

## Developing Reactive Curriculum with respect to Covid-19 in Pakistan

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### Abstract

*This article evaluates the response to the Covid19 outbreak in the Pakistani curriculum. It also examines the design of a curriculum that discusses the specifics of the circumstances of students and reminds the students of global links. This report is focused on semi-structured interviews with 11 curriculum professionals, 21 administrators including 36 teachers, and subject matter review on the Pakistan National Curriculum 2018. The results demonstrate a deception among the participants about the predetermined top-down existence of the program that is ineffective in circumstances such as the Covid-19 disease outbreak. The program was seen as extremely restrictive, and alternate methods could not be found. In normal times and even less during a pandemic, the participants concluded that the program could not help children understand. This paper therefore proposes a full revision of the curriculum and the development of teacher skills. Also it proposes updating curricula so that they are context-specific, responsive to requirements of the learner and promote personal development.*

**Keywords:** Covid-19 outbreak, Pakistan National Curriculum, Students, Revision, Program

## **Introduction**

The world is currently seeking perspective, awareness and solutions to the various problems the education sector faces as a result of the Covid 19 pandemic (Gul & Khilji 2020). The needs of each nation and of a rapidly evolving labor market have a direct impact on the training environment and the possibility of providing a career-based experience and maximizing development for individuals (Hayes and Juárez 2012). As this world is rapidly changing, school curricula get outdated quickly and create a gap between communication and personal and practical circumstances (Ullah 2020). It is therefore important for education systems to update their curricula, adapt to shifts in the community and also to create an educational culture that releases every person's creative and intellectual energies and prepares them for a world in which the key to success and economic expansion are knowledge and multifaceted interactions.

The Covid-19 has adversely impacted the training of thousands of children in Pakistan (Gul 2020), a nation already has 11 million teenagers out of school as in many other developing nations (Rahman 2020). With this pandemic not appearing imminent in the end, private school started online education framework that will save careers for students. But public schools hesitated to embark upon such projects because of limited technology and resources. The Federal Ministry of Education and Professional Training has developed an educational tele college system using the national tv network to propagate educational curriculum for grades 1 to 12 for student learning outcomes (SLO). Nevertheless, the efficiency of this scheme as regards short-term learning and long-term achievement of students is becoming increasingly a concern for parents, teachers and educational actors. Though it overwhelms the complex or far difficulties of this delivery mechanism, curricula can still appear as a stone, stacked with in background, is unable react promptly, trying to take up or to adjust, or challenging the established order. The Education 2030 Program which is a major blind spot (Pinar 2020).

The Covid-19 pandemic highlights the vital need for the curriculum to be more sensitive and constructive, and to maybe even refocus time away from traditional school matters and to timely subjects, which traditional school topics will inform understanding (Pinar 2020). Higher educational institutions in Pakistan have introduced innovations in order to meet the generous

demand for curriculum reforms by enabling more flexibility in curriculum topics and delivery methods and also evaluations of personal and academic problems, and by giving students greater accountabilities. All of these advances seek to improve the curriculum of emerging social needs. However, the current curriculum set up in 2006 also calls for the attention of educational actors to innovate at the level of schools. Therefore, we seek to assess whether the current school curriculum reacts to rapidly evolving, unpredictable and sometimes disturbing events such as the Covid-19 outbreak. Additionally, we want to propose a proactive curriculum that discusses the specific circumstances of students and reminds them of their global connectivity.

### **Statement of Problem**

While Covid-19 has been discovered, we are constantly in search of these attributes in all areas of our nation's educational programs (Gul and Khilji 2020). It is a reality that nations and a century hence face diverse and competing needs that will challenge the structure of education and the development of students' job training (plus diverse and dynamic changes over the century) (Hayes and Juárez 2012). The creation of institutions and program that allow a school districts to adapt rapidly impairs their ability to provide good education, resulting in a vacuum that leaves those children who rely on them with little other opportunities to keep up with the times (Ullah 2020). So, then, we are arguing that we have to create education systems that take advantage of society's changing needs and unleashes creative and intellectual abilities and skills so that our students can be ready for the rapidly evolving world in which they can both hold a fundamental position of advantage and enable them to thrive economically.

