

Access to the Quality Assurance Of Postgraduate Educational Management At University of Medicine, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam



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ABSTRACT: The issue of managing the university training process according to the quality assurance approach is important not only for medical universities in Ho Chi Minh city but also with medical universities and higher education in general. That management process must be derived from the theoretical foundations of educational management, school management, higher education management the foundations of psychology, education and related sciences; complying with the general regulations of the education and training sector, of the Ministry of Health, based on the specific conditions of the medical universities in the area. Bearing this in mind, the study investigated the characteristics of postgraduate medical training activities and the status of postgraduate training management. A survey of 103 administrators, lecturers, technicians, who are currently working and teaching at Medical University was conducted. All responses were analyzed through descriptive statistics. The results showed that the characteristics of evaluating the postgraduate training activities at Medical University in Ho Chi Minh city were greatly comprehensive and the current situations of quality assurance management at Medical University in Ho Chi Minh City were evaluated as satisfactory. Based on the results, the study suggests some recommendations for improving the quality assurance management for postgraduate training at Medical Universities in Ho Chi Minh city.

KEYWORDS: univarsity of medicine, quality assurance, quality management, postgraduate, training programme

1. INTRODUCTION

The Vietnamese educational system has been significantly changing into a new and comprehensive version in the direction of enhancing quality assurance; strongly shifting from mainly equipping knowledge into developing a comprehensive development mode, learning capacities in order to improve intellectual power, develop human resources, foster talents in the fourth industrial revolution and great changes of the world.

After many years of renovation, higher education in Vietnam has grown markedly in terms of scale, diversified in training types and forms, adjusted the system structure, developed the curriculum., training content, process and quality improvement of accreditation work, mobilizing many social resources. The development of postgraduate training in all aspects is a testament to the achievements of Vietnam's higher education.

However, in the current context, the issue of postgraduate training management at university needs to be approached from the perspective of quality assurance to meet the needs of developing high-quality human resources in various fields. That is also the management task of University of Medicine in Ho Chi Minh City. Bearing this in mind, this study aims to investigate the factors that access to the quality assurance of postgraduate educational management at Unviarsity of Medicine, Ho Chi Minh city probably suggest a further implication so that educators can find the best way in edcucational management

Research questions

- *What are the characteristics of postgraduate medical training activities at Medical University in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam?*
- *What is the status of postgraduate training management at Medical University in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam?*

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Quality assurance for postgraduate education in Vietnam

The Vietnamese education law has stipulated higher education for undergraduate, master (MSc) and doctoral (Dr.) levels since 2019 in which the training programs for undergraduate, MSc and Ph.D levels help learners to supplement and improve the

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knowledge they have learned at university in order to modernize specialized knowledge, strengthen interdisciplinary knowledge; have capacities to carry out professional work and scientific research in the field of education (MOET, 2014). Accordingly, people who achieve these educational degrees must master their professional knowledge, practical abilities and high adaptability to the development of science, technology and economy; have the ability to detect and solve problems in the field of study (Ellis, 1993; Vu, 2017)

The postgraduate medical training in Vietnam not only requires the training programs for MSc and PhD levels managed by the Ministry of Education and Training, but also requires the typical qualifications of the specialized training in the medical profession such as Specialty 1, Specialty 2 and Resident Doctor that are managed by the Ministry of Health. In other words, learners are required to complete the training programs to attain general knowledge and skills and then start their major coursework related to their medical professional knowledge.

