The Quality of Saudi Graduates and the Needs of Saudi Labor Market

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Abstract

Education is one of the basic requirements in all human societies, so the view of these communities on a continuous basis development to maintain the standards and to fulfill the educational requirements to suit the needs of the present and future data. This urgent need for educational development create a large burden to the community, so the aim of this study is to identify the gap between the graduates and the market's need to narrow the gap between the outputs of public universities in Saudi Arabia and the needs of the market. The research is based on the theoretical literature through the presentation of some suggestions as well as some field studies conducted in this area. The researcher concluded with some recommendations that may contribute to the development of university education in general, and to meet the requirements of the market.

Key words: Quality of Graduate, requirements of the market

1. introduction

This paper studies the "Quality of Graduate" being as the main axis when entering work market and also studies the relation between concepts of such quality with preparation of colleges students in general and qualify them to be ready to enter work market acquiring skills and knowledge that enable them to carry out their occupational roles investing the available academy scientific knowledge that requires concepts and visions enable the graduate to interact with work environment in high standards.

The need of the work arises to fill the gap of the outputs of university education in many Arab Countries including Kingdom of Saudi Arabia that enhances the market with Saudi Graduates. The importance of such issue shown on the actual need of skilled Saudi National Workers compare to the estate of unbalance in this area in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The severity of such issue shown in the increase of Saudi manpower due to the increase of population and increase of graduates of different educational levels as result of increasing care of manpower development in addition to less opportunities in public sectors, but the national manpower is increasing in percentage. More than the Saudization percentage due to the need of work market for specific jobs requires specific qualifications and skills. The burden of such problem is increased on Private Sector due to the responsibility of securing more work opportunities, especially that the government sector is satisfied with the working manpower and to avoid the disguised unemployment in addition to reduce spending in this sector, which lead to limited work opportunities (Research and Studies Center – Chamber of Commerce, Riyadh 1419).

In this matter, Madani (2002) has discussed the development of high education as one branch of human development in the Kingdom in a scientific paper presented in symposium of "Future view for Saudi Economy up to the year 1440 – 2010 and he has pointed to the deep changes happened in the international and regional system in different fields and how to secure adequate outputs for the market and confirms the importance of development of university performance and draft indicators for performance and system for university accreditation in order to grantee continuous quality and development in university systems. He has pointed out that there is necessity for planning requires change of recognition in university education internationally in light of four axes:

- Policies of expansion in education as the education is considered as the key of social movement, economic chance, luxury, meet the need of advanced economy and secure elements of society modernization.
Update the systems and methods of university study as information technology has affected the systems and methods of university teaching that motivated universities to help students to acquire learning skills and methods of self learning and also universities cared the professional development for teaching board members to improve efficiency and qualification of the student and university.

The scientific research in universities is aimed to serve the community. In light of universal changes, universities do efforts to link the scientific research with issues of society considering it as part of decision making, policies analysis, forming objectives for students and researchers towards the research and ability to solve problems by using the available knowledge and skill of self-learning.

Direct toward the quality of high education by improving performance of universities and set up systems to achieve quality and efficiency in university system.

Hence AL-Ansari (2008) confirmed the type of rehabilitation and employment of youth assuming that when a person is qualified properly for work, he can compete in the market. Increasing caring for learning in actual work site let him be more qualified for employment in the market and capable to cope up with new changes of requirements of job.

Regarding work market, Saudization, learning and training as system was studied by AL-Dossari (2007) as he pointed out that the work market in the Kingdom is a system of manpower, external rules and policies, overseas recruitment policy, national economic elements, supply and demand for trained skills and manpower of various levels, system of in service rehabilitation in companies in addition to advance and accuracy of information regarding all above mentioned. It impossible to call this as one system that can be evaluated as success or failed system, but it is a group of interacted elements. Training as it is in its current status is considered as one of mediums to increase Saudization percentage in the market. Education and training system either public or private considered as one system even though the implementing parties are different. Education and training system interacting with Saudi work market considered as a system that needs Central Organization manages such system efficiently guarantees the response of the system to the requirements of the Organization exclusively as per the required specialties and specific plan.

