

Abstract

Introduction and Objective: Medical library and information science has an interdisciplinary nature that uses other medical, humanities and information technology related disciplines to train professional human resources needed for educational units, libraries, university and hospital information centers, and research centers. Medical library and information education in various levels follows the objective of training human resources for working in various medical libraries. This study aimed to investigate the competencies needed for the librarians of Iran's medical libraries and their correspondence with medical library and information science course syllabus.

Materials and Methods: This study is applied and conducted as a survey in 2014. Research population included all faculty members of medical library and information sciences, library managers, and librarians working in Iran's medical university libraries. The study sample included 240 individuals by stratified random sampling. Data was gathered by a researcher-made questionnaire. The validity was confirmed by professionals and the reliability was $\alpha = 0.97$. Data was analyzed by SPSS 22 using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation) and inferential ones (t-test and ANOVA) in $p < 0.05$.

Findings: Results showed that individual and ethical competencies and research ones are the most and the least important ones, respectively. From faculty members' views, information search competencies and those of medical subjects and topics, from library managers' views, managerial and research competencies, and from librarians' views, individual and ethical competencies and those of research were the most and the least important competencies, respectively. Among demographic variables, gender and career length were not significant. Age, educational discipline, and educational degree have some influence in some competencies needed for librarians. The results showed that the correspondence amount of competencies needed for librarians with the syllabus of medical library and information science in undergraduate level was 57% and that of MSc was 69%.

Conclusions: The syllabus of medical library and information course in undergraduate level in the case of research competencies and especially those of individual and ethical ones and in MSc level in the case of communication competencies and those of individual and ethical ones need to be revised.

Keywords: competency, medical library and information science, medical librarian, university curriculum syllabus, knowledge and skill, library managers, faculty members, Iran's medical universities.