More specifically, **Specialization 1** is a type of higher education applied to all clinical specialties and professional practices in the field of health sciences with the purpose of developing medical human resources, capable practice to supplement some basic scientific knowledge and basic medicine and pharmacy that learners have learned at university in order to be able to achieve self-studying abilities and become medical professionals in the specialized practice. **Specialization 2** applies to all clinical specialties and professional practice in the field of health sciences, aiming to train high-level medical professionals who are able to practice well in their specialized medicine. **Resident doctor** is a specific type of university training program related to the health sector which aims to train specialist doctors with solid basic scientific knowledge, systematic specialized knowledge, high practical skills, and proactive problem solving as well as be proficient in solving basic professional problems in the field of expertise (MOET, 2014)

The issue of quality assurance of higher education at institutional levels has been a great concern to the central authorities, educators, scientists and society. Therefore, several researches on the quality assurance of higher education have been carried out in many different aspects and are particularly paid much attention on the management aspect towards quality assurance. It can be noted that quality management is building and operating a management system which is based on both standards and criteria to activate the quality assurance conditions in all stages for all products of the educational system (Tuan, 2015). There are three levels of quality management currently used in the Vietnamese educational system: educational accreditation, quality assurance and total quality management.

Educational accreditation is a form of external quality assurance process under which services and operations of educational institutions or programs are evaluated by an external accrediting agency to determine if applicable standards are met. It is performed at the last stage in the manufacturing process to detect and eliminate all or part of the training program that does not meet the quality standards. To put it simpler, accreditation is considered as a review process and is normally based on quality assessment criteria which assess the quality and standards of an educational institution or training program to determine if educational training programs or institutions meet defined standards of educational quality (Dung, 2018; Giao, 2017)

Quality assurance that is used to check whether the training program designed and developed is fit for academic purposes and future job requirement (Duc, 2015). Furthermore, quality assurance is a more advanced level of quality management than accreditation, performed before and during training. Quality assurance activities help to prevent the occurrence of low quality educational training. Quality assurance is designed according to the standards and put into the training process to ensure the output product achieves the predetermined goal (Chinh, 2015). Quality culture is an assurance activity associated with the comprehensive activities of the educational institution and is considered as a common responsibility of all collectives and individuals of the educational institution as well as related subjects; is an organization's value system expressed through an environment that encourages the formation and continuous development of quality. Prominent trends that have influenced on the internal and external quality assurance are like the terms of "input" to "output"; movement from intuitive assessment to test/assessment based on clear requirements; focus on learners' ability at the end of the training program; changing the focus from quality assurance for responsibility into quality assurance for actual quality improvement; strengthening the cooperation with external quality assurance agencies.

Total quality management is a systematic program that indicates everyone and everything in the organization is involved in the enterprise of continuous improvement. Frazier (1997) stated quality management provides a connection between outcomes and the process by which outcomes are achieved. Particularly, quality management may be regarded as an ideal systemic process for managing change in public education (Yang, 2015). Furthermore, total quality management is the process of studying customer expectations and desires, and designing products and services to meet customer needs to the fullest extent.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Participants

103 academic staff participated in the survey of which 63% of them were females and 40% were males, aged between 25 and 52. They are administrators, lecturers, technicians, who are currently working and teaching at Medical University.

3.2. Instrument

The popular method to investigate the characteristics and status of quality assurance management in Medical University in Ho Chi Minh city is to use the questionnaire survey to get perceptions from a large population (Cesur & Korsal, 2012; Fulcher, 1997; Scar, 2008; Kucuk& Walter, 2007; Winke, 2011). Therefore, in this study, the questionnaire was used for gathering data from 103 administrators, lecturers and technicians in order to get their opinions about characteristics of postgraduate medical training activities and status of postgraduate training management.

The questionnaires for lecturers consisted of three sections. Section A aimed to ask for lecturers' background information. In which 7 questions were designed to get information about their full name, gender, age, email, cell phone number, educational qualifications and year of teaching in Medical University. Section B aimed to gather information on the characteristics of postgraduate medical training activities. Section C aimed to gather information on the status of postgraduate training management at Medical University in Ho Chi Minh city, Vietnam.

