

Evaluating Curriculum of Master Degree Course of Pre-School Education Major in Allameh Tabataba'i University

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Abstract.

The aim of this study is to evaluate purposes, contents and efficiency of curriculum in Master Degree (MA) Course of Pre-School Education in Allameh Tabataba'i University from the view of students and professors. This study is applied and survey in terms of purpose and research, respectively. 60 students, graduates and professors of Allameh Tabataba'i University participated in the study in which students and graduates contained 84 percent of samples (42% for each group) while this amount was 16% for group of professors. A questionnaire was used in the study as a data collection tool which was categorized by CIPP evaluation model in four components of Context, Input, Process and Product (CIPP) and asked the participants in the five-choice Likert scale. The results indicate that all components of purpose, content, and efficiency of MA course curriculum of Pre-School Education major are placed in high level of acceptability. The findings of this study indicate that there is no significant difference between the views of professors and students in any of the components except for the component of context.

Keywords: evaluation, Curriculum, Pre-School Education, purpose, content, efficiency, CIPP.

1. Introduction

Educational quality is one of the most important issues which have attracted the attention of educational planners particularly in developing countries during recent years. Thus, the theories and viewpoints about evaluation are developing and completing. Educational evaluation is a massive concepts related to all elements of the educational system. In fact, Educational evaluation is the result of interaction of all values which are created either inside or outside of educational system with various forms in order to increase the quality of its efficiency and different models are presented for its implementation (Moshkani et al 2016).

Evaluation simply means determining the value for anything. In other words, evaluation contains judgment whether the subject matter of the evaluation is desirable or not. Generally, evaluation may be defined as the systematic collection of information and value judgment about a subject (curriculum, references and educational-research tools, etc.) in order to determine whether the intended aims have been achieved or are being achieved (and how much?) to be used as a basis for future decisions (Sabaghian and Akbari 2010:17).

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Since higher education systems, as the most obvious manifestation of manpower investment, play a key role in training and providing efficient manpower (Jafari and Omidian 2015), evaluating purposes, content and efficiency of students' curriculum is one of the most important actions which universities are able to do it in order to enhance the quality of education and upgrade Scientific level of the society. The curriculum is the heart of universities and should be considered as the mirror of aims and roles of higher education. However, Pre-School Education major has not been able to find its real position in the educational community even in families because of the lack of attention to the quality of preschool plans, priority to basic training and education, and understating the capability of Pre-School education as an important input in data processing and results of pre-school efficiency.

Pre-school Education is received great attention in many parts of the world as one of the field of study which deals with education of children. Allameh Tabataba'i University is one of the pioneers of Master Degree (MA) in this field in country of Iran which can be a suitable pattern for other Iranian universities.

There are various methods for evaluating efficiency of curriculum such as CIPP, Research Synthesis, and Formative Evaluation in which CIIP is used in this study. CIIP is categorized in context, input, process, and product in which mentioned components are relied on Design Decisions, Structure Decisions, Performance, and outcomes, respectively.

According to what was mentioned and since Allameh Tabataba'i is one of the few universities in the country of Iran where the Pre-School Education is taught in master degree, this study tries to evaluate purposes, contents and efficiency of Curriculum of Master degree course of Pre-School Education in Allameh Tabataba'i University on the view of professors, students and graduates of the major in order to find out weak and strength points of Curriculum.

2. Background

Some similar researches in this field can be briefly mentioned by reviewing previous studies. Some studies particularly focused on CIIP Pattern. Khalegh khak and Mesrkhani (2015) in a study entitled "reviewing evaluation patterns and especially the evaluation of CIPP" claimed that several patterns have appeared in all contexts especially educational evaluation. As a result, CIIP is a comprehensive framework for evaluation in various fields such as Curriculum. Improving efficiency of curriculum is the most important aim of evaluating in CIPP. Cho and Jo (2019) in a study entitled "Integrating CIPP with Kirk Patrick evaluation models" and Phillips and Holton by evaluating curriculum of Royal Dutch Shell Company, indicated that at least 3 of 4 components of CIPP Model, context, input, and product are necessary in order to create a comprehensive approach.

Another part of the studies utilized evaluation model for qualitative evaluation of various institutions and organizations e.g. Hosseinpour et al (2019) in a study entitled "Designing evaluation model of effectiveness of military training courses" indicated that designed model has great power in order to evaluate effectiveness of training and educating courses.

