

Teaching Accountability: A Socio-educational Approach to Improve the Performance of the University Staff Members (A Proposed Socio-educational Perspective)

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Abstract

This study puts forward a perspective of the teaching accountability system in order to improve the performance of the university teaching staff as universities in many countries of the contemporary world are in need of a teaching accountability system that enables them to improve their teaching outcomes, and also enhance to the performance of their staff in terms of the teaching methodology and evaluation of the academic performance, the activities of the scientific research, the services of local community of the teaching staff of the contemporary universities. The study comes up with a proposed perspective that includes a philosophy, objectives and scientific basics, requirements and mechanisms of realizing this proposed perspective

Keywords : Teaching Accountability; Socio-Socio-educational Performance; University Staff Members. Socio-educational Perspective

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1. INTRODUCTION

Recently, many leading countries like the United States, Australia, Canada, U.K., and Germany have been given a mounting interest in the teaching accountability of the higher education. The interest is getting increased; especially with the adoption of these countries and their socio-educational institutions, the policy of the comprehensive quality in order to improve the outcomes of the higher education represented in the level of the quality of the graduates, the scientific research and the community and environment service.

To achieve this goal, many universities attempted to apply several types of measures to improve the individual (the student, the member of teaching staff or the administrator) and the institution (the department, the college or the university). The interest and the trend to adopt the teaching accountability by many countries have not stemmed from void; they have their own justifications for paying this interest in the system imposed by a set of demands and challenges such as: The increasing demographic and economic changes leading to the continuous increase of the social demand on the higher education especially with the implementing the principles of free education, equality of socio-educational opportunities, the positive and strong relationship between the level of the education of the individual and attainment of the job, the income and the social status.

Among the justifications of the adoption of the teaching accountability is that governments have realized the importance of the higher education as one of the economic and social investments; besides the application of the comprehensive quality and accreditation systems, and the desire of governments and authorities of higher education to advance the level of the academic performance so that it becomes commensurate with the standards of the quality standards (Al-Shukheibi, 2005, 122). Due to the importance of the teaching accountability system, many researchers have studied and analyzed it identify the method of publicizing the culture of the teaching accountability among the members of the university members.

Among the researchers is Al-Jaroudi (2011) who conducted a study to take notice of the reality of accountability in the institution of the high reduction in Saudi Arabia. The study concluded that there was not any article in the higher education and its legislation that indicated the process of holding the teaching staff member for his tasks to guarantee the performance of his tasks. George (2011) prepared a proposed model of the teaching accountability to realize improvement in the quality of pre university teaching in Egypt through the implementation of the remuneration system and securing funding resources for the crisis of implementation of the teaching accountability and publicizing its culture through courses, symposiums, awareness leaflets. Aweidah (2013) conducted a study to

take notice of the actual reality of the teaching accountability culture among the teaching staff members and the academic leaders in institution of the higher education in Egypt. The study revealed a weakness in the teaching staff culture of the teaching accountability besides the rarity of apparatus needed for publicizing this culture among the university teaching staff members. Abu Ula (2013) conducts a similar study to take notice of the teaching accountability as perceived by teaching staff of the faculty of education in Aswan University. The study showed that the majority of the teaching staff did not recognize the teaching accountability and its objectives in the university teaching.

Al-Halawani & Salah (2014) put forward a perspective of the teaching accountability of the pre- university teaching in light of the experiences of some advanced countries. Their analytical study revealed the existence of strong teaching accountability under the two types of centralization and decentralization of education in Egypt. Mandina & Chiheve (2013) investigated the opinions of the principals in the Gweru area-Zimbabwe as a case study for four school principals inquiring about what can be done to make available an environment that helps assertion of the quality and teaching accountability of the secondary schools. The data of the study was collected through observance, interviews, and content analysis. The case study showed there was a set of procedures that can secure a good environment of quality and teaching accountability such as keeping the positive relationships that are based on transparency and justice among the teachers and the school administration, supporting the vocational growth, and teacher development, providing training besides securing the resources and the funding tools. Popov, et al. (2015) conducted a study on the quality justice and the teaching accountability as decisive determinants of distinction in teaching. The study revealed that quality, justice and teaching accountability are essential elements to the success of the academic teaching systems. The study also showed that there is a close correlation between teaching accountability and the teaching quality and that it is the base of realization of the social justice. Kwok (2011) conducted a case study about the principals' recognition of the culture of quality, and the teaching accountability in the schools of (Lasallian) schools in the Hong Kong State. The study showed that it is possible to secure the culture of the quality and the teaching accountability through the adoption of various curricula that include a comprehensive education of the culture of quality and the teaching accountability.