Achievement of high standards of harmony between university education outputs and needs of the market requires realizing the relation between them and also mostly requires radical changes. In this meaning, we find many theoretical and experimental studies that concentrate on leadership especially group leadership and change management in establishments particularly and there is tendency to reject the change many times and in different trends as it was shown in Jeray (1988). For example the old scared from new and many consider the change is threatening them and their status, concepts and beliefs.

In this field, mostly attention is given to university education and its outputs and meeting the needs of the market and that market's needs for properly trained graduates is considered as one of the most important challenges that face university education in different world countries.

The importance of such issues increases by considering the new quality challenge that higher education in Arab countries facing (Saeed 2006), which is revealed on demand increase in the market for higher quality professional qualification. Such challenge includes some phenomena that may hinder achievement of high education objectives like some deficiencies in distributing students for Academic specialties, dominance of theoretical specialties and decreasing of internal and external qualifications. Studies and reports indicate to the problem of the gap between the high education outputs (quality and quantity) and the market's needs as this basic axis concerns the problem of harmony between high education outputs and needs of the work chances and the time difference in creating the aimed development in the sectors of education and work as education subjects to the slow human's ability comparing to extreme rapid change in work sector especially technical change.

High education development includes social faculties' development, which is under care of ministry of high education. Aiming to establish basis of development and modernization, securing basis of creativity, direct the investment in scientific research and knowledge and approving economic competition based on ability of human knowledge for production, therefore it is necessary to develop the human resources, cadres and capabilities that are able to deal with requirements of this age and cope up with it results (Madani, 2002).
2. The problem of the study

The problem of study represents on non existence of clear vision to the social faculties regarding the gap between outputs of Saudi official faculties and market's needs as there is no communication based on sufficient training agreements to train the graduates before and after graduation to fill the gap between these changes.

3. The importance of the study

This study is concentrate on the problem of the harmony between the Saudi's Universities outputs and needs of the market. This study's aims and importance meet with aims and importance of general national Saudi to support the market with qualified skills to cover the maximum possible of "relative self-sufficiency" making the Saudi manpower in more advance rank especially in private sector.

The importance of the study based on how it participates to fill the gap between the absolute academic work that progressively developing and the needs of the market that searches for most professional and qualified persons.

4. Method of the study

The study depends on one method which is descriptive method to cover the theoretical side of the study that shows the effect of curriculum and its relation with the market by referring to the books, researches and specialized studies in Arabic and foreign journals.

5. The theoretical literature and previous studies

Aal-Saud (2007, 90) presented the issue in the point that the general education's graduates are increasing every year in large numbers some of them are below the standard accepted to continue the university education, therefore the curriculum and methods of teaching need to be revised and updated to achieve steps of success as others achieved by using other methods in education proved efficiency like distance education, open education and life education. It is important to point to the importance of training in light of rapid changes in the field of communications and information systems as training of manpower and provide them with skills and experiences that achieve the competition is considered as a basic demand.

On the other hand, the world has seen unprecedented quality changes in economy field. Some of the most known changes are: globalization, market's economy, knowledge's economy and openness that increase the competition.

The work market in different world countries has new various requirements on both production and service processes or at the level of workers' ability to perform their jobs skillfully. The public and private companies look for graduates that are able to meet the new requirements concerning their academic knowledge and practical skills.

AL-Ansari (2008) has pointed out to the necessity of giving the private sector the role and incentives to conduct training programs either for purpose of employment or to develop the performance of its employees. Such practice gives more trust to such companies as principle of participation with public training sector and reduces costs of having training establishments under public sector. Such training programs fulfill the need of available posts for public sector and also give the private sector the chance to choose the appropriate trainees to recruit them. This kind of participation and integration between the public and private sectors is important for the following reasons:

- Tendency to transfer many public establishments to private to reduce the expenses in addition to develop the services rendered to beneficiaries.
- Economic openness that is going on in the world nowadays, which resulted in assigning new responsibilities on the part of private sector.
- Tendency to choose to private sector for recruitment of new graduates from different education and training institutions.
- High developments in the training and education systems and dealing with the economic changes and trial of such systems to help the market in international competition.
- Interaction of different education systems like public education with technical and vocational training.
The need to education and training that are more close to the market.