Yazdani et al (2017) evaluated and reviewed the quality of PHD Course particularly in management major in country of Iran through a study based on interpretive paradigm and reported the results. Rezapour et al (2016) reviewed educational efficiency of Ardakan University on the view of students and faculty members through CIPP and indicated that all participators, either students or faculty members, reported a favorite level of educational efficiency in four elements of CIPP. It can be said that the facilities and equipment of the university were mediocre from the students' point of view. However, all cases of academic performance of the university were evaluated better from the faculty members' point of view than students, except for the quality of the equipment. Al-Shanawani (2019) in a study entitled

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“evaluating self-teacher curriculum by using CIPP model” indicated that the purposes of curriculum of the center has high acceptability while process and product have medium rate of acceptability in educational process. Prisăcariu and Vilcea (2015) evaluated the quality and indicators of the PHD curriculum in country of Romania on the view of PHD students and provided some indicators such as clear laws for the reception, systematic monitoring of students, students’ satisfaction, environment, and enhancing the scientific level of professors.

Fitzpatrick (2014) in a study entitled "using the method of CIPP evaluation about educational plans of Net App Company" indicated that many of the company's plans were not acceptable and had not suitable efficiency. In fact, the plans need to be evaluated in order to give favorite services.

3. Methodology

This study is applied and survey in terms of purpose and research, respectively in which reviews and evaluates purposes, contents, and efficiency of curriculum in master degree course of Pre-School Education in 2019 on the view of the students and professors of Allameh Tabataba'i University of Tehran. 60 students, graduates, and professors of of Allameh Tabataba'i University participated in this study in which students and graduates contained 84 percent of samples (42% for each group). This amount was 16% for group of professors. Stratified Random Sampling and Convenience Sampling were used in order to select students and professors, respectively.

Measurement tools of the study was designed by modeling from Keivan Salehi’s questionnaire (2005) based on a study entitled “evaluating vocational school by using CIPP model in Tehran University”. The questionnaire was designed in a multiple choice with 5 items in likert scale (Strongly disagree, disagree, to some extent, agree and strongly agree) while questions were provided in 4 parts (purpose, contents, Context, and efficiency). Validity and reliability of questionnaire were confirmed by the Specialists and experts. The reliability of the questionnaire was obtained based on Cronbach's alpha coefficient (0.89%). Descriptive statistics (frequency, mean, and bar chart), Inferential Statistics (Kolmogorov-Smirnov, Independent Samples T-Test, and ANOVA), and SPSS24 software were used in order to analyze the data.

4. Results

Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test was used in order to check out the normality of variables. The results indicated that the evaluation scores of purpose, content, context and efficiency were between

-1.96 and +1.96. Thus, the assumption of normal distribution of the statistical population can be accepted based on 95% confidence coefficient. On the other hand, because one of the assumptions of using analysis of variance is assumption of homogeneity of variance, Levene Test is used in table 1.

Table1: the results of Levene Test, Assumption of homogeneity of variance

Variable	F	Df1	Df2	Significance Level
purpose	0.43	1	58	0.51
content	0.54	1	58	0.46
context	0.07	1	58	0.78
efficiency	3.49	1	58	0.06

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According to table 1 and values of F obtained from Levene Test, there is no any Significant difference in level of $\alpha=0.5$. Thus, Null hypothesis was accepted (Assumption of homogeneity of variances) and the necessary assumptions for using the analysis of variance test was confirmed.

In response to the first question of a research, the purposes of curriculum were assessed from the perspective of professors and student of master degree (table 2).

Table2. The results of T Test in component of purpose evaluation

Variable	Mean Differences	t	mean \pm SD	Significance Level
Purpose evaluation	10.71	12.06	34.71 \pm 6.87	0.00

The results of table 2 indicate that the mean of variable of purpose evaluation and standard deviation are 34.71 and 6.87, respectively. The results of single simple T Test indicate that acceptability of purpose evaluation variable is greater than expected according to Significance level and error 0.05 (p-value=0.001). (Comparison criteria with the number 24, which was the value of the domain related to the questionnaire). Thus, the goals of MA curriculum of Pre-School Education major are at a high level of acceptability.

In response to the second question of a research, the content evaluation of curriculum was assessed from the perspective of professors and MA students (table 3).

Table 3: the results of T. Test in component of evaluation content

Variable	Mean Differences	t	mean \pm SD	Significance Level
Content evaluation	7/30	12/59	23/30 \pm 4/48	0.000

The results of table 3 indicate that the mean of variable of content evaluation and standard deviation are 23.30 and 4.48, respectively. The results of single simple T Test indicate that acceptability of content evaluation of variable is greater than expected according to Significance level and error 0.05 (p-value=0.001).(Comparison criteria with the number 16, which was the value of the domain related to the questionnaire). Thus, the content of MA curriculum of Pre-School Education major is at a high level of acceptability.

In response to the third question of a research, the context evaluation of curriculum was assessed from the perspective of professors and MA students (table 4).

Table 4: the results of T. Test in component of evaluation context

Variable	Mean Differences	t	mean \pm SD	Significance Level
context evaluation	6/16	9/49	20/16 \pm 5/03	0.000

The results of table 4 indicate that the mean of variable of context evaluation and standard deviation are 20.16 and 5.03, respectively. The results of single simple T Test indicate that acceptability of context evaluation of variable is greater than expected according to Significance level and error 0.05 (p=0.001).(Comparison criteria with the number 14, which

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was the value of the domain related to the questionnaire). Thus, the content of MA curriculum of pre-school education major is at a high level of acceptability.