Jacob (2014) demonstrated how the quality culture could be publicized in the higher education. The study threw light on the role of the education leaders in reinforcement of the culture of guaranteeing the quality teaching. The researcher used a questionnaire inter views arranged for a sample of (135) members of the deans, heads of departments

and coordinators of the academic programs. The study concluded that the accountability processes applied by six universities had a great role in publicizing the teaching quality. Porter's (2015) study revealed the scarcity of the empirical studies on the teaching accountability. The study showed that despite the significance of the teaching accountability and quality in the students' success in the open teaching, there is a limitation in the studies on this important topic. It also showed the majority of the studies conducted to reveal the correlation between the scales of the teaching accountability and the criteria of the academic accreditation, support of performance and the success of the students in the open teaching. It showed the results of the majority of these studies mix the accountability and the institutional performance especially the students' learning outcomes.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. The concepts and the types of the teaching accountability

Teaching accountability is defined as a system adopted for the evaluation of the teaching staff performance and measuring the results of the teaching process. Through this system, the members of the teaching staff are held accountable for the performance and achievement of the students (Al-Jaroudi, 2011, 7). It is a process through which the teaching effectiveness of the socio-educational practices, activities and methods can be verified and steered to the right directions that ensure the realization of the teaching objectives, i.e. it is a teaching process of finding out the extent of the effectiveness of the inputs and the processes and the outcomes of the teaching process (Radwan et al., 2010). Through this evaluation, the teaching institution can identify the extent of achieving the standards of the comprehensive quality and determining the compensations and penalties for the teaching staff.

Due to the importance of the teaching accountability, some scholars have classified it into several categories, the most important of which is the classification by (Hammond and Asher, 1991). They both agreed on that the teaching accountability consists of three types the first is the bureaucratic accountability, which is based on the hope of creating "the best system" under which all students will be educated. The strength of this system lies in the possibility to ensure equal and good education. Decisions are made at the top and handed down to administrators who convert them into procedures for teachers to follow in teaching the students. According to this system, teachers are not held accountable for meeting the individual needs of their students but they are held accountable only for following the standard procedures of teaching the students. The second type is the professional accountability, which is unlike the bureaucratic accountability, permits practitioners to make their own decisions meeting the socio-

educational needs of the individual students. This type ensures that teachers will be highly knowledgeable, competent, and committed to good teaching. Consequently, a professional accountability system directs a particular attention, not only to student progress, but also to policies governing the preparation, certification, selection of teachers besides evaluation of their performance. The third type of teaching accountability is called the market Accountability that is connected to answering some questions: How can all parents guarantee access to good schools?

How do students and their parents choose schools? What information should schools provide so that students and their parents can be informed consumers of public education? This type indicates the quality of the schools and the degree of their attraction of the consumers, the students and their parents. Accordingly, such schools are held accountable in two ways: The first; they are expected to work more seriously and forcefully to extend the services wanted by the parents and the students. The second their problems have to be evident and clear for all so that they can handle them and take part in solving them.

2.2. Basics and objectives of the teaching accountability

The objectives of the teaching accountability are not limited only to guarantee that the general performance of the university institutions is carried out according to the principles and limitations of the guidelines and regulations. Rather, they go beyond that to involve the practice of the general performance of the university with the highest possible level and in the minimum time and the least cost. Therefore, the objectives of the teaching accountability are categorized in monitoring the activities, and tasks carried out by members of the teaching staff to guarantee the quality of work production, reveal the resourcefulness of the teaching staff and then reward them and work to establish equality in duties and rights.

The teaching accountability also seeks to detect the mistakes and problems before the take place and avoid them in the future. It also aims to get rid of the problems curtailing the performance efficiency of the teaching staff and direct the top management to swiftly take action to protect the public interest and take measures necessary for evaluation of the performance. Among the teaching accountability objective is to prevent the official power abuse and to establish equality in evaluating the objectives for the beneficiaries (Mohammad, 2009, 67). The teaching accountability of the universities and the institution of higher education is based on a set of principles such as transparency, accountability and commitment.

(a) Transparency that requires knowledge and immediate access to information about the performance of the socio-educational institution in terms of making available the

documents and facts relative to the socio-educational issues of any member of the society as one of the basic human rights such as the right of information and the right of access.

