

Essentials for the Establishment of a Local University Staff Development Program in Egypt. Menoufia as a Center

Prof. Dr. Ahmed Zaghawa

Head Department of Animal Medicine and Infectious Fish Diseases
Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, Menoufia University

At the present time all over Egyptian Universities, there is a trend for the development of higher education sector in order to compete the requirement of job market. Many events had occurred in the last five years as the establishment of private universities elsewhere in Egypt. This was consequence for the increasing number of students at the governmental universities. Some Egyptian universities applied the credit hour system as a new system for learning and evaluation. University staff development lies in the first position for developing higher education due to the following reasons:

- It realized that university education had fallen short of expectations. For example, it was accused of having failed to apply research to the problems of national development.
- Universities were producing graduates for non-existent jobs, while failing to meet the changing manpower requirements in key areas of national development, such as agriculture, health, engineering, and economics. Indeed, there was a mismatch between university and manpower requirements
- The economic recession and the rising number of students resulting in the need for extra finances, on the other hand, has a marked effect on the quality of education offered by the universities? This situation has been aggravated by the scarcity, obsolescence or neglected condition of technical equipment in many tertiary institutions. In addition, textbooks, references, teaching aids, laboratory equipment, scientific literature and periodicals are all in short supply.

Nowadays, throughout Africa, institutions of higher education are in state of crisis. Universities are bursting at the seams due to the ever-increasing students numbers. They are starved of resources and their libraries are experiencing on acute book famine. These woes are not only threatening lower academic standards but the very existence of the university itself.

In the face of such serious problems, it is becoming more and more evident that the quality of staff is a crucial element in ensuring universities retain their traditional mission of discovering, transmitting and preserving knowledge. Sadly, staff development has received little attention, being measured by the mere advancement up the academic ladder.

Currently, only a handful of lectures has been professionally trained in the art of teaching. The assumption has all along been that the lecture needed in order to be able to teach in a university. The rest one imbibed through osmosis.

That is not the case today. All over the world, it is now recognized that excellence in teaching must be natured. Since universities have little control over basic economic and political conditions, their ask is to take up challenge for providing excellent educa-

tion in the prevailing situations and use their most valuable resource, their staff, to plan and execute structural reforms. It therefore follows, that the rather complex system of generating and transmitting and a technical mastery of their staff teaching, research and constancy functions. This is the essence of staff development.

Function of Universities

Higher education is of paramount importance in the process of development in Egypt. High level manpower must be trained and quality research carried out if development policies are to be correctly formulated, programs appropriately planned and projects effectively implemented. Consequently, the contributions and functions of universities in Egypt may be considered as threefold: Training, Research and Public Service.

Development of personnel (Training function):

Egyptian governments expect the universities to prepare the needed personnel to fill high level scientific, technical, and professional and management jobs. One of the most important roles, of university lectures, is to produce graduates capable of performing such jobs.

Development of knowledge (Research function):

- Egyptian governments expect the universities to generate the knowledge and innovations needed for development through indigenous scientific research and technical know-how as well as to disseminate information.
- University lecturer has to initiate and carry out research that will generate knowledge and contribute to development.
- Encourage students in their research efforts as well as guide and supervise them.

Provision of necessary service (Public service function):

- Egyptian governments look forward to universities rendering needed high skill service to the community by the staff involving themselves in local activities.
- The universities constitute reservoirs of expertise, which can be trapped by the government private sector.
- The community members, therefore, expect staff member to lead them in their development activities by sitting on various committees and board.

Role of University lecture

As an authority in his discipline:

Lectures fail to perform efficiently because of one or all of the following:

- Lack of adequate preparation
- Poor delivery techniques
- Pitching the lecture above or below the academic level of the students.
- In sensitivity to the expectation of the students.

As a planner and manager of time:

As a university teacher you must develop the skills to plan and manage your time. You have to plan your day, your week and the entire academic year so that you can accomplish all your work.

You need time to:

- Prepare your lecture,
- Give your lecture,
- Supervise students carrying out research,
- Carry out your own research,
- Grade the assignments you have given to your students,
- Set and mark your examination papers,
- Attend departmental meetings and conferences, and
- Attend and serve on committees to which you are elected or appointed.

As an academic guide to students:

Many students will register to take the courses you offer because they need them as requirements for earning a degree and also because they think that they can cope with the work involved.

As a university lecturer, you also assume that your students can follow the course you give.

As an adviser and counselor:

1. The staff in clinic departments is usually professionals; they normally organize clinics for students who need counseling.
2. Students will also come to staff for advice on personal matters
 - Staff older than students do, so they take the role of parents.
 - Confidence between students and staff.
 - Advice the student to go to a particular person who you consider can be of help.

As a researcher:

- Three indicators of the efficiency of a university teacher are linked:
Research – Publication – Promotion
- Many university teachers do not engage in research and even if they do, many seem to avoid empirical and longitudinal studies. This is actually due to:
 1. Lack of adequate funds.
 2. Anxiety to accumulate a number of publications over a short period.
- In carrying out research, you should involve your students as much as possible.

As a consultant:

- The establishment of a university in a community is looked upon as a blessing in many respects.
- Local University provides immediate employment for the middle level manpower and it also acts as a reservoir from which experts can be drawn for local and national activities.
- These experts are expected to render high skill service for the community. Thus university lecturers have been invited to:
 1. Give public lectures and academic topics.
 2. Chair function organized in the community.
 3. Carry out research on relevant issues in the community.
 4. Participate in local politics.
 5. Act as role models.
 6. Assist with extension work.