Analysis of Enactment of English Language Curriculum Model of an Autonomous Pakistani University in Relation to Higher Educational Developments in Finland

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ABSTRACT

This paper explored Bolman and Deal's framework for understanding leadership and organizations for comparison with an English language curriculum model of an autonomous Pakistani public university's (SFU) to reveal the gaps and needs for possible development. This, in turn, is related to educational developments and insights from the higher education (HE) sector in Finland. It is found out that the Higher Education Commission (HEC) curriculum without any amendment and piloting is taught in autonomous Pakistani universities. The specific academic and situational needs of the staff and students are not taken into consideration for curriculum design in Pakistan. The evaluation of the courses is administered solely through the formative assessment. It is suggested that the critical feedback from the faculty and students is pivotal for the design and implementation of the curriculum in universities. It is perceived that Bolman and Deal framework is a good frame for developing the pedagogical features within universities in Pakistan, as it not only embraces the structural aspects of the curriculum but also identifies underlying political constraints, human resources and symbolic aspects.

Keywords: *Bolman and Deal framework, English language curriculum model, design and implementation of the curriculum*

Introduction

It is perceived that in university classrooms the faculty experience teaching problems while teaching the prescribed course developed by the nominated curriculum committee (Irfan, 2018). Reinforcing this issue, Siddiqui (2007, p.50) observes, '*the majority of the teachers believe that in the prescribed curriculum they cannot bring any change*'. It is a fact that Pakistani education system has substantial reliance on the prescribed textbooks (Irfan, 2018). Mahboob and Tilakaratna, 2012 also emphasize that transmission of the language policy goals take place through the medium of provincial and national curriculum. They believe that most of the teachers construct their own aims in the classroom to overcome the existing flaws in the curriculum. It is also viewed that the curriculum transcends the

students' comprehension and does not develop students' classroom participation and critical reflection (Siddiqui, 2007). Irfan (2018) highlights a significant aspect of the curriculum in autonomous Pakistani universities. The faculty in universities provide the reading material from the books and the journals written in English. The students' responses suggest that they have to grapple with the reading material to comprehend the thought and the writing of foreign authors. It is implied that foreign authors' varied socio-cultural perspectives, contexts and writing styles also confuse students. At the same time, it is construed that not only students but university faculty also undergo pedagogical dilemmas because of their deficient proficiency in English. The unsystematic selection of the course contents for their '*alliance with foreign*

traditions and western educational context' also perplex students (Irfan 2018, p.19). The research questions are:

1. What is the curriculum model of an autonomous Pakistani university?
2. How is the Bolman and Deal framework discussed beneficially in pedagogical development projects?

The authors have designed the following model of English language curriculum used in an autonomous Pakistani university (see Figure 1). The purpose is to emphasize the fact that the process of English language curriculum design does not include the needs and situation analysis of the university.
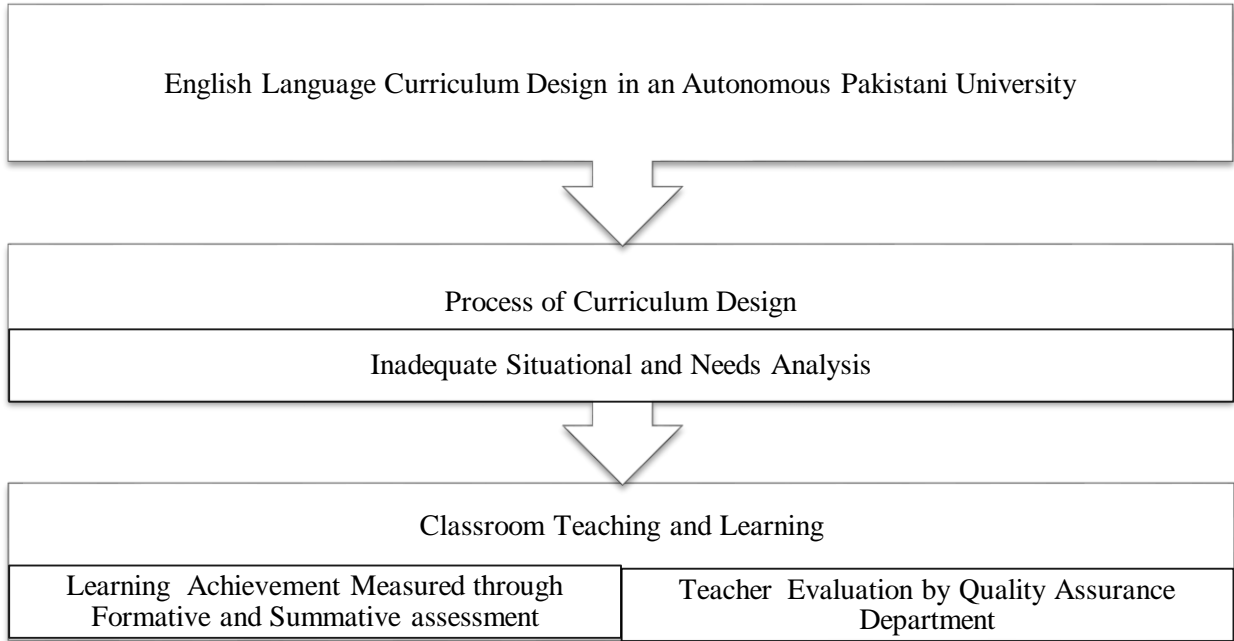
English Language Curriculum Design in an Autonomous Pakistani University

