



## An Investigation of Effective Factors on Educational Quality of Master of Science Courses in Universities of Iran

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### ABSTRACT

Educational quality is one of the most effective factors on educational management. The aim of this paper is finding solutions for increasing educational quality of Master of Science courses in universities of Iran. This paper has used questionnaires' students and masters in TarbiatModares University in Iran. Results from statistical tests indicate that efficient management in university, the method of choice of masters in university, assessment methods of performance of masters, methods of acceptance students, new method of teaching and improvement of teaching planning have influence on educational quality of master of science courses in universities of Iran.

**KEYWORDS** :Educational Quality, Master of Science, Iran.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This definition of quality of education allows for an understanding of education as a complex system embedded in a political, cultural and economic context. This paper will examine research related to these dimensions. It is important to keep in mind education's systemic nature, however; these dimensions are interdependent, influencing each other in ways that are sometimes unforeseeable.

A number of reviews of research similar to that being carried out here have recently been conducted. These include the research consortium EdQual whose initial literature reviews (Yu 2007; Barrett et al. 2007) cover some of the literature that should be reviewed in a study such as this. In addition, the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) in 2003, commissioned considerable work on education quality, resulting in a publication which contains several reviews of research (Verspoor 2005). Similarly, as a background paper to the evaluation of World Bank-supported primary education projects (Independent Evaluation Group 2006) another review of research into education quality and effectiveness was carried out (Boissiere 2004), and the Education for All Global Monitoring Report devoted its 2005 edition (UNESCO 2005) to education quality, also commissioning many research reviews of interest (e.g. Benson 2004; De Grauwe 2004; Dembélé and Miaro 2003; Gauthier and Dembélé 2004). It should be noted that the lack of a methodological critique in several of these reviews makes the

reporting of their findings problematic for culling 'relevant' research results. The EdQual review "Research Evidence of School Effectiveness in Sub-Saharan African Countries" (Yu 2007) provides an overview of some of the reviews of such work carried out prior to 2007, as well as reviewing a set of individual studies. Of course, the focus is on sub-Saharan Africa, and not all developing countries. The lack of critique of the statistical validity of the results reviewed should be noted, however. In reviewing, for instance, the 1994 Fuller and Clarke review, no mention is made either of the research designs of the studies reviewed, or the effect sizes of the different variables, so one is at a loss to evaluate the meaning, no less the significance of the three factors reported as being attributed with "consistent school effects", namely, 1) the availability of textbooks and supplementary reading materials; 2) teachers' subject knowledge and verbal abilities; and 3) instructional time and the work demands placed on students (Yu 2007:10). As in several other reviews of school effectiveness research which we deal with below, what is reported is merely a list of variables and then the vote tally of the number of significant effects/number of analyses. This is clearly insufficient. For instance, when Yu reports that "class size and teacher salaries had inconsistent or no effects on student academic achievement," it is essential to ask what is consistency or inconsistency if those factors which are judged in the review as being significant are found to be influential irrespective of the validity of the research design. The EdQual paper also covers Hanushek (1997), which, like the Fuller and Clarke review, similarly utilizes a vote tally method to look at the consistency of research results. But it draws an even more worrying conclusion, namely, that "there are no clear and systematic relationships between key inputs and student performance" (Yu: 12). Yu asserts that Hanushek's review "challenges the conventional view that school resources are relatively more important than families in developing countries than in rich countries".

The marginal efficiency of different inputs is likely to be much greater in developing countries than in industrialised countries precisely because of the scarcity value of certain school resources, as correctly pointed out in Yu's review of Heneveld (1994). Whether a school has a blackboard, for instance, may matter much more than whether there are sufficient textbooks, in contexts in which very few schools have sufficient textbooks, so that the isolated factor of a blackboard increases in significance. Added to these reviews are those of Kellaghan and Greaney (2001), who Yu refers to as recommending the use of student assessment to "engineer change at the levels of educational policy and teaching practice to enhance quality," (Yu: 14) and Lockheed and Levin (1993), who identify various "necessary inputs; facilitating conditions; and the will to change and act" in creating effective schools in developing countries. (Yu: 15) More detailed lists of variables are reported by Yu in the further reviews examined, viz. Pennycuik (1993), Scheerens (2000a,b) and Velez et al. (1993). He comments on Scheerens' observation that there is "inconclusive and weak evidence on the effect of instructional factors that have received empirical support in industrialized countries" (Yu: 15). Further, Yu examines the Velez et al. review (1993), another vote tally across quantitative research in Latin American and the Caribbean. The 'positive', policy manipulable variables, albeit across a variety of unreported research designs and models, comprised: active teaching methods; access to textbooks and other instructional materials; pre-service formal education (as opposed to in-service training); basic infrastructure; teacher experience, subject knowledge and closeness to school; time on task and curriculum coverage; student attitudes; preschool; homework practices, including parental involvement; and school size. The two factors negatively related to academic achievement were distance to school; and grade repetition and overage pupils.

