EVALUATION OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION'S PERFORMANCE WITH THE CLASSICAL AND VALUE-BASED CRITERIA IN THE SUPREME LEADER'S VIEW USING BALANCED SCORE CARD (BSC)

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ABSTRACT

This study seeks to evaluate the performance of the Higher Education based on the classical and value-based criteria proposed by the Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran and posed in many organizations as slogans. Designing and implementing the scientific methods of performance evaluation is especially important in the present conditions of the country. Sloganeering as an organizational problem in many organizations will result in designing and implementing many non-prioritized plans and movements without an accurate and realistic outlook. We have used in this research the Balanced Score Card Model in order to evaluate the Higher Education's performance with the criteria proposed by the System's Leadership. Then, we sorted the model in quad levels using the experts' views and set the intra- and inter-level relation of the model. Then, the final structure of the model was evaluated by use of a questionnaire and confirmed by a selected sample. Finally, the Higher Education Institute, which we were researching was evaluated by its customers (students) through a questionnaire. The final results of the evaluation indicate the organization’s status of performance at the quad levels of the Balanced Score Card Model.

KEYWORDS: performance evaluation, Higher Education, Balanced Score Card Model, the Leader

1- Introduction

One cannot claim to be moving in a right path without taking an effective look at his previous behaviors and movements. One of the problems unfortunately felt in our country and organizations is their moving forward without having an effective and accurate look at their past. Most organizations, especially the governmental ones, claim to obey the Leader's guidelines and policies. Many authorities pose in their slogans and speeches the points already posed by the Supreme Leader and use his words only verbally. In other words, a large number of organizations claim to be following the leader's orders in order to achieve the aspirations of the Islamic Republic System, but can it be said that this claim is similarly proved in their action, It is urgently needed that a precise assessment and evaluation based on one of the best and most comprehensive scientific methods be made in this field so that the true status of organizations
could be measured using an accurate method. If this goal is achieved, many worthwhile benefits will be obtained, the most important one being true understanding of the organizations' present status far from an unrealistic and Utopian outlook. Such an outlook makes it possible to separate and classify organizations accurately and transparently. Among the methods that can be used for organizations' performance evaluation, the Balanced Score Card Model has been recognized to be more complete and useful as it is a multi-faceted method of evaluation. This is the reason why we have used this method in this research.

2- The Necessity of the Research

It is an urgent need to conduct a research on this topic in our country's present status of management in order to design a strategic evaluation model of organizational performance based on scientific and standard criteria along with the principle- and value-based indices of the Islamic Revolution using one of the most efficient modern methods called Balanced Score Card. The Higher Education Sector has been a considerably important subject due to its determining role in the country's development and dynamicity. Assurance of the effectiveness of education and its performance status in the Higher Education System can lead to improvement of the conditions in other sectors such as economy and culture. Therefore, a precise assessment of the Higher Education based on the models designed in accordance with the internal and native necessities and priorities is necessary in order to design the next programs with a realistic look based on a sound judgment.

3- The Theoretical Literature of the Research

4-1- Performance Evaluation

In the new models of performance evaluation, quantitative models such as productivity criterion with effectiveness and efficiency approach, and profitability criterion with performance audition approach, as well as qualitative models such as descriptive and value-based criteria with organizational commitment and organizational ethics approach and several other criteria have been used (Rahimi, 2006). Evaluation studies seek to investigate the results of actions organized to see whether the organization has achieved its pre-determined goals or not (Moslehi, and et al, 2007). Performance evaluation has in general been in all the managers' code of conduct during the whole life of management, but it began as a technique from Japan (Bozorgian, 2002). In our country, the evaluation system has a long history due to the Islamic culture, but unfortunately, it has not had an acceptable development proportionate with this long history (Hajisharif, 1992). Good performance of a university brings development and progress for the society on the one hand, and the development of the society as a positive feedback brings a higher position for the university on the other (Mokhtarian, and Mahammadi, 2008). The Higher Education's performance evaluation model is very important and essential. It can also prove effective as a means of persuading the government to concentrate further attention on the Higher Education issues (Meiying, 2009). Institutions cannot be judged merely based on their previous validity; they should be assessed and evaluated based on accurate and perfect criteria (Thomson, 2008). Based on the Productivity Measurement Model (issued in 2004), the input of the Higher Education System in Iran includes students, credits, space and equipment, Scientific Board members
(university professors), employees, information and the like, and its output includes graduates, scientific achievements, promoted professors, economic incomes, developed space, facilities and knowledge (Azar; Tarkashvand, 2005). Indices in the areas of education, research, welfare, and general affairs have been presented for evaluation of universities. In some reports, universities have been classified based on reputation, professors, students, research, facilities, employees and special advantages without any special orientation towards the performance quality parameter (Shafia, 2001). Nayereh Daneshvar also investigated the theoretical history of the qualitative assessment of Iran’s Higher Education System in 1384 in a research called "Higher Education, Endogenous Development", in which she examined the qualitative evaluation indices in different models having been presented (Jafari, 2011).