Process of Curriculum Design

Inadequate Situational and Needs Analysis

Classroom Teaching and Learning

| Learning Achievement Measured through Formative and Summative assessment | Teacher Evaluation by Quality Assurance Department |

Figure 1. Autonomous Pakistani university's English language curriculum model   (developed by the researchers)

Review of the literature on English Language Curriculum in Higher Education

The curriculum is a central component of pedagogy and learning at higher education (Banegas, 2019; Richards, 2011). It is inclusive of students and teachers' strategies, supporting materials and modes of assessment (Rodgers, 1989). Richards (2011, p.39) describes the following elements for constructing an effective curriculum.
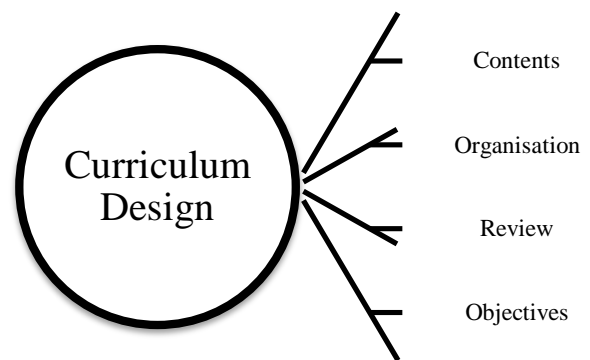
Curriculum Design

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Figure 2.   Aspects of curriculum design (Richards, 2011, p. 39)

It is believed that an insightful and the pragmatic curriculum process involves an analysis of students' learning needs and outcomes, contents of courses, teaching

resources, teaching and learning evaluation and physical environment of any university (Johnson, 1989, p.3). Various authors argue that curriculum development process has deep dependence on learners' academic needs (Berwick, 1989; Bocock & Watson, 1994). Therefore, it is proposed to collect the specific data about students' educational, ethnic, cultural and socio-linguistic backgrounds, learning aptitudes and expectations (Irfan, 2018). It is also important to carry out the situation analysis of environmental and academic features of the university in the context of the curriculum scheme for appraisal of their potential impact on students and teachers' evaluation (Clark, 1989; Todea & Demarcsek, 2017. The construction of an effective curriculum also includes academic rationalism that stresses upon the fact that courses should be specifically tailored for augmenting valuable characteristics of the learners such as, rationality, intellect, humanitarianism and dignity (Wegerif, 2002). The inclusion of socio-economic ideology in the curriculum is thought to be a meaningful justification for an economically developed and prosperous society (Baumfield, 1995). Many authors believe that the foremost goal of any curriculum is to develop critical thinking and self-awareness (Barette & Coate, 2005; Roberts, 1998, p.23). Baumfield and Devlin (2005, p.38) suggest that the thinking skills endorsed in the curriculum can develop '*students' higher order thinking, depth of knowledge, connectedness to the world and substantive conversation*'.

The cultural sensitivity is another crucial aspect of the curriculum. The books on literature promote specific ideological content, cultural norms and values (Burnett, 1998). Hornberger (1991) argued that it is very important to develop the cultural pluralism to form an integrated national society that is founded on the autonomy of various cultural groups. The incorporation of cultural pluralism in the curriculum supports the learners to participate in different cultures and rather than adhering to the culture of the dominating economic and social group (Blackmore & Kandiko, 2012). Lastly, the place of social reconstructionism in the curriculum lays emphasis on the role of schools and learners in addressing prevalent inequality and social injustices in universities (Apple, 1986; Freire, 1972). Thus, in an autonomous Pakistani university English language curriculum model does not encompass the various significant aspects such as, needs analysis, situational evaluation, academic rationalism, critical self-awareness, social reconstructionism and cultural pluralism. As a consequence, the learners experience dilemmas in universities with regards to English language acquisition. The authors discuss Bolman and Deal framework to explore the existing ambiguities in the curriculum design process and its subsequent enactment or application possibilities for curriculum development in Pakistani universities and especially for the university discussed in this research.

