

Faculty Members' Promotion: Challenges and Solutions

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Dear Editor,

The importance of comprehensive and sustainable development, competition between countries to gain a superior cultural-political and economic position, and strengthening science and technology to expand the sphere of influence and national authority indicate the efficiency of universities and institutions of higher education, research, and technology to achieve country's scientific and technological goals. In the meantime, the effective and undeniable role of faculty members as the most important pillar in the process of promoting and guaranteeing the quality of higher education is irrefutable. This issue has caused science and technology policy-makers to seek to conduct the tasks of faculty members in line with the goals of the country's science and technology system. The faculty members' promotion is one of the most important tools to achieve such a goal. In addition to the importance of such an approach, which in itself underlies sustainable and comprehensive development, evaluating the challenges of the promotion system of faculty members requires an appropriate motivation to codify effective regulations aiming to guide the activities of faculty members as a basic need of the country's academic community. The following are some of the limitations and proposed solutions for the promotion regulations:

Incompatibility of the Scores of Faculty Member's Activities

One of the major problems of the faculty members' promotion regulations is the incompatibility of the scores of some faculty member's activities. The promotion regulations are similar to a multivariate

game in which, changing the score of one activity affects not only the relevant section but also the other sections. The simplicity of achieving a full-scored activity will cause other activities of these regulations not to be implemented but to be forgotten. To overcome these challenges, it seems that the index with the minimum score should be considered mandatory in all sections; for example, the minimum cultural-research score should be considered equally, and after gaining the minimum score, action should be taken to calculate other scores in different articles (1).

Identical Look at All Disciplines

Another major problem with the promotion regulations is its identical look at all disciplines. Despite the differences in the requirements of various disciplines, the regulations have tried to evaluate all disciplines based on a single structure (2). It is suggested that promotion criteria be considered based on the expected goals and capabilities of each discipline (3).

Identical Look at All Geographic Regions

Another noteworthy point in the promotion's regulations is the identical look at all universities in the country, which is not fundamentally correct. Given that the needs of different regions of the country are different and some indigenous regions have special indigenous needs, it is obvious that the confrontation rate of all universities of the country with the mentioned issues is not the same and therefore, not everyone's duty is the same. Basically, solving some indigenous issues requires being present in the relevant area, which is easily possible for students and faculty members in the indigenous regions. Therefore,

in matching faculty members' promotion indices, more attention should be paid to the mission, needs, specific conditions, and scientific resources and opportunities of each university of medical sciences (4).

Lack of a Dynamic Structure in faculty members' Promotion regulations

Another important problem in the promotion regulations is the completely static look at the scoring agents. This approach hinders innovation and creativity in the performance of faculty members. Also, insufficiency in the implementation of homogeneous, transparent, and fair promotion processes, lack of mastery of faculty members over the promotion process and how to evaluate activities, and the impact of conflict of interests or disagreement on the outcome of the promotion process are among the problems of the executive instruction of the faculty members' promotion regulations (4). The provided suggestions based on the results of studies to resolve these challenges include changing the composition of the University Board of Auditors periodically, establishing a consulting and facilitating unit of preparing promotion files for faculty members, holding symposiums, and discussions between the boards of auditors of different universities, and holding faculty development programs aiming to teach the provisions of the promotion regulations (5, 6).

Bold Contribution of Research

Regarding faculty members' promotion, the regulations are inevitably publication-oriented, and publishing scientific texts in the form of articles has become the main point and daily concern of members. Despite such a regulation and other pressures on faculty, regarding gaining scores, the research has come to the text from the margin and had become the original from the branch. One of the consequences of such an atmosphere is the quantitative growth of the number of scientific texts. Given the role of research activities to solve the problems of society, one should try to lead these activities to real attention to the needs and scientific-research space of society, creating evolution and advancement of the scientific field, and also participation in establishing research policies (7). It is suggested that given the evaluation of the quality of faculty members' research works, their attention be paid to the quality of research and published works rather than worrying about increasing the number of works (8).

Conclusion

Considering the special position of the faculty members' promotion system in higher education policy-making and the main role of this system in directing their activities in the fields of culture, research, education, and administration, the present study provides the possibility of acquainting the country's scientific policy-makers with the challenges of the faculty members' promotion system and also constructs a suitable basis for establishing a comprehensive promotion system.

Supplementary Material(s): is available here [To read supplementary materials, please refer to the journal website and open [PDF/HTML](#)].

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