The practice degree of the faculty members at Al-Zaytounah University of educational competences from the students' points of view

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Abstract

This study aims at recognizing the practice degree of the faculty members at Al-Zaytounah Private University of the educational competences from the students' points of view. To that end, a questionnaire consisting of 50 paragraphs was designed and distributed randomly to 300 students. The results of the study indicate that faculty members have mediocre educational competences according to the students' points of view.

Keywords: educational competences, faculty members, Al-Zaytounah Private University

1. Introduction and Literature Review:

Developing teaching processes should go hand in hand with modern developments in the field of scientific and educational research. This has become a necessity required by the constant need to promote teaching and learning situation efficiency in a technological world that changes very rapidly. It is expected that scientific and technological advancements will keep growing and accelerating. Accordingly, it is necessary to be ready to face these various and different changes.

Faculty members are the cornerstone upon which learning process relies. Therefore, it is essential to keep them posted with the latest development since it has become a must that we build an everlasting learning and training systems that are capable of coping with the global development which, in turn, leads to promoting their teaching and research competences and help them develop their knowledge by looking for everything new in their fields and by encouraging them to be innovative and creative (Willems 1980)

Universities have expanded their functions and tasks. They carry out different social events and activities. The main tasks of universities can be summarized in learning, research and society service. Therefore, the university education plays a major role in achieving better life securities for individuals and communities. Accordingly, the university administration needs to pay special attention for faculty members who are responsible for learning. This can be fulfilled through providing them with training, rehabilitation, preparation and development (Pogrow 1983; Benson 1984; Spuck & Atkinson 1985)

In order to achieve the learning goals that faculty members aim at, they should be equipped with educational competences that improve their performance. These competences include: planning of teaching, order, human relations, learning practices, exciting reality, and evaluation (Belousa and Uzulina 2012).

The competences related to human relations have to take into consideration the human nature, creating equal learning opportunities, problem solving, discovering oneself and strengthening interrelationships between all educational system components (Davies & Rogers 2000).

Educational competences are considered as primary requirements for learning and education because they rely on enabling university faculty members to carry out all learning situations. Today, the attention has been diverted to learning outputs including the concepts of learning measurements and evaluations, specifying and analyzing learning tasks, and processes of making faculty members ready to take over the tasks they are asked to perform. This, in turn, may induce verbal interaction in classrooms, micro-learning, computerized learning, management information system, task-analysis method, and procedural research method (McNergncy 2003, Aizsila 201).

Many researchers such as Anandan and Kelly (1982) discussed the concept of 'competence' as the overall behavior that includes knowledge and attitudes that faculty members utilize in order to guide the students' behavior and achieve the specified goals. Before we come to the concept of educational

or pedagogical competence , we need first to agree that 'competence' generally means the ability to do something at a certain level to a certain degree of skill and efficiency.

Berry and Ginsberg (1991) defined competence as the overall behavior, including knowledge, skills and attitudes, that the teacher utilizes so as to build and develop the students' knowledge perfectly. During this process, the teacher practices this behavior at a certain level of performance since these are very specified behavioral goals which express the necessary skills and knowledge of him/her.

Tyler and Waldrip (2002), on the other hand, defined 'competence' as a group of very specified behavioral goals that portray all the knowledge, skills and attitudes which are thought to be essential for effective learning. These are the general goals that reflect the various tasks that the teacher must be capable of doing.

From my point of view, the educational competence is a group of faculties, skills and attitudes that the faculty member uses in different learning situations in order to do his/her tasks very efficiently.

In order to be successful, those who are interested in becoming teachers have to have the following educational competences that faculty members must always have:

Planning of Teaching Competence: the faculty member sets the students' needs in light of their developing capabilities. He/she also chooses the activities that suit their abilities and sets evaluation strategies and the suitable tools to measure how successful the sought productions are.

Lesson Performance Competence: the faculty member presents the teaching material clearly and in a logical order. He/she uses different methods that are suitable for each learning situation taking into consideration individual differences. During teaching, the faculty member uses clear language and breaks the obstacles and difficulties to make communication with students easy and smooth.

