced in teaching process and class management. Therefore, they can better understand the classroom atmosphere and provide better quality education by effective interacting with students. Consequently, they indirectly encourage students to evaluate them more effectively. However, in the present study, the average evaluation score

of the faculties with the assistant professor rank was higher than those with full or associate professor ranks. To explain, one may highlight the fact that newly recruited teachers devote more considerable energy and greater attention to the emotional dimension of the class, whereby students have evaluated them better.

The strength of this study is that the teaching weaknesses of faculty members can be identified from the results, and an educational program can be devised in this regard. The limitations of this study included the lack of time for students to complete the questionnaire in the Sama system, which was out of control of the researcher.

Evaluation of teaching methods is a process aimed at improving teaching and promoting education by faculty members. On the other hand, feedback on evaluation results can reflect the teachers' strengths and weaknesses in teaching. Given that students are involved in the training process more than any other stakeholders and that they can comment on its merits, therefore, evaluation will be useful when incorporated as part of a comprehensive teacher evaluation program and its data are of good validity and reliability.

Ethical considerations

Ethical issues (Including plagiarism, informed consent, misconduct, data fabrication and/or falsification, double publication and/or submission, redundancy, etc.) have been completely observed by the authors.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors are grateful to the faculty members and administrators of Birjand University of Medical Sciences.

Financial Support: This article is based on a research project titled Evaluation of Faculty Members' Evaluation Status in Birjand University of Medical Sciences from the Perspective of Students and Related Factors in the Academic Year 2017-2018 (Code: 1235) which was funded by Birjand University of Medical Sciences.

Conflict of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interests.

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