4-3- Balanced Score Card Model

The Balanced Score Card Model was introduced by Robert Kaplan, a professor of Harvard University, and David Norton, a popular consultant of management, who were both from Boston (Nion, 2007). It is one of the best and most popular models developed for evaluation of organizations (Carla & et al, 2012). The key indices are examined in four perspectives: finance, customer, internal process, and learning and growth. Considering an evaluation process as a social activity implies that the performance evaluation systems are participative and flexible (Stan Davis, Albright, 2004) and can satisfy the students’ distinct needs (Race, 2001). It has been mentioned somewhere that Balanced Score Card is a framework to describe an organization's activities in using some of the criteria for each one of the four aspects (Chavan, 2009). Moreover, the governmental and non-profit organizations evaluate strategy from a different perspective in their Balanced Score Card Model, or define the quad perspectives in a different way (Iranzadeh, 2009). The aspects considered in Balanced Score Card Model are changeable. In other words, an organization may not pursue financial goals, in which case the financial aspects can be omitted for the organization and another aspect can be considered for it (Tabari, Arasteh, 2008).

4-4- The Strategies and Indices in the Leader's View

The following statements have been extracted from the Revolution Leader's speeches made in different temporal and locative situations:
The need to have a spirit of risk-taking, innovation, initiative, and discipline: The risk-taking spirit is actually a part of the Europeans' good traits and virtues. The spirit of initiative, innovation and discipline is very necessary. Any society which lacks these will never make progress. These are all essential.
The necessity of control culture in the country: I tell you, no one is beyond control. Nor is the Leader, let alone the Leadership-related offices. Unfortunately, control in our country is not specialized, scientific and efficient. It is not impartial in some cases; we have to confess this.
The importance of research: if we don’t take research serious, we will have to keep looking forward to receiving the sources from the foreign countries, and wait until someone conducts a research in a corner of the world so that we make use of it either directly or indirectly, and teach it in our country. This is dependency. This is called nothing but translation and dependency of the scientific character for a country or academies.
The need to have a modern, reasoned and profound religious thought: We should keep supplying new and reasoned religious thought in universities and promote the students' religious thought. Do not consider your addressees to be exclusively religious students. Your addressees are all university students of the country, even those who do not have much propensity towards religion. These are your addressees. You should also attract these. By means of strong logic and reasoning, self-confidence, and confidence in your logic, you can attract hearts. You should try to lessen the enmities or even remove them in some cases.

The university professors' need for familiarity with the religious sources and knowledge: We do need this strong logic within ourselves and in our universities. This logic should be developed by students' language. Some of the respected professors who made speeches talked about the fact that university professors need these issues, too. Professors also need familiarity with religious knowledge. What is necessary for innovation? Our thoughtful professors and students should scrutinize and question in the research centers many of the legal, social and political issues regarded by some as messages from Allah, about which no doubt is allowed. They should break this dogmatism and look for new ways. Not only can they make use of them, but they can also offer them to humans throughout the world. Today, we have such expectation from the universities.