(b) Another principle of accountability is also comprehensiveness, i.e. it involves all aspects of the practical and measurable teaching aspects. Accountability also depends on the principle of equilibrium and integrity, i.e. no aspect of the teaching process outweighs another; but all aspects of the teaching process are given the same amount of consideration they deserve according to the importance each aspect represents in the achievement of the objectives of the teaching process.

(c) Commitment is one of the principles that the teaching accountability is based on; this principle reflects the extent of the members of the teaching staff commitment to observe the quality of the services extended to the students. It also implies a moral commitment stemming from the self - commitment of the individuals' vow to apply in their performance.

The teaching accountability is also based on the promotion of the teaching staff members, because remunerations and awards give the teaching staff members a strong drive to help their student succeed. Moreover, the remunerations prove the credibility of the standards adopted by the socio-educational institution. The teaching accountability is characterized by regularity and permanence as it is carried out before implementation by preparing the control system, during the implementation through detecting the deviation and rectifying it by evaluation of the results and future correction. Among the important basics of the teaching accountability is the steering of performance through evaluating, controlling, publicizing the achievement and the periodic evaluation (Ahmad, 2006, 77-83).

2.3. Models of the teaching accountability

The teaching accountability of the higher education is connected to a number of models such as the models that connect the teaching accountability with objectives and goals and target. This means that education quality is accomplished through total accomplishment of goals, i.e. the teaching accountability, here, is connected with the student's performance and the level of their achievement.

According to this tendency, the decline of the teaching quality means a decline in the achievement level as shown by results of the examinations or other criteria used for measuring the socio-educational achievement connected to this model is the idea of holding the members of the teaching staff, the deans and presidents of the universities are accountable for extent of the accomplishment of specific goals which are connected with the variations in the students achievement and behavior. According to this model,

the teaching accountability depends on the achievement of several major objectives: Evident measurable objectives, evaluation tools that measure the progress of achieving these objectives, remunerations for the accomplished objectives.

There is another model connected with the used material and human inputs, methods of using and investing these inputs and then the system is complete (inputs – processes - out puts - feedback).

Finally, there is a third model called standardized accountability which entails pinpointing specific teaching accountability clear criteria such as the adoption of teaching methodology, the curricula, teachers certification and their experience, the density of classes , the teaching technology used and proportions of drop outs... etc. (Abdul Karim, 2006, 453).

2.4. Methods and means of the teaching accountability

The teaching accountability entails using means and methods proper for the nature of the university institution such as: Supervision and observance of a variety of tasks carried out by the members of the teaching staff through direct contact with them counseling and advising them, rewarding their outstanding, but penalizing the negligent. among the methods of the teaching accountability is also the review done by specialized units in the university that review the records and reports to find out the real data about various activities then compare them the data with what have been scheduled to be done according to the plans prepared in advance. The records form one of the means of the teaching accountability for recording the data and information about the performance of the employees of the university institutions.

Complaints against the university institutions are among the other means that the teaching accountability is based on, but are verifying their authenticity and are not vexatious complaints that hinder the function of the institution. Other means of accountability are the reports of the head of departments. managers, and inspection that is done through interviews with the employees of the university institutions and taking notice of the problems that intercepts the progress of performance and trying to solve these problems besides detecting the errors and their causes (Mohammad, 2009, 72).

2.5. Obstacles of the teaching accountability

A number of obstacles encounters and prevents the implementation of the teaching accountability; these are: The large size of the universities, colleges and the mounting numbers of their students and teachers, the weakness of the information systems of some universities that don't use modern technology to convey the information besides the centralization which adopted by some universities, the scarcity of resources designated for the university teaching , weakness of the outcomes of the secondary education that supplies the higher education with weak kinds of students who depend on

memorization and they lack the higher levels of thinking. Other obstacles of the teaching accountability system is that all the employees are not involved in the continuous improvement process, and the low level of awareness, perplexity of procedures, routine, courtesy and the absence of practical scientific standards adopted for the teaching accountability (Abu Ula, 2013, 93-94).

3. PROBLEM OF THE STUDY

The problem of the study stemmed from the contemporary universities' need of a system based on the teaching accountability. This is evident under the contemporary university reality of certain universities in many countries witnessing an evident decline in the level of the university outcomes represented by thousands of graduates. The labor market has shown the shallowness of their knowledge and their poor skills. This led to the inability of the university education to turn out graduates capable of encountering the local and international problems facing their societies due to many factors, the most important of which is the poor performance of the teaching staff of some universities. They transmit some thoughts in the form of ready molds besides stuffing the minds of the students with only theoretical knowledge.