Bolman and Deal framework for understanding leadership and organizations

Bolman and Deal (1991) have developed four perspectives, or frames, for understanding organizations and leadership: structural, human resource, political, and

symbolic (see Figure 3). It is interpreted that the political framework of the model recognizes major political constituencies or power structures; the structural framework consists of problem solving tasks such as, process, design and analysis; human resource framework involves employees and the role of empowerment and finally; the symbolic framework comprises inspiration and visions and foremost values of an organization and its people.

The model is useful for looking at and investigating any kind of organizations. It gives a good base for analytical and development work. In this particular research, it is chosen as a model to look at the curriculum development in the specific context being an autonomous university in Pakistan. The model has been used among other things in educational teaching in the Finnish context. It has in that context been found useful when wanting to understand educational institutions and develop them. The model works well especially when wanting to make sure that the organization or a situation or an aspect (like curriculum design) is viewed or analyzed from multiple perspectives. This is why it is applied here. The model is illustrated below.
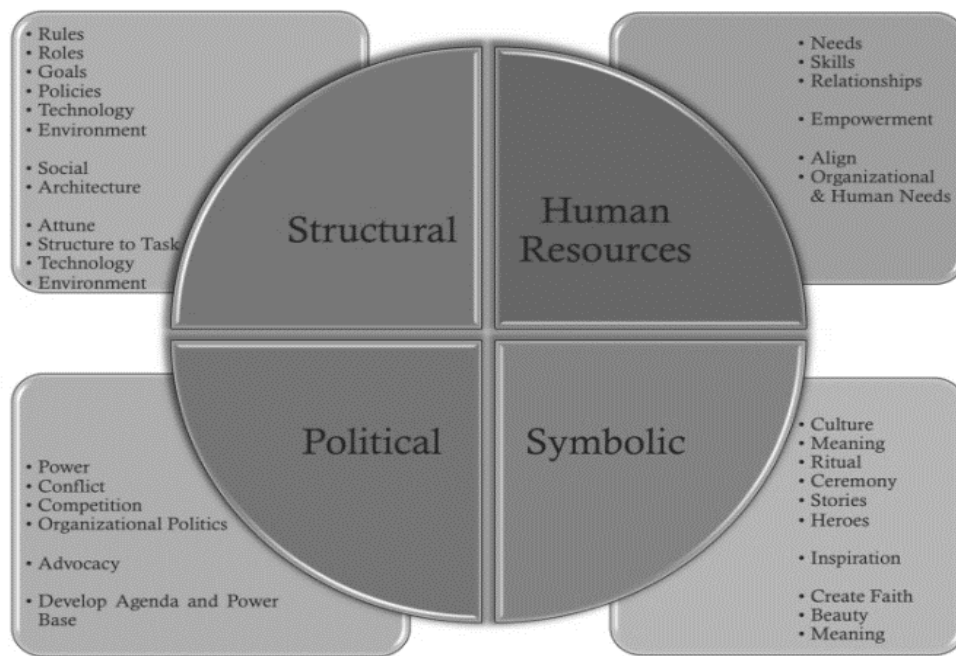

Figure 3. Illustration of Bolman and Deal's four frames (1991)

Perspectives from the Finnish Context

The Bolman and Deal model is here discussed in relation to Finnish Higher Education (HE) contexts, i.e. in relation to curriculum design, learning and educational (pedagogical) work at Arcada UAS as well as in relation to more general insights from the Finnish context and pedagogical teaching practice in general. Qualitatively good profession-oriented university

education is rooted in continuous professional development, and in interaction between society and working life (Wikstrom-Grotell & Tigerstedt, 2014). This means that learning is competence and context based, with a problem-solving focus relevant to society. Learning occurs on various arenas both inside and outside of the university. The pedagogical core is a student-centered dialogical approach to learning. The focus lies on tutoring, designed to support an active, flexible and individualized approach to studies, as well as the integration of research in education and the role of the teacher as a coach and facilitator becomes essential. (Arcada Pedagogical Policy, 2018; Hyde-Clarke & Wikström-Grotell, 2016; Silius-Ahonen, Tigerstedt, Wikstrom-Grotell, 2015).