4. RESULTS

4.1.Characteristics of evaluating the postgraduate training activities at Medical University in Ho Chi Minh city

Postgraduate training activities at Medical Universities in Ho Chi Minh city have two main training programs for Master students and Ph.D students. In these training programs, students are required to complete 3 general knowledge blocks; basic and specialized knowledge and then MSc thesis or Ph.D dissertation defense at the end of the course. More specifically, for general knowledge, students are taught knowledge about nature and science whereas for the basic knowledge block, students are taught the fundamental medical knowledge. Moreover, specific and intensive blocks of medical knowledge are taught, studied when students start studying their major coursework.

Regarding the process of postgraduate training programme in medicine, it can be observed that the University has employed different kinds of teaching methods during the whole academic year. Table 1.1 shows frequency of using different kinds of teaching methods at Medical University in Ho Chi Minh city

Table 1.1: Kinds of teaching methods at Medical University in Ho Chi Minh city

Teaching method	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Teaching in the classroom	50	17.8
Teaching clinical on patients	45	16.1
Teaching in briefings	20	7.2
Teaching on models	65	23.2
Teaching in operating rooms	55	19.6
Teaching in the laboratory	45	16.1
Total	280	100

Table 1.1 shows that the training is characterized by the following forms of teaching: teaching clinical on patients, teaching in briefings, teaching on models, and teaching in the classroom. operating room, teaching in the laboratory. In specific, the highest percentage (23.2%) is for teaching on models, followed closely by teaching in the operating rooms (19.6%) and teaching in the classroom (17.8%). The rest of teaching methods ranges from 7.2% to 16.1% respectively.

Table 1.2 shows the frequency of different kinds of testing and assessment at Medical University

Table 1.2: Kinds of testing and assessment at Medical University

Item	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Quizzes	8	6.8
Tests for clinical examination	25	21.4
Tests for analysis and medical consultation	17	14.5
Tests for evaluating and concluding diseases	15	12.8
Tests for developing treatment regimen	22	18.8

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Test for evaluating and giving a treatment according to the protocol	30	25.7
Total	117	100

From table 1.2, it can be clearly seen that the training program has performed several testing and assessment (with a total frequency of 117) such as quizzes (6.8%) , tests for clinical examination (21.4%); tests for analysis and medical consultation (14.5%); tests for evaluating and concluding diseases (12.8%); tests for developing treatment regimen (18.8%); test for evaluating and giving a treatment according to the protocol (25.7%). The purposes of applying different kinds of tests during the whole academic year are to evaluate the training results, measure and collect information in order to get feedback determining what knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviors learners obtain after university.

Apart from different kinds of training programme, kinds of teaching methods and kinds of testing and assessment, the Medical University also pays more attention on quality assurance system. More particularly, the requirements of the quality assurance system in the postgraduate medical training are undertaken 6 contents such as 1) Determining the management contents in the training process with the basic characteristics of each stage; 2) Developing a process to perform each job; 3) Defining the criteria after each step of the process; 4) Writing instructions for implementing the process for related subjects; 5). Providing adequate resources to implement the process (human, material, financial, mechanisms, policies...); 6) Evaluating and improving the process after each stage.

In the light of statistical results above, it would come up with the conclusion that the characteristics of evaluating the postgraduate training activities at Medical University in Ho Chi Minh city were greatly comprehensive in which the University has applied 2 main training programmes for master and Ph.d students with different kinds of teaching methods during the whole academic year such as teaching clinical on patients, teaching in briefings, teaching on models, and teaching in the classroom. operating room, teaching in the laboratory. Furthermore, the training program has performed several testing and assessment such as quizzes , tests for clinical examination; tests for analysis and medical consultation; tests for evaluating and concluding diseases; tests for developing treatment regimen; test for evaluating and giving a treatment according to the protocol. The purposes of applying different kinds of tests during the whole academic year are to evaluate the training results, measure and collect information in order to get feedback determining what knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviors learners obtain after university. More importantly, the University also pays more attention on quality assurance system in order to determine the management contents in the training process and then improve the quality assurance systems for catching up the changes of the society.