Yu finally reports on the review of school effectiveness research carried out by Boissiere (2004) as a background paper for the evaluation of the World Bank's support to primary education (Independent Evaluation Group 2006). Boissiere identifies the following five categories of "determinants of primary education outcomes:" 1) hardware (e.g. school building, classroom and furniture, sanitation); 2) software (e.g. curriculum, pedagogy, textbooks, writing materials); 3) teachers; 4) management and institutional structure; and 5) context and background variables. In his brief review, Yu does not highlight some crucial comments made by Boissiere himself about the research literature itself, however. For instance, Boissiere notes that over the years few clear-cut results have been uncovered and that "decision-makers still have to fall back upon their experience and practical judgement." (1) Additionally, although Boissiere advises that private schools, vouchers and decentralization strategies benefiting the poor be tried out, he comments that "success depends greatly upon the political context of a country's education system and the institutional history of education in a given country". As "there are not many rigorous studies to draw upon at the primary education level, so care must be used in extrapolating results of studies from high- and middle-income countries." Indeed, this is where the EdQual review leads itself, the purpose of the review being to help to define the research focus of the consortium. Yu writes: "ignoring the different contexts when interpreting and implementing research findings would be irresponsible and unlikely to achieve intended outcomes" (Yu: 12). However, Boissiere (2004: 26), does acknowledge the methodological weaknesses of the studies reviewed, and refers to Glewwe's argument (2002) that "if a number of good conventional studies agree on the significance of an input, there might be good reason to believe in a causal connection. His main caveat is that there are too few good conventional EPF (education production function) studies" (quoted by Boissiere 2004: 5).

The aim of this paper is finding solutions for increasing educational quality of Master of Science courses in universities of Iran.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

This paper replies the following questions:

1. How much efficient management in university effect on educational quality of Master of Science courses?
2. How much choice of masters in university effect on educational quality of Master of Science courses in viewpoint of students and masters?
3. How much assessment methods of performance of masters in university effect on educational quality of Master of Science courses in viewpoint of students and masters?
4. How much methods of acceptance students in university effect on educational quality of Master of Science courses in viewpoint of students and masters?
5. How much new method of teaching in university effect on educational quality of Master of Science courses in viewpoint of students and masters?
6. How much improvement of teaching planning in university effect on educational quality of Master of Science courses in viewpoint of students and masters?

This paper has used questionnaires' students and masters in TarbiatModares University in Iran. Sample is as following table:

Table 1. Society and Sample for this study

Sample	Statistical Society	Group
108	151	Masters
306	1474	Students
414	1624	Total

We have used statistical test as  $\chi^2$  test for analyzing results.

### 3. EMPIRICAL RESULTS

**First question:** How much efficient management in university effect on educational quality of Master of Science courses?

Results indicate that:

Students' emphasis on Islamic environment, human and respectful campus emphasis on educational quality and try to raise the standards of education and science (with the construction of libraries, learning centers and work yards ...) against any threats, violence and the arbitrary behavior, university degrees in the university president, faculty and heads of departments, a strong emphasis on management aspects of the university president, faculty and heads of departments, the emphasis on the creation of human relationships with faculty and students of the university, faculty and administrators.

**Second question:** How much choice of masters in university effect on educational quality of Master of Science courses in viewpoint of students and masters?

Empirical results indicate that Long-term planning for teacher training courses will contribute to the scientific richness. Perhaps the most important tasks of the University and the University specialists and skilled population is needed. The long-term planning for teacher training and a great role in increasing the quality of university education and postgraduate courses will be particularly.

One of the things on which there is significant disagreement between the views of teachers and students, is using the techniques of participatory management and administration of the council.

**Third question:** how much assessment methods of performance of masters in university effect on educational quality of Master of Science courses in viewpoint of students and masters?

One of the things on which there is significant disagreement between the views of teachers and students is using the techniques of participatory management and administration of the council.

Teacher selection is based on research, teaching, research and writing for his significant is role in the development of high quality postgraduate education courses.

Performance evaluation system of professors to students believed to greatly increase the quality of postgraduate education

**Fourth question:** How much methods of acceptance students in university effect on educational quality of Master of Science courses in viewpoint of students and masters?

Decentralized approach to student selection and revision of the graduate student selection has less effect on educational quality of Master of Science courses.

**Fifth question:**How much new method of teaching in university effect on educational quality of Master of Science courses in viewpoint of students and masters?

Develop courses and teaching methods for teacher's assessment postgraduate students and faculty believe more effective in increasing the quality of postgraduate education.

Teaching methods and evaluation of each lesson the students by teachers to be highly effective training has a most effect on educational quality.

**Sixth question:** How much improvement of teaching planning in university effect on educational quality of Master of Science courses in viewpoint of students and masters?

#### 4. Conclusion and Suggestions

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