Some researchers presented their opinions regarding the reasons of such problem. AL-Khateeb (2004, 150) mentioned that there are many factors participated in any way in creating the problem or crisis of university education. The most important of such factors are:

- Run out of funding.
- Lack of correlation of curriculum and university teaching methods with needs of societies especially in our current life with rapid developments in knowledge field in general and information technology in particular.
- Unemployment of university graduates or disguised unemployment.
- Social claim that universities shall bear the social responsibilities to achieve the drafted objectives and should be subject to system of administrative observation.
- Social pressures on university education institutions to achieve the principle of costing/efficiency.

Many researchers believe that the foundation of universities and institutions shall be looked into from different angles if changes are needed either in methods of thinking or the work process itself. There is no ready magic solution to adapt any method of thinking or work, but we have to understand the process, ways, relations, concerns and systems of reasons, results and contexts for the case/s being studied (Harigopal, 2002).

Other specialists discussed such issue from another point that they spotlight on sides which are more sensitive regarding the latest scientific developments going on in the world. AL-Ajlan (2008) explained that the quality is power motivates the university education to achieve its objectives the society demands in light of specific criteria not only to check the university education outputs, but check the elements of offering educational service especially teaching board members.

Also he explained that one of the most important matter and problems that face the high education institutions in the Kingdom for example is the gap between qualification of high education outputs and market's needs and deficiency of university outputs towards local market (various experiences and skills) although it has theoretical abilities match and compete with outputs of other international universities because this market considers as the main container of most of these outputs. In case such outputs being unqualified then they are social and economic burden. Kingdom has witnessed rapid development in various fields and it is necessary that educational system to be the first in this development. Therefore necessity arises to develop the administrative and academic process in high education institutions and care the quality criteria in a way suits the development plans including requirements of the work market.

Based on the above mentioned we can abstract the importance of work in methodological and practical way, which require drafting appropriate plans and executive programs that can solve the above mentioned problems being as basic resource for existence of obstacle of none quality of Saudi universities outputs and needs of the market. United regulation in Saudi universities – ministry of high education stated in some objectives (direct the scientific research to solve the Saudi social matters and enable the Saudi students to continue their high education locally. But still some of high education students in Saudi Universities are below the required standard (AL-Ajlan, 2008).

AL-Otaibi (2009) believes that objectives of high education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia reflect the culture and needs of society and trends of age and its technologies and needs of human and his development demands. Therefore such objectives meet the culture of Saudi society presented in Islam as religion and method of behavior and work.

In research paper presented by AL-Saleh (2008) about development of systems and rules of high education since first beginning of drafting the basis of education and its programs the researcher mentioned that education in general and high education in particular has received distinctive attention as all universities in the Kingdom were established and had their systems with royal ceremonies. Universities witnessed since establishment up to present huge development from number of sections, number of teaching board members or number of students and such development required development in organization either from administrative, financial or academic side. High education in particular has dynamic nature in its relation with the surrounding changes regional, local or universal. Here comes the role of supervising parties to bear the responsibilities until the education cope up with such changes.

In this regard, the Eighth Development Plan Strategy 1425-1430 for development of high education in the Kingdom has aimed to apply the following policies:
• Increase the capacity of high education institutions matching with requirements of social and economic development and needs of different areas of the Kingdom.

• Update the systems of high education, courses and programs that match with the requirements and needs of the market.

• Improvement of internal and external qualification of high education system.

• Increase participation of private sector in achieving the national objectives for high education sector.

• Expansion in programs of social service provided by high education institutions.

• Giving more care to scientific research and development in high education institutions.

• Intensify the exchange students to outstanding foreign universities.

• Apply system of academic accreditation for all programs of high education institutions.

• Update the cooperation and interaction between high education institutions and private sector.

Facing such facts, the Eighth Saudi Development Plan 1425-1430 has considered the matter of "education outputs harmony" is one of most important development issues in the Kingdom that requires advancing the qualification of high education system. Therefore the policy of development of high education institutions, courses and programs was included the policies of the plan in accordance with the market's requirements also the policies of the plan included a referential example for universities that works in harmonizing the current available programs in high education institutions with requirements of social and economic development and needs of the market (ministry of economy and planning 2005).