They do not go beyond that to the reality of practices and the practical applications leading to creativity and distinction. According to the researcher's academic experience, the eradication of backwardness, ignorance and the poor outcomes of the university education cannot be implemented except through holding the negligent of the teaching staff accountable for their poor performance.

Besides, exposing the weak aspects of their poor performance and remedying what can be handled not only this but dismissing those whose poor performance is irreparable. These actions cannot be done except through establishing bases of a system based on the teaching accountability, and this system which many of the contemporary universities are want of. Therefore, it is high time, after revealing the lineaments of university reality, which is based on the teacher's poor performance that is reflected in the learner's performance it is high time to create a practical system based on scientific bases and practical approach that puts the aspects of accountability into effect and handles the defects of the teaching out- comes. This the remedy adopted by many advanced countries to treat the shortcomings in performance.

Some references indicate that (46) American states adopt one or another of the models of the teaching accountability of the higher education. There are also other countries like Canada, Germany, Australia, England and other advanced countries have done the same thing (Al-Shukheibi, 2005, 100). Taking into account the steps of the great countries that have experience in the adoption of the teaching quality, the reality

characterized with poor outcomes of the teaching process in many countries of the contemporary world, the low level of the performance of university teaching staff, and the absence of an independent accountability teaching system in many of the universities of the present world, the Arab countries in particular, this problem has appeared to answer the following question: What is the proposed perspective of the teaching accountability as an approach to improve the performance of the teaching staff members of the contemporary universities?

4. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of the study is theoretical and practical as follows:

4.1. First: The theoretical significance

The importance of this study lies in the significance of the topic it is addressing, i.e. creating a system of the teaching accountability for the contemporary universities in general and the Arab universities in particular. This is in order to realize the quality of the performance of the teaching staff, because the adoption of this system is an urgent necessity not only to tackle the shortcomings of the academic performance, but also to cope with the scientific international experiences that affirmed in their perspectives that all the elements of the teaching process must be at the highest levels of quality and efficiency. This cannot be achieved expect through an independent distinct accountability system, a matter that many states and private universities in many countries lack.

4.2. Second: The practical significance

The results of the study can be utilized in creating a teaching accountability system contributing to the improvement of the quality of the performance of the academic performance in the contemporary universities.

5. RESULTS

The results pertaining the question of the study: what is the proposed perspective of the teaching accountability as an approach to improve the performance of the teaching staff members of the contemporary universities?

The perspective is based on a philosophy, objectives and mechanisms of putting into effect the teaching accountability of improvement of the university teaching staff that can be illustrated as follows:

5.1. The philosophy of the proposed respective

The philosophy of the perspective springs from the importance of the teaching accountability of the improvement of the academic performance of teaching staff of the universities and institutions of higher education in general, through their evident role in improving the teaching process and enabling the members of the teaching staff to vary their teaching methods, adopt developed teaching aids, and cope up with time and adopt advanced methods in evaluating the performance of their students, vary the teaching activities. Moreover, they can improve their contribution in the scientific research through their commitment to the ethics of scientific research, criteria, procedures, and publication terms, publish their studies in the specialized periodicals of high impact factor. The improvement of the academic performance should be connected to the quality of the services extended by the university teaching staff member to the local community through cooperation, consultation and evaluation of the all the institution of the local community, let alone the participation in the voluntary societal activities that the contemporary international universities are keen on.

5.2. Objectives of the proposed perspective

The perspectives aims at creating a teaching accountability system to improve the academic performance university teaching staff in terms of the improvement of the university teaching process, the scientific research, community services due the strong relationship, as proved by many studies, between the teaching accountability and the quality of the academic performance through its evaluation and finding out its shortcoming and points of strength, remunerating the creative members of the teaching staff, and penalizing the negligent ones, finding out the problems encountering them and solving them to avoid their recurrence besides other procedures leading to the improvement and quality of the universities outcomes, in general.

5.3. Foundations of the proposed perspective

The perspective is based upon several foundations such as comprehensiveness, i.e. the teaching accountability involvement of all the types of the academic performance of the teaching staff member, namely: The teaching process, the scientific research, community service. Other foundations are the commitment of all the teaching staff members of the current universities to comprehending the culture of the teaching accountability and seeking to realize its objectives, commitment to its principles, applying its procedures in all their occupational affairs. Therefore, such commitment imposes another commitment that entails universities to publicize the culture of the teaching accountability among all their employees through training workshops, conferences, lectures and other means of accountability education. This is on the one hand, but on the other hand, the university commits itself to the adoption of the controls

and standards, indicators, tools and methodology of the advanced evaluation that guarantees the quality of the academic performance of the teaching staff.

