
Letter to the Editor

Perspectives of Faculty Members on the Compatibility of Curriculum with Content of Courses Presented at Kermanshah University of Medical Sciences in 2013

(Received: 3 May 2015 Accepted: 12 May 2015)

Dear Editor

Curriculum is a map that provides learning opportunities to accomplish specific and general objectives (1). Course content is the concept that is taught. In fact, course content is determined based on the differences derived from the final objectives of teaching and the current state (2). The perspectives of medical education authorities can contribute to promotion of current processes and can be used to assess the efficacy of educational programs (3). Teachers are one of the most important elements of the education process that teach the courses according to the curriculum and introduced references. Since the medical sciences majors involve both basic sciences and evidence-based diagnosis and treatment, it is necessary to make use of the views of teachers, as the primary users of the teaching process, on the compatibility of the curriculum presented by Supreme Council of Cultural Revolution with the content of courses.

This descriptive-analytical study was aimed to analyze the opinion of faculty members about the compatibility of curriculum with content of courses presented at Kermanshah University of Medical Sciences in 2013. The viewpoints of 134 basic and clinical faculty members of Kermanshah University of Medical Sciences were evaluated through a researcher-made questionnaire. Face and content validity of the questionnaire was confirmed by ten faculty members of Kermanshah University of Medical Sciences. The reliability index of 0.81, confirmed through the test-retest method. The obtained data were analyzed by SPSS-16 software using ANOVA and chi-square tests.

The studied samples comprised of 46% clinical and 54% basic faculty members. The participants reported the compatibility of curriculum with course content as 55.3% fully compatible, 38.4% comparatively compatible and 6.3% partially compatible. The highest rate of compatibility (84.3%) was reported for the departments of

basic medical sciences, indicating a significant difference between the two groups ($p=0.04$). The highest rates of compatibility were reported for compatibility of curriculum with course topics (82.8%) and coordination of prerequisite courses (69.6%), and the lowest rates of compatibility were reported for incompatibility of hours (59.6%), syllabi (53.6%) and introduced references (41.5%). Incompatibility of presented course units with course content was specifically reported for dental majors (4). Other sources have also shown incompatibility of educational objectives with course content and lack of coverage of all educational needs of the students, reported by the teachers of medical sciences (5).

The results of this study revealed that curriculum and course content should be prepared and updated according to the national requirements, global development and international comparative look (2), in order to achieve the objectives of Vision and Fifth Development Plan of Islamic Republic of Iran. In reviewing the curriculum and content, four parameters of updating, enrichment, mission orientation or needs fulfillment and value orientation should be taken into account (5). Medical teachers are the most significant element in the dynamic teaching process that, in addition to receiving direct feedback from their own teaching, can make the best evaluation of the compatibility between curriculum and course content.

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Citation: Pourmirza Kalhori R, Jalilian N, Jalilian N, Deh Haghi AA. Perspectives of faculty members on the compatibility of curriculum with content of courses presented at Kermanshah University of Medical Sciences in 2013. *Educ Res Med Sci*. 2015; 4(1): 44-45.

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