Digitalization affects education. One strength at Arcada is based on personal contact and communication between students and teachers. To help this, an online learning platform was introduced at Arcada more than 15 years ago. The current platform is used for all courses to be of good support to online, blended and face to face teaching. Digitalization changes the students' possibility to acquire knowledge and information both inside and outside the university. Online studies and online supported blended learning are realized in all target-oriented and user-oriented educations. Arcada UAS applies the principle of BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) for students. Arcada's pedagogical ambition is to support the student's active and life-long learning experience by taking into account diversity, choice and flexibility in terms of time and space. Dialogue and

presence on social and cognitive arenas are prerequisites for learning (Arcada Pedagogical Policy, 2018; Wikstrom-Grotell & Tigerstedt, 2014).

Research Design

The researchers constructed a model for Pakistani universities that can be and is to some extent used in an autonomous Pakistani university (see Figure 1). It is observed that the process of curriculum design does not take into account the needs analysis and situation analysis of learners, teachers and resources (see Figure 1). The Bolman and Deal framework is discussed to find out the gaps in the English language curriculum of a Pakistani university (see Figure 3).

The current study is predominantly qualitative in nature as the researchers constructed interview questions around the above stated models. The questions were constructed about the curriculum design and execution, selection of curriculum committees, needs and situation analysis and Bolman and Deal framework. The questions were:

1. How is English language curriculum planned and designed in an autonomous Pakistani university?
2. What are the methods of the nomination of English language curriculum committees in an autonomous university?
3. What is the process of curriculum design in a university?
4. How is the curriculum implemented in a university?
5. How are the academic needs of the university staff and students considered?

6. Which techniques are adopted for carrying out the situation analysis of the various campuses?

The sample size comprised of 10 English language faculty members who were members of English language curriculum committees. The curriculum in an autonomous Pakistani university is designed and executed by the nominated curriculum committees. The committees are selected by the competent authority of the university. The researchers selected the English language curriculum as an example of curriculum for the analysis with a base in the Bolman and Deal framework and insights from the Finnish context. The rationale was to narrow down the focus of the study. The qualitative data were collected from a large scale autonomous public university having 9 campuses spread out across the province Punjab. The research sites were three campuses of this university located in Lahore. Keeping in view the English language curriculum, the participants were from the Department of the above stated Lahore campuses. 9 out of these participants had MPhil degrees and one had PhD TESOL degree from United Kingdom. The researchers collected the qualitative data for the study by means of recording 45 minutes interview of each participant. The interviews were carefully transcribed. The researchers in order to keep the confidentiality of data and for upholding appropriate research ethics, described the university with an acronym, that is, Sunflower University (SFU). The interviewees were given acronyms such as SFU1, SFU2 etc.

Findings
The findings explored participants' ideas about English language curriculum at higher education, justification for selection of university curriculum committees, process of curriculum development, educational requirements of university students, situational analysis of various campuses, planning and provision of teaching materials, appraisal of university teachers and learning outcomes of students.

Perceptions about English language curriculum design in an autonomous university
The participants expressed their views about designing and implementing curriculum in universities such as, '*English language curriculum should be designed and implemented in accordance with international criteria*' (SFU1) because the performance of students '*in higher education revolves around effectiveness of curriculum design*' (SFU2).

Nomination of English language curriculum committee
The participants reported the justification for the nomination of the curriculum committee with these phrases '*preference for PhD faculty*' (SFU5) and '*good personal relations with higher management*' (SFU4). It is worth mentioning that the '*qualification*' and '*personal relations*' are emphasized rather than recommending the faculty for their expertise and know-how about the principles and application of curriculum design in a university.

English language curriculum development process and implementation
It is perceived that '*English language curriculum in a university is implemented*

without piloting' (SFU9). The members of the curriculum committee instead of providing an explanation about the stages of the curriculum process, report that '*universities follow HEC curriculum guidelines*' (SFU1). It is interpreted that the universities need not carry out the piloting of the new courses because most probably they follow the Higher Education Commission (HEC) course outlines.