4.2. Status of quality assurance management for the postgraduate training programme at a Medical University in Ho Chi Minh city, Vietnam

In Ho Chi Minh City, there have been several public education institutions which are university-level training in medicine such as Pham Ngoc Thach University of Medicine; University of Medicine and Pharmacy; National University; Hong Bang International University, Van Lang University, and Nguyen Tat Thanh University. However, only Pham Ngoc Thach Medical University, which is under the People's Committee of Ho Chi Minh City, has developed the postgraduate training programme in medicine. Bear this in mind, there was a survey conducting with the help of 100 people who are administrators, lecturers technicians at this Medical University. These participants responded to the questionnaire which was related to the current situation of quality assurance management according to the quality assurance approach at Medical University. (see Table 2.1)

Table 2.1: Current situations of quality assurance management at Medical University in Ho Chi Minh City (n=103)

No.	Question items	Very good		Good		Fairly good		Not good	
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
1	How is the status of awareness about the position and role of postgraduate training management at Medical University?	53	51.5	27	26.2	20	19.4	3	2.9
2	How is the actual situation of developing a set of criteria to ensure the quality of the postgraduate medical training management process?	51	49.6	26	25.2	22	21.3	4	3.9
3	How is the current status of postgraduate training management process at Medical University?	49	47.5	30	29.2	21	20.4	3	2.9
4	How is the reality of self-assessment of	50	48.5	25	24.3	23	22.3	5	4.9

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	the quality assurance system in the process of postgraduate training management at Medical University?								
5	How is the current situation of supplementing and completing the quality assurance system in the process of postgraduate training management at Medical University?	49	47.5	25	24.3	24	23.3	5	4.9
6	How is the current status of developing resources for postgraduate training management at Medical University?	52	50.4	27	26.2	21	20.4	3	2.9
7	How is the actual situation of cooperation between medical universities and medical institutions in the management of postgraduate training in medicine at Medical University?	54	52.5	30	29.1	18	17.5	1	0.99
	Average		49.6		26.3		17.9		7.07

Table 2.1 shows that the management of postgraduate training activities according to the quality assurance approach at Medical university in Ho Chi Minh City has initially achieved results in terms of requirements, content and management aspects in which the interpretation of the score ranges from not good to very good, corresponding from 7.07% to 49.6% of the averaged percentages respectively.

More specifically, for Question 1, the highest percentage is 51.5% for the participants who agree that status of awareness about the position and role of postgraduate training management is very good, followed by 26.2% for those who claimed the fairly good level whereas only 2.9% were not awareness about the position and role of postgraduate training management at Medical University.

For Question 2, 49.6% and 25.2 of the participants respectively said that the current situation of developing a set of criteria to ensure the quality of the postgraduate medical training management process is very good. Similarly, 21.3% held the fairly good option. However, only 3.9% said the actual situation of developing the quality assurance criteria is not good.

For Question 3, 47.5% of the participants who agreed that the process of management at the postgraduate training programme is very good, followed by 29.2% who claimed the good level while only 2.9% disagreed with this view.

For Question 4 and 5, 48.5% and 49.5% of the participants who agreed that the reality of self-assessment, supplementing and completing the quality assurance system in the process of postgraduate training management at Medical University are very good, followed by 24.3% of them who selected good level. In contrast, 4.9% of the respondents were not satisfied with the self-assessment, supplementing and completing the quality assurance system.

For Question 6 and 7, more than half of the participants (50.4% and 52.4% respectively) agreed that the situations of developing resources, the cooperations between medical universities and medical institutions in the management of postgraduate training in medicine at Medical University are good. However, a few disagreed with this view, corresponding from 0.99% to 2.9% only.

Based on these statistical results above, it can be said that the current situations of quality assurance management at Medical University in Ho Chi Minh City were evaluated as satisfactory in which the very good levels range from 47.5% to 52.5%. This means that the Medical University has been fully awareness about the position and role of postgraduate training management; as a results the University has developed a set of criteria to ensure the quality of the postgraduate medical training management by using self-assessment in order to supplement and complete its quality assurance system, developing highly qualified human resources and raising up the cooperations in the management of postgraduate training programme between medical universities and institutions.