Evaluation Competence: The faculty member prepares quizzes and exams to evaluate the students' performance in light of the desired goals. He/she uses different measuring and evaluating methods and tools that are convenient for measuring and evaluating the students' performance in class and suitable for measuring the extent of goal achievement in general.

Curricula Development Competence: this can be achieved through analyzing the teaching curricula to their basic components. Then, the faculty member derives the educational goals accordingly and marks the strength and weakness aspects of the current curriculum and designs enriching activities that cover the content of the teaching material.

Human Relations Competence: the faculty member develops friendly relationships with students in order to enhance their desire to participate in the educational activities and accepts other students' ideas and contributions. He/she augments these relations and creates opportunities for students cooperation, trusts their abilities and respects their feelings.

Guidance and Counseling Competence: the faculty member understands the problems that the students' may face and helps them overcome these problems. He/ she offers counseling services, contributes to solving their problems and provides them with some guidance that enables them to solve their own problems.

Management And Organization Competence: the faculty member addresses the responsible staff to make the classroom ready for teaching by ventilating it and providing the teaching tools. He/she creates a social and democratic atmosphere based on justice and equity, makes students feel secure and free to express themselves, accepts their opinions, ideas and comments, clarifies their role in conducting activities, and takes into consideration individual differences in the classroom (Syasina 2012).

The faculty member should do his/her best to apply and abide by these competences in the classroom since they enable him/her to do his/her job perfectly, help students properly and achieve the goals set for the curriculum in general and for each lesson in specific.

2. The study

2.1 Study Problem
The study will try to answer the following questions:
1. From the students' point of view, what are the educational competences that a faculty member at Al-Zaytounah Private University should have in light of knowledge development?

2. From the students' point of view, to what extent do faculty members at Al-Zaytounah Private University apply educational competences?

2.2. Importance of the Study
The importance of this study lies in the fact that universities all over the world spread knowledge and science and graduate students who are capable of interacting with the inputs and variables of our age. Therefore, this study focuses on:

1. Specify the educational and administrative competences for faculty members at Al-Zaytounah Private University to benefit from them and to activate them within the developmental framework of the university.
2. Activate the role of faculty members at the university in planning, performing, and evaluating their teaching process.

2.3 Terminology
- *A Faculty Member:* procedurally, any person whose profession is teaching at Al-Zaytounah University during the first semester of 2012/2013 regardless of the academic rank he/she holds.
- *Educational Competences:* a group of knowledge, skills, attitudes and abilities that a faculty member has and practices in a learning situation. These competences enable him/her to do his/her job perfectly and efficiently.
- *Al-Zaytounah Private University:* one of the private universities in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan which grants BA and MA degrees in some fields of study for male and female students.
- *Level of Practice:* the level or degree specified for a certain measurement.

2.4 Study Limitations
The study handled the educational competences for only faculty members who teach at Al-Zaytounah University during the first semester of 2012/2013.

3. Methodology
3.1 Study Population:
The study population of this study is all the students at Al-Zaytounah Private University (8150 students) who are enrolled in the first semester of the academic year 2012/2013

3.2 The Study Sample:
The study sample consisted of 300 students chosen randomly, distributed as follows:

Table (1): The distribution of the study sample according to 'gender' and 'field of study'

Variable		Number
Gender	Males	123
	Females	177
Field of Study	Science	98
	Humanities	202

3.3 Study Tool

Credibility and Consistency: To authenticate the tool credibility and consistency, the preliminary questionnaire was judged by (10) experienced referees. Changes were made according to the referees remarks. The final questionnaire consisted of 50 paragraphs. To ensure the consistency and validity of the tool, a tests and a retest were used on 20 students who did not belong to the study sample. Pearson correlation coefficient was taken for both tests. The results showed that the study tool (the questionnaire) enjoyed a high level of consistency.

3.4 Method
The researcher used the descriptive method. He collected data and reviewed the related literature. He then designed the study tool, distributed it on students, collected the questionnaires and analyzed the data using the statistical analysis SPSS and other statistical tools.