In response to the fourth question of a research, the efficiency evaluation of curriculum was assessed from the perspective of professors and MA students (table 5).

Table 5: the results of T. Test in component of evaluation context

Variable	Mean Differences	t	mean ±SD	Significance Level
efficiency evaluation	6/03	7/63	29/03 ± 6/12	0.000

The results of table 5 indicate that the mean of variable of efficiency evaluation and standard deviation are 29.03 and 6.12, respectively. The results of single simple T Test indicate that acceptability of efficiency evaluation of variable is greater than expected according to Significance level and error 0.05 (p-value=0.001).(Comparison criteria with the number 14, which was the value of the domain related to the questionnaire). Thus, the content of MA curriculum of pre-school education major is at a high level of acceptability.

Finally, in response to the last question of the research, the evaluation of curriculum were assessed from the perspective of professors and MA students (table 6).

Table 6: Analysis of variance to compare curriculum of Pre-school education major in master degree course Between students and professors

Variables	Source of Variables	Sum of Squares	Degree of Freedom	1. Squared Mean	F	P-Value
Purpose	Intergroup	246.064	3	82.021	1.92	0.136
	Intragroup	2338.648	55			
	Total	2584.712	58	42.521		
Content	Intergroup	127.735	3	42.578	2.480	0.071
	Intragroup	944.434	55			
	Total	1072.169	58	17.172		
Context	Intergroup	223.784	3	74.595	3.50	0.021
	Intragroup	1172.216	55			
	Total	1396.000	58	21.313		
Efficiency	Intergroup	215.769	3	71.933	1.911	0.139
	Intragroup	2070.400	55			
	Total	2286.169	58	34.644		

According to the table 6, because purpose evaluation ($\alpha < 0.136 = \text{Sig} = 0.05$), content evaluation ($\alpha < 0.071 = \text{Sig} = 0.05$), and efficiency evaluation ($\alpha < 0.139 = \text{Sig} = 0.05$), the data of Null hypothesis (H0) are approved ($\alpha = 0.05$). Thus, it can be claimed that there is not any significant difference between groups of professors and students in evaluating purpose, content, and efficiency. On the other hand, context evaluation ($\alpha > 0.021 = \text{Sig} = 0.05$), the data of Null hypothesis (H0) is not approved ($\alpha = 0.05$). Thus, it can be claimed that there is significant difference between groups of professors and students in evaluating content, context, and efficiency.

5. Discuss and Conclusion

The results of this study indicated that the purposes of curriculum of MA course of Pre-School Education major were at a high level of acceptability and it was reported by professors group

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more desirable than students. It can be said that the purpose was reported at a favorite level in studies of Darani and Salehi (2016), Makarem et al (2012), Akhlaghi and et al (2011), and Al-Shanawani (2019).

Curriculum content component of MA course in Pre-School Education major was at a high level of acceptability and it was reported by professors group more desirable than students too. Also, the content variable was evaluated at a favorite level in studies of Jafari and Omidian (2015), hasanvand et al (2015), and Darm (2019).

Context component of MA course in Pre-School Education major was at a high level of acceptability. The results are consistent with the studies of Durrani and Salehi (2015), Khaleghkhah and Mesrkhani (2015), Cho and Jo (2019) and Banut and Dashmuk (2008). These studies also considered the context variable to be desirable.

The results and analysis indicate that efficiency of MA course in Pre-School Education major was at a high level of acceptability. The results are consistent with the studies of Rezapour et al (2016), Skirns and Basker (1997), Kahn et al. (2014), Hodavand et al (2014), and Moulin (2008). These studies also considered the context variable to be desirable. The results of the analysis indicate that curriculum in evaluating purpose, content, and efficiency of MA in pre-school education is not significantly different between groups of professors and students. The results of this study are consistent with the studies of Hoseinpour et al (2019), Hasanvand et al (2015), Fitzpatrick (2014), and Ramstad (2009). They believed that the opinions of professors and students were different. It seems that a closer look at this issue could have led to better results. It can also be inferred that despite all the weaknesses in MA course of Pre-School Education major in Allameh Tabataba'i University, the students tried to answer the question realistically and evaluated components based on real conditions and facilities instead of imagining the ideal situations.

It seems that developing valid standards and indicators and coordinated with curriculum content for Pre-School Education major can be an effective measure. In addition, continuous measurement and evaluation of content and efficiency of academic majors will be useful and effective in order to enhance the level of teaching process and interaction of students and professors. Establishing a scientific committee based on sociocultural conditions and situations of Iran and reviewing, modifying and re-thinking the curriculum of preschool education field can be effective and useful measures in enhancing the quality of universities in country of Iran.

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