True meaning of science and scientific innovation: An important duty of universities is scientific modernism; fanaticism is the disaster of religious thoughts and environments. In all environments, fanaticism, stability and commitment to extremism and dogmatism imposed on human-without having a rationale behind them, are catastrophes. What is considered ideal for an academic environment is that it should be innovative in scientific issues. This is the true meaning of knowledge production. Knowledge production is not merely knowledge transfer. Scientific innovation is important in the first place. I say this so that it becomes a culture. This is not specific to professors. Its addressees are students and the whole academic environment as well (Foroghijahromi, 2010).

4- Framework of the Research Conceptual Model

To obtain the needed information concerning evaluation of the Higher Education System's performance based on the Balanced Score Card Model using scientific and value-based criteria, we first extensively studied the theoretical background and literature, extracted important and noticeable points related to the research topic and placed them in the four levels of the model, and set the relations among them. After we designed a nativized model of Balanced Score Card for evaluation of the Higher Education System's performance, we designed the main indices based on the quad principles of Balanced Score Card Model in the form of questionnaires. The validity of the questionnaires was tested using some experts' view. They were asked to comment on each question, and they all confirmed the validity of the questionnaire. It was primarily tested on a five-people group before its extensive distribution, and the needed corrections were made. The questionnaire's reliability was also confirmed through measurement of Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient, which was determined 0.79. As this coefficient is higher than 0.7, we can say that the questionnaire is valid enough. The present research is an applied one by purpose, and based on the research nature and method, it is a descriptive/non-experimental/field survey. The population includes all the students of University of Shahid Bahonar Kerman, and the sample
size was estimated 224, using Kokeran's Formula. Of all the distributed questionnaires, 183 questionnaires were returned.

5- Research Objectives

The main goal of the research is to identify and classify the criteria, and create the strategic tree structure to draw the strategic map of the organization based on the Balanced Score Card Model, and then to evaluate the performance based on the structure. This research seeks to evaluate the organizational performance at the four levels based on the scientific and value-based criteria. The sub-goals of the research are as follows:

- Identifying the Higher Education System's evaluation indices at the learning and growth level.
- Identifying the Higher Education System's evaluation indices at the internal processes level.
- Identifying the Higher Education System's evaluation indices at the customer perspective level.
- Identifying the Higher Education System's evaluation indices at the organization's main and ultimate goal level.

6- Research Hypotheses

This research is principally purported to provide an efficient and reliable model of organizational performance evaluation in the Higher Education System. Therefore, hypothesis is of no relevance in this research.

7- Description of the Ultimate Structure of the Nativised Model

Most goals and indices of this research are based on the value-based criteria proposed by the Supreme Leader, and the remaining indices are parts of the scientific and common indices of evaluation performance, according to which the ultimate evaluation of the model has been made qualitatively by means of a questionnaire. In order to identify the value-based and scientific criteria for performance evaluation using the literature, previous researches, the existing texts and the Leader's speeches having been made since the past 23 years, we identified a series of the most important criteria for evaluation. Consulting professors and experts, we replaced the criteria in the Balanced Score Card model. Then, we structured the model in four levels, based on the quad structure of the Balanced Score Card Model, and finally established the relations among the indices.

8- Higher Education's Strategy Map

We present in the following the final model within the framework of Balanced Score Card Model using the indices extracted from the Leader's speeches made in different locative and temporal situations as well as the scientific indices:
The Final Outcome from the Results of the Questionnaire

By summing up the results of the questionnaire and adding up the scores of different levels based on the weight structure obtained, we come to the following conclusions:

- Scientific and industrial achievement
  - Native science
  - Prevalence of Islamic and Revolutionary ideas among students
  - Course's proportion with the society's needs
  - Independent and reasoned scientific spirit
  - Creation of students' Revolutionary personality
  - Students' spiritual and intellectual growth
  - Effort of non-Revolutionary thoughts on students
  - Students' commitment to Islamic and Revolutionary criteria
  - Islamic Revolution's thought turning into a discourse in universities
  - Scientific and industrial achievement