But it is necessary to admit that there is delinquency in participation between education institutions and the other social institutions. It is important to enhance the relation between faculties and sections of universities and all other social institutions and to focus on harmony between the outputs of such faculties and sections and the developmental needs for the country and should work on development of the programs, which consider the developmental circumstances and also should build relations between the academicians and in-charge professionals (AL-Ajlan 2008).

The participants, for example, in a study presented a paper regarding the harmony between the education's outputs and the market's needs have indicated that the educational curriculum in the universities do not match with the needs of the Saudi market and the universities still separated from the society and do not fit the nature of the private business and the specialties needed in the private sector not available in the universities. In addition to that the universities do not train the students to be qualified for work in private sector, hence the academic factors could be considered as basic factor included in the reasons being as a reaction of the market towards the education outputs (AL-Tarkistani, 2005). Many other studies and researches based on the facts and data confirm the existence of the above problem deeply in the Kingdom.

Other specialists view such matters from another point that highlights other sides, which are more sensitive considering the new scientific issues arise in the world. AL-nsari (2008) believes that it is very important to confirm the training's necessity to enhance the human's abilities and qualifications and develop them from scientific, practical, psychological and behavioral sides. Training is aimed to find manpower with talents and high abilities highly related to level of technological implementation that characterizes the social organization indicating that the in-service training is differ from training before joining the work.

To achieve such purpose all agree that the cooperative training is important as it has vital role to correlate the academic education and the market by supporting the trainees in an environment that they can acquire skills and behaviors required in the markets as conditions. The current cooperative training, without suspecting the intentions and efforts of supervisors, is still facing actual obstacles that lessen the complete benefit of cooperative training (Sohail & AL-Qahtani, 2003).

Ahmed (1428) confirms that there are important reasons to apply the quality standards in universities due to the pressures face such universities. One of the most important reasons is that most of high education providers are not in the level of the university, which requires reevaluation of many institutions and universities that issue scientific degrees. She also indicated the increasing role of the government and industry. Once the universities receive
The government expects that they should have impact on university's policies in addition to the impact that business organizations practice on government's performance based on the importance that the industries' inventions and advancement have, as there is an important demand of recruiting parties that the high education institutions and universities should render the appropriate education in order to have manpower with sufficient basis. Also there is demand that the universities should be responsible of their job performance to achieve quality.

Managements of universities' outputs continue in different trends. Universities are not mere teaching members, students, curriculum, infrastructure, programs and plans, therefore the necessity came for comprehensive quality management in universities being as important condition for success of any change in business processes and different and various aspects of such processes.

The study of Seymour (1991) covered 23 pioneer faculties and universities that apply the comprehensive quality management program. The study showed that comprehensive quality management can make the difference in education quality improvement including advantages of comprehensive quality management in the university represented in doubling the ability of the education institution to bear the responsibility of rendered services and improving the educational environment. Decision making based on the facts and data more than before and there chance for all department members to work in team and workers' knowledge regarding the education process became double, less expenditures and less repetition of the works.

From Arabic side for example, AL-Nabhani (2001) has conducted a study about the development of high studies management in Sultan Qaboos University in light of requirements of comprehensive quality management. The study aimed to research on how to benefit from comprehensive quality management in developing high studies in the university.

In the study of AL-Qurashi & AL-Thabiti (2001) under title "Methods of reestablishment of education in high studies in K.SA universities" the two researchers have discussed a concept for reestablishing programs of high studies in universities of the Kingdom in light of international's trends in the field of reengineering programs of high studies. The research is a theoretical study depends on the analysis, standard and logic generalization in presenting notion of researcher regarding the steps to be followed in order to reestablish programs of high studies. The most important results of the research are: the technological, economic and political international changes require increasing response of high studies programs with the market's requirement, the input of the reengineering considered as the appropriate way to reestablish high studies programs. The reestablishing high studies program in the Kingdom requires: review the radical thinking in high studies programs in light of future concept for such programs and specify the deficiency in implementing the program (administrative and academic) for purpose to get rid of administrative materials and works that causing waste of money, effort and time and rearrange the high studies programs and set up strategies for reestablishing such programs and specify the new rules and methods.