4. Results:

To answer the research questions, the means and standard deviations (STD) were calculated. Here, the results are presented according to the research questions:

1. From the students' point of view, what are the educational competences that a faculty member at Al-Zaytounah Private University should have in light of knowledge development?

Table (2): Means and Standard Deviations for the studied competences

Competence	Mean	STD	Order
Planning of Teaching	2.56	0.71	2
Teaching performance	2.49	0.65	4
Verbal and non-verbal communication	2.77	0.64	1
Learning environment	2.47	0.77	5
Lesson Management And Organization	2.55	0.75	3
Learning Evaluation	2.38	0.87	6
Average	2.53	0.63	---

From the data in table (2), it is noted that educational competences for faculty members- from the students' point of view- were relatively mediocre since the average for all competences was (2.53) which was very close to the default mean (3). On the individual competence level, the 'verbal and non-verbal communication' competence was the most important followed by 'planning of teaching', then 'teaching performance' and 'lesson management and organization'. By contrast, 'teaching environment' and 'learning evaluation' were the least important according to the students' opinions. These results indicate that the students are interested in faculty members' communication, planning of teaching and the teaching performance. These variables, in fact, help establish a friendly scientific atmosphere in the classroom.

To know the students' responses for the different paragraphs of the questionnaire, the means and standard deviations were taken as shown in the following tables successively:

Table (3): Means and Standard deviations for the paragraphs of 'Planning of teaching'

Paragraph	Mean	STD	order
1. Formulates educational outcomes clearly	2.67	0.94	3
2. Takes into account the components of the content when planning for a lesson	2.81	0.86	2
3. Chooses educational activities related to learning outcomes	2.49	1.04	4
4. Takes into account the characteristics of learners and their abilities in the activities he/she chooses	2.15	0.96	6
5. During planning, he/she provides alternatives that take individual differences into account	2.37	0.85	5
6. Identifies the sources of learning	2.87	1.01	1
Average	2.56	0.71	---

The data in table (3) show that the educational competences for faculty members at Al-Zaytounah Private University were above average from the students' point of view since the average for their responses was (2.56) and an STD of (0.71). As for the paragraphs, the highest responses were for (6) 'identifies the sources of learning'. By contrast, (4) ' Takes into account the characteristics of learners and their abilities in the activities he/she chooses' was the least.

Table (4): Means and Standard deviations for the paragraphs of 'Teaching performance'

Paragraph	Mean	STD	Order
1. Begins with a suitable introduction	2.91	1.08	1
2. Presents the information in an appropriate order	2.78	0.87	2
3. Links the content with the learners' prior experiences	2.13	0.97	17
4. Creates opportunities to express one's own knowledge	2.51	1.06	7
5. Develop valuable and positive attitudes during the presentation of the content	2.40	0.94	11
6. Illustrates new concepts	2.70	1.06	3
7. Presents a sufficient number of illustrative examples	2.37	0.85	12
8. Closes up the lesson in an appropriate way	2.34	0.91	14
9. Uses different educational activities	2.33	1.12	15
10. Interacts with learners, individually and collectively	2.34	0.95	13
11. Provides adequate time for the interaction of learners	2.63	1.03	4
12. Uses various teaching strategies taking into account the idiosyncracity of the content	2.55	0.93	6
13. Connects knowledge to life situations	2.46	1.00	9
14. Motivates learners to use one or more types of thinking	2.27	0.81	16
15. Watches the learners' progress during their involvement in any educational activity.	2.43	1.12	10
16. Reinforces right attitudes.	2.51	0.88	8
17. Re-explains the lesson whenever necessary.	2.60	1.02	5
Average	2.49	0.65	

Table (4) shows that the educational competences for faculty members at Al-Zaytounah Private University was above average with regard to 'Teaching performance'. The overall average was (2.49) and the STD was (0.65). On the level of the paragraphs, the highest was that of the first one 'Begins with a suitable introduction' and the lowest was number (3) 'Links the content with the learners' prior experiences'.