5.4. Requirements of implementing the proposed perspective

Implementing this perspective requires several procedures, the most important t of which are: Furnishing the fund and apparatus required for the implementation of the teaching accountability system by the teaching staff. Such requirements include: Laboratories, technologically equipped teaching halls, libraries and other required equipment. One requirement of implementing the perspective is the work to publicize the culture of the teaching accountability among all the members of the teaching staff through training workshops, scientific conferences, symposiums, lectures and other means of teaching accountability education. Another means is the adoption of the standards, indicators related to the quality of the academic performance as standards underlying the performance evaluation by the units of the teaching accountability. Another requirement is the developing the methods of evaluation of the academic performance and pinpointing the aspects and practices entailing teaching accountability.

Another requirement is the legislation of regulation and issuing laws that help the teaching accountability system that involve all the aspects of the academic evaluation besides adopting transparency and openness in communicating and publicizing the information related to the aspects of the academic performance of the teaching staff and communicating this information to them regularly and continuously to take notice of the stages of their progress and shortcomings. It also requires the commitment of the officials of the university administration such the university president, deputies' deans and the heads of the academic departments to the standards and performance indicators the members of the teaching staff are held accountable. This entails connecting the results of the teaching accountability pertaining the academic performance to the rank and salary system adopted by the university so that the hard working member of the teaching staff can get rank promotion plus a financial allowance whereas the negligent gets penalty involving his ranks and salaries, too.

5.5. Mechanisms of implementation of the proposed perspective

This proposed perspective can be applied through several mechanisms such as: Setting up a unit of teaching accountability in every college; it reports directly to the president of the university, but it involves the dean, the heads of departments and some of the teaching staff members. This unit is authorized to carry out the accountability task such as: Publicizing the culture of the teaching accountability, following up and evaluating the scientific productive aspects of the teaching staff in the field of teaching, scientific research and the local community service. Other important procedures are: identifying

teaching indicators that can be adopted in conducting the teaching accountability, evaluation of the teaching task, identification the extent of its appropriateness for the local and standards specifications and standards , evaluation of the teaching activities efforts exerted to serve the local community and solving its problems.

Also, among the other mechanisms of application, focusing on the outcomes of the teaching process as a criterion for evaluation of the teaching staff member. Other important principles that are effective in implementing the proposed perspective is the commitment to the transparency principle in publicizing the culture of the data, the accurate detailed information about the teaching staff and communicating the information to teaching staff, activation of the reward and punishment procedures, i.e. rewarding the hard working members and penalizing the negligent members and rejection of nepotism that hinders the successful administrative work.

To implement this proposed perspective, it is imperative that instruments of evaluation and measurement be secured to measure the level of the students' performance quantitatively and qualitatively so as to get clear data through which the shortcomings and virtues of the teaching accountability be known . The necessity of implementing the perspective entails getting rid of the restrictions of centralized administration system, which devastates innovation, hinders the university smooth operation, and wastes its time. Thus, implementation of the teaching accountability must be carried out by specialized with high degree of proficiency and responsibility and scientifically qualified to supervise the teaching accountability.

Another important procedure is the encouragement of license patents and scientific discoveries of the teaching staff members and rewarding them financially and morally. It is imperative to issue the laws and legislations that activate the socio-educational accountability for all the aspects of the university operations

6. CONCLUSIONS

The current universities in many countries are in an urgent need of adopting a teaching accountability system because of its importance in improving the academic performance of the teaching staff. The improvement is reflected in the aspects of the teaching process teaching methodology, evaluation of the teaching process, scientific research, activities related to teaching process, and the activities of serving the local community of the university teaching staff.

This entails making available all the physical capabilities and the apparatus facilitating the implementation of the teaching accountability system and publicizing the culture of the teaching accountability among the teaching staff members as well as the employees of these universities. Among the applications of the teaching accountability is

also securing the proper legislative environment through legislation of laws and regulations and making all the administrative decision facilitating the implementation of the teaching accountability system and setting up units and centers of the teaching accountability that have scientifically qualified employees to supervise the process of the teaching accountability in the current universities.

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