AL-Elaiwy (2005) has discussed in his study "Kingdom experiment in developing technical education and technical training" issues of technical rehabilitation and training regarding the most important difficulties of this field in the Saudi market as the research stated:

- The curriculum is not flexible to cope up with the changes in the market.
- Business owners are requesting the Saudi to be more skillful and productive.
- Improperness of coordination of planning for manpower and human resources between the government sector and private sector.
- Graduating huge numbers of Saudi graduates, but they unqualified, which reflect negatively in the market.

In a study of Chamber of Commerce and Industry about "training and professional rehabilitation and private sector's jobs (2005) as stated by AL-Otaibi (2009)" indicated the current and future needs of jobs in the market, which are specified through field study covered large number of private establishments in Riyadh area. Although the previous study concentrated on the jobs that require qualification as per the request of chamber of commerce and industry in Riyadh, which are basically technical and nontechnical jobs, but the field study confirmed the establishments need university specialties to fill the current and future need. Such jobs are as follows:

- Computer and information systems.
• Medical jobs (medicine, pharmacy, laboratory and nursing).
• Engineering jobs (computer engineering, civil engineering, electrical engineering, electronic engineering, and architect).
• Translation and editing.
• Finance (accountants).

The basic problem is found here, the education should connect the education and the society's need. Correction of relation between the achievements of university education depends on factors of university education's inputs, processes and outputs. The study showed the correlation between the achievements of university education and comprehensive development in the Kingdom and university specialties and its relation with development and the relation between university education's outputs and development.

In the same trend weakness is seen in universities' work on how to develop the training programs in a way matching the market needs. Again, once the market's needs is unobvious and not supported by facts and data, university is exempted from part of the responsibility, but not exempted from establishing training programs cope up with changes. All are agreed on the importance of such axis in our modern world like skills of information, work style and modern management.

Ryan (2002) discussed in his research under title "British training market, cases and evidences". British work market from view of training role in providing this market with persons have skills that enable them to get best work chance. The study confirmed the importance of training in general including technical training and found that the training based on needs of the market is the center point of all this process and the public and private sectors are competing in Britain to present training programs based directly on current needs of the market in Britain at that time.

Sade-Pirkko (2005) in his study under title "individual and collective thought on how to meet the requirements in developing the education" has discussed number of axis in European education institutions from view of necessity of systematic thinking. The research was found out that when this way of thinking is applied in education institutions it develops many aspects of educational–learning work including self commitment, reach to best intellectual model in the establishment and reach to mutual vision and mutual collective learning and that the systematic thinking shall link all influent elements in the educational - learning process in advance and more efficient way.

6. Conclusion

General education graduates every year huge numbers of graduates, some of them are below the reasonable level to continue the university education, therefore the curriculum and way of teaching should be revised specially our current traditional education and necessary action should be taken to develop and update the curriculum and way of teaching. It is also extremely necessary to follow steps of success achieved by others through using another education method that proved its worthiness like distance learning, open learning and life time learning. It is important here to focus on the importance of training especially for persons who study computer in light of rapid changes in communications field and information systems. Training of students, who are our future manpower, and providing them with skills and experiences that achieve competition is considered as a basic demand.

It seems that students are mostly not interested in technical and technological specialties, which resulted in need of the market for such specialties. Interesting in human sciences more than technological specialties, which is a reason for the gap between the outputs of the university education and the market, therefore an estate of balance should be established. This does not mean that technological specialties should be higher than the human sciences as each has a role and no priority should be given to any.

7. Recommendations

• More consideration should be given to English language as it is a vital demand for university's students and the market.
• To encourage the communication between the universities and the market in organized and systematic way through various commissions.
Establishing commissions and mechanisms to cope up with the latest in scientific and technological field in the universities, research centers, establishments and specialized parties in the world to benefit from the latest events in different fields in organized way and to adopt the appropriate ones.

To establish the mechanisms for the relations between the universities and the graduates and to recognize the strength and weakness points that they found in their works either academically or practically and also to get lessons for more efficient steps regarding the curriculums, way of teaching, training, specialties and all other related matters. It is obvious that the universities are first party concerned regarding this issue.

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