5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In general, it is found that the University has applied for 2 main training programmes for master and Ph.D students with different kinds of teaching methods during the whole academic year such as teaching clinical on patients, teaching in briefings, teaching on models, and teaching in the classroom. operating room, teaching in the laboratory. Furthermore, the training program has performed several testing and assessment such as quizzes , tests for clinical examination; tests for analysis and medical

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consultation; tests for evaluating and concluding diseases; tests for developing treatment regimen; test for evaluating and giving a treatment according to the protocol. The purposes of applying different kinds of tests during the whole academic year are to evaluate the training results, measure and collect information in order to get feedback determining what knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviors learners obtain after university. More importantly, the University also pays more attention on quality assurance system in order to determine the management contents in the training process and then improve the quality assurance systems for catching up the changes of the society.

Based on the evidence from the questionnaire surveys, it can be concluded that the Medical University has been fully awareness about the position and role of postgraduate training management; as a results the University has developed a set of criteria to ensure the quality of the postgraduate medical training management by using self-assessment in order to supplement and complete its quality assurance system, developing highly qualified human resources and raising up the cooperations in the management of postgraduate training programme between medical universities and institutions.

In order to improve the quality assurance management for postgraduate training at Medical Universities in Ho Chi Minh city, there have been some suggestions for improvement through (1) Raising awareness for collectives and individuals participating in the postgraduate training process to properly understand the importance of the management system according to the quality assurance approach (2) Making the management staff, lecturers, support staff, students and other stakeholders aware of the importance of managing the postgraduate training process according to the quality assurance approach at the university. Medical universities. This is the first factor to carry out the activities of planning, organizing and directing the implementation, checking and evaluating the quality and effectiveness of that process (3) Managing the university training process according to the quality assurance approach is a management method suitable for the development of high-quality human resources in the context of the current industrial revolution 4.0. The goal of this solution is for the collectives and individuals directly (or indirectly) participating in the university training process to properly, comprehensively and sustainably perceive this approach to ensure quality and effectiveness in the field of higher education. organization and execution of activities (4) Being proper awareness of the nature of standards and quality assurance criteria in the management of postgraduate training in medical universities. These standards and criteria both ensure compliance with the regulations of the Ministry of Education and Training, the regulations of the Ministry of Health, are suitable for the conditions of each medical university, and are updated with international standards (5) Using social information networks, the website of the school, the Graduate Training Department to introduce and promote the important role and position of graduate training management according to the quality assurance approach (6) Strengthening inspection, supervision, and adjustment of awareness of related subjects about postgraduate training management according to the quality assurance approach in medical universities (7) School leaders need to develop a plan to foster and raise awareness for leaders, administrators, and lecturers in the school about the role and importance of quality assurance (8) It is necessary to incorporate the responsibilities and interests of individuals as well as the collective into the operation of the quality management system in all components from inputs, processes and outputs.

In conclusion, the issue of managing the university training process according to the quality assurance approach is important not only for medical universities in Ho Chi Minh city but also with medical universities and higher education in general. That management process must be derived from the theoretical foundations of educational management, school management, higher education management the foundations of psychology, education and related sciences; complying with the general regulations of the education and training sector, of the Ministry of Health, based on the specific conditions of the medical universities in the area. The Medical University in Ho Chi Minh City needs to apply flexibly, creatively and appropriately to the conditions of the university in the process of managing the university training process according to the approach to quality assurance, meeting the requirements and tasks of human resource development, have a high level of medical profession today. In the context of the current industrial revolution 4.0, the task of managing university training in the medical profession according to the approach to quality assurance is not only for medical universities but also needs the support and coordination of all levels of government, of the education sector, the health sector and the whole society.

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