- Final goal perspective
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<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Performance Measures</th>
<th>Level Weight</th>
<th>Final Result in Lakert's Scale</th>
<th>Each Component's Weight</th>
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<td>Learning and Growth Level</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Self-Confidence and Self-Belief</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>University's Success in Making Revolution's Values Known to All</td>
<td>2.6250</td>
<td>0.1935</td>
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<td>Promoting Religious Thought and Spirit</td>
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<td>Creating and Enhancing Independent Scientific Spirit and Self-Confidence</td>
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<td>The University's Success in Turning Islamic Revolution's Thought Into A Discourse</td>
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<td>0.52</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<td>2.6550</td>
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</table>
10- Analysis of the Results

11-1- Interpretation of the Results in Final Objectives perspective

The first index—turning the idea of Islamic Revolution into a discourse in the university has a result lower than the mean [2.19]. Perhaps, a reason for this is lack of precise planning and the theoretical weakness of many of the professors and authorities in this area. The second index—the role of the university in the scientific and industrial developments of the country scored higher than the mean [2.82 in most students' view. The movements that have recently occurred in this field, which have given further attention to the country's scientific growth and its higher scientific rank in the global rankings based on scientific and academic research and defining new and more effective grounds for having a more effective relation with the field of industry can be some of the causes and results of the Higher Education's performance improvement.

11-2- Interpretation of the Results at the Customer Level

What students, as important customers of universities think about assessment of their status during and after their studies and performance cases that affect their studies are reflected at the customer level. The results obtained at the customer level indicate that the mean of the students' satisfaction in the University of Shahid Bahonar Kerman based on the defined criteria is higher than the mean. The results of this research regarding the three important subjects of enhancing religious thought and spirit, promoting scientific independent spirit or self-confidence, and the university's success in making the Revolution's values known to all have scored 2.77, 2.622 and 2.625 respectively. Some of the reasons why these criteria have not been implemented are:

1- The professors and experts' inability in terms of scientific and theological aspects, and thus their inability to achieve the pre-determined goals.
2- The dominant passive and insecure atmosphere in many cases among those who affect the thought area.
3- The existence of familial and social improper roots that prevent individuals from admitting the scientific and religious objectives.
4- The great and influential presence of the westernization culture and change of intellectual paradigms among many of the students and professors.

11-3- Interpretation of the Results at Internal Processes Level

At the internal processes level, the total average is higher than the mean, but as it has only a slight difference from the mean and also because the Revolution's Leader has greatly emphasized this sector, as well as due to the role of the improvement of the existing parameters and criteria at this level and the effect of this part at customer and final objectives levels, the result of the
estimates in this part is expected to be much higher than 2.73.

11-2- Interpretation of the Results at Learning and Growth Level
The research results in this part show a higher number than in other parts [3.23]. With regard to the questions asked of the students in this perspective, this result shows that the students have a good background for learning and growth. Most of the students inserted in this part relatively high responses in Lakert's scale and showed that they are well prepared for learning and growth. This result is very considerable and important and should particularly be taken into consideration.

12- Suggestions Based on the Research Results
Considering the four results of the research based on the four perspectives of Balanced Score Card Model, as well as the final result of total weight mean and analysis of the current status, the following points can be effective and helpful in improving the conditions and moving towards the pre-determined objectives:

- Further attention and planning to employ professors taking into account their religious and scientific roots.
- Directing the university's general atmosphere and internal space towards familiarity with the Quran.
- Trying to take the methods, thoughts and individuals out of the western intellectual paradigm and creating new models based on the Iranian-Islamic thought among the students and professors.
- Planning to criticize and challenge the translated sources which are mostly based on atheistic thoughts, and presenting alternative models for the translated sources.
- Challenging many of the common imitated methods in Higher Education, which are based more on positivism and experimentalism than on belief in Allah.
- Evaluating the university's employees and authorities continuously and precisely in terms of both quality and quantity.
- Monitoring and evaluating the university professors due to their effect on the students' intellectual and moral ideas.
- Heightening the active relation between the university and industry, and reforming many of the previous inefficient methods in this regard.
- Studying more precisely the why and how of promoting the students' Revolutionary and idealistic atmosphere with regard to their own views.
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