Needs and situation analysis of university students

SFU3 perceived that the academic needs of the students in universities are only '*knowledge about courses and acquiring a degree*'. SFU6 also reported that '*the pedagogical and learners' needs are considered irrelevant*'. SFU4 viewed that '*assessment results of students are the only source of data for evaluation of the program courses*' (SFU7). The undergraduate and postgraduate students in universities have socio-linguistic, cultural, educational and economic diversity. They are certainly in need of English language skills to cope with the academic problems in a university. It is also imperative to identify a gap between what students can do and what they should do. With regards to situational analysis, it is perceived from the participants' views that the only way of doing the situational analysis is through inclusion of '*faculty from different campuses of the university*' (SFU6) in committees. The committee members do not visit campuses to get reliable and authentic evidence about the fluctuating settings of the campuses located across Punjab because meetings are mostly arranged in Lahore Campuses.

Measurement of university students and faculty's learning outcomes

It is observed and perceived from the university teachers' views that the students' formative (continuous) and summative (End of Term Examination) '*assessments are the only means for evaluating outcomes of the various courses*' (SFU3). SFU7 reports, '*in universities, teachers' performance is evaluated by the Quality Enhancement Cells (QECs)*'. SFU2 expresses the view, '*QEC takes into account several aspects such as, students' performance (results), evaluation of taught courses, and participation of university faculty in professional development activities*'. **Perceptions about Bolman and Deal framework**

It is reinforced that participants of the curriculum committee comprised of the representatives from 3 Lahore campuses of the selected university (see section 3). They emphatically expressed their confidence in the use of Bolman and Deal Frame for autonomous universities in Pakistan. For instance, SFU10 believes, '*the use of Bolman and Deal framework for curriculum design can bring about tremendous success in the universities*'.

Discussion of Findings

It is perceived that the English language curriculum at an autonomous Pakistani university does not include needs analysis, situational analysis and intended learning outcomes of the students. It is observed that the curriculum is designed and implemented in such a way that it does not develop students' ability for academic rationalism, critical thinking and cultural pluralism (see 4.1). It is also noted that universities are supposed to follow the Higher Education

Commission (HEC) guidelines for curriculum design. Therefore, the course outlines are mostly copied from the HEC website without any amendment and are taught in classes without piloting and also do not carry out the review process (see 4.3). The only way of evaluating curriculum is through formative and summative assessment and teacher evaluation undertaken by the students. It is important that English language academic needs of students and the critical feedback acquired from student and teacher evaluation should be kept in view for design and implementation of English language curriculum in universities (see 4.4 & 4.5). In addition, the curriculum committees are nominated on the basis of personal relations with management (see 4.2). The committee members do not visit other campuses of the university located across Punjab to obtain authentic information about their varying conditions (see 4.4). Lastly, the participants believe that Bolman and Deal framework would be practically beneficial for the developments, curriculum design and implementation in the Pakistani universities (see 4.6). The researchers reflect that the Bolman and Deal framework (see Figure 3) when used for development purposes in a HE context can bring well-defined instructions, student and teacher roles, objectives, technology and guidelines. The ideas can be helpful to focus on excellence in pedagogy and learning of the contents since it encourages a holistic approach to developments in an organization. Pakistani curriculum design process deliberately escapes the rules about environment and social architecture. The curriculum should be in harmony with the physical environment where the students spend most of their time. The minds of the students blossom in a comfortable and relaxed learning environment. However, these facts are not believed to be considered for the construction of curriculum in all Pakistani universities. In relation to human resources, it is noted that an autonomous Pakistani university model (see Figure 1) is specifically deficient regarding the concept of empowerment. It is also exclusive of symbolic and political perspectives. The symbolic framework can be interpreted in relation to Pakistani cultural context, meaningful teaching and learning strategies and motivation. Regarding the political framework (power structures), parallel organizational politics, conflicts and competitions can be exposed. Relying on Bolman and Deal (1991), there can be a need for development of agenda to tackle the politics embedded in Pakistani higher education set up.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The paper reports the comparison between two models i.e. Bolman and Deal (1991, see Figure 3) and autonomous university curriculum model (see Figure 1) that is designed by the researchers. It is noted that an autonomous university model includes structural and human perspectives but is evidently deprived of the political and visionary viewpoints.

It is recommended to redesign and evaluate an autonomous university model in the light of Bolman and Deal's (1991) four frames and to continue benchmarking HE contexts where the frames are more visible and taken into account in general. It is also

required to gather information about learners' academic problems to design and implement curriculum in universities in accordance with their needs which are self-confidence, competence and self-determination for satisfactory performance in universities. The language proficiency course might aim at the development of four skills such as, listening, speaking, reading and writing to use English with confidence.

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