Table (5): Means and STD for the paragraphs of 'Verbal and non-verbal communication'

Paragraph	Mean	STD	Order
1. Uses verbal expressions that explain the importance of the content taught	2.76	1.00	4
2. Uses accurate and precise language	2.79	0.88	2
3. Illustrates the educational tasks to be performed, in an easy and understandable language	2.58	0.99	6
4. Uses facial expressions and gestures appropriately	2.60	0.82	5
5. Speaks in a clear and audible voice	3.13	0.69	1
6. His/her verbal interactions include all learners	2.78	0.87	3
Average	2.77	0.64	---

It is evident from the table above that there was a relatively high degree of educational competences for faculty members in the field of verbal and non-verbal communication since the overall average was (2.77) and STD was (0.64). On the paragraphs level, the highest score was for paragrpah(5) 'Speaks in a clear and audible voice' and the lowest was for paragraph (3) 'Illustrates the educational tasks to be performed, in an easy and understandable language'.

Table (6): Means and STD for the paragraphs of 'Environment of education'

Paragraph	Mean	STD	Order
1. Avoids cynicism and negative criticism	2.66	1.17	2
2. Builds a classroom atmosphere that is based on respect	2.75	0.96	1
3. Encourages weak learners	2.25	0.99	3
4. Supports his performance with the necessary tools and teaching aids	2.24	1.10	4
Average	2.47	0.77	---

Table (6) makes it clear that there was a relatively high degree of educational competences for faculty members in the field 'environment of education' since the overall average was (2.47) and STD was (0.77). On the paragraphs level, the highest score was for paragraph (2) 'builds a classroom atmosphere that is based on respect' and the lowest was for paragraph (4) 'Supports his performance with the necessary tools and teaching aids'.

Table (7): Means and STD for the paragraphs of 'classroom management'

Paragraph	Mean	STD	Order
1. Attracts the attention of the learners in the course of teaching	2.78	1.06	3
2. Uses administrative measures to facilitate teaching	2.61	0.97	6
3. Arranges the elements of the classroom commensurate with the content taught	2.16	0.95	9
4. Uses different methods to control dropping off class	2.42	1.02	7
5. Avoids dropping off class	2.75	0.93	4
6. Avoids wasting the class time	2.97	0.95	1
7. Performs teaching in the time allotted	2.81	0.93	2
8. Sets expectations for the behavior of learners	2.34	1.08	8
9. Directs learners who have appropriate behavior	2.01	0.96	10
10. Reinforces the desired behavior	2.69	1.18	5
Average	2.55	0.75	---

Table (7) makes it clear that there was a relatively high degree of educational competences for faculty members in the field 'classroom management' since the overall average was (2.55) and STD was (0.75). On the paragraphs level, the highest score was for paragraph (6) 'Avoids wasting the class time' and the lowest was for paragraph (9) 'Directs learners who have appropriate behavior'.

Table (8): Means and STD for the paragraphs of 'Evaluation of Teaching'

Paragraph	Mean	STD	Order
1. Connects the learners' progress with the desired educational outcomes	2.69	1.00	1
2. Asks preliminary questions during teaching	2.54	1.12	2
3. Raises comprehension questions at the end of the class	2.28	1.10	5
4. Uses 'observation' as a way of evaluation	2.27	1.05	6
5. Documents his/her remarks when learners make presentations	2.30	1.18	4
6. Tells learners about their strong and weak points	2.21	0.99	7
7. Provides learners with feedback in the suitable time	2.34	1.11	3
Average	2.38	0.87	---

Table (8) makes it clear that there was a relatively high degree of educational competences for faculty members in the field 'evaluation of teaching ' since the overall average was (2.38) and STD was

(0.87). On the paragraphs level, the highest score was for paragraph (1) 'Connects the learners' progress with the desired educational outcomes' and the lowest was for paragraph (6) 'Tells learners about their strong and weak points'.

5. Recommendations:

In light of the results, the researcher recommends the following:

1. The university administration and deans must encourage faculty members to participate in conferences and workshops to develop their educational competences.
2. Establish a standard list of educational competences so that faculty members can refer to it to practice these competences effectively.
3. Conduct other pieces of research to find out the extent of applying the educational competences by faculty members in other universities.

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