### **Research Objectives**

To explore the ways how school curriculum deals with the Covid-19 pandemic in Pakistan

To discover the corrective actions possible to ensure that the curriculum currently available will respond to a critical condition mostly in context of the Covid-19 outbreak

### **Research Questions**

How did the school curriculum deal with the Covid-19 pandemic in Pakistan?

What corrective action is possible to ensure that the curriculum currently available will respond to a critical condition mostly in context of the Covid-19 outbreak?

### **Literature Review**

A responsive curricular responds to students' educational needs and parents and community needs by presenting content in a straightforward, understand way and ensuring students as well as parents have access to and evaluate it in a manner that they can comprehend (Moll 2004; Sarason 2009; Dhet 2012; Hayes and Juárez 2012). This implies that the content of the course represents the link between educational requirements of students and changing social circumstances. To accomplish this, material must enable flexibility of case tasks, including role-playing and interactive games, bringing concrete examples into teaching process. Boughey (2009) said a responsive curriculum will teach and instruct students to fulfill their own growth needs, to expand in forms that satisfy evolving needs and to make a corresponding contribution to society. Biggs (2003) notes that the effective use of the material requires two major steps (curricular). First, the degree of perception for students and ways to gain new information outside their own current (intellectual) understanding (emotional). The degree to which all these dimensions are covered reflects its reactivity.

The best way to optimize learning is by encouraging learners to consider, assess, criticize, and learn factual information at the same time (Biggs 2003). In this report, the researchers consider the optimization of learning as "engaging students actively involving education through certain skills, including reading and speaking" (p. 15). Curriculum responsivity facilitates the relationship between student and instructor, enhances student cognitive skills at a higher level and supports active learning through increased collaborative and independent student ability. The principal objective of this responsive curriculum is to build independent and autonomous learners (McKinney 2009; Phan and Deo 2007).

The design of a curriculum for distance learning program, since the need of distance learners is somewhat different from that of learners using other methods of research, is distinct from the design of internal or direct learning program.. The students, their needs for specific learning and medium by means of which study takes place must be the top priority for the curriculum

experts, according to Smaldino and Simonson (1999). "What is required to enhance results" should be the priority. "What is required to enhance results" should be the priority. This means that what is really happening "what is going on?," "what do students feel about e-learning?" and "what are the alternative ways?" Smaldino and Simonson stressed many other aspects that need to be taken into account during every distance study course. That include "the substance of the course, instructional methods and evaluation techniques." A well-designed sensitive resume has significance. In addition, tasks with strong instruction and evaluation methods are assisted.

### **Research Methodology**

This research is inherently qualitative. Qualitative analysis is done to determine the main causes, convictions, and motivations behind a phenomenon. This approach introduces the phenomena of science and creates hypotheses or theories for the potential work of quantitative analysis. Creswell (2009) figured out is that researchers with qualitative methods are immersed in circumstances and are critical data-gathering instruments, often guided by experience and opinions. In order to ensure the variety of institutional and geographical forms within the study, we used deliberate sampling. The requirements for involvement are that people should understand the curriculum or involve themselves in the process of curriculum creation and provide comprehensive information.

For this report, 10 professionals from the curriculum office with extensive job experience in the same sector and 20 school directors and 35 teachers with extensive educational practices in various district were included this study includes a number of students. The principal participated in teaching practices; their responses were also registered as teachers. To explore research issues, Pakistan has carried out a content review of the current National Curriculum Framework. Semi-structured interviews were then performed to provide a deeper analysis of student responsiveness throughout that pandemic and the corrective steps to make a program sufficient for emergencies.

### **Thematic Analysis of Interviews**

The thematic review of each interview with students, teachers and curriculum experts was performed. The participants of the study pointed out that, without investigating the regional contexts, the National Curriculum Framework is established central, although the provincial representatives were involved in the expansion process. This system therefore appears to be much less responsive for regions. In response to an SOP's following the COVID- 19 pandemic, interview data were obtained by telephone using a single survey questionnaire. The data were analyzed with themes (Braun and Clarke 2006).

### **Clear objectives, aims of the curriculum**

Most participants in this study accepted the purposes, goals and objective of content of the curricula was not very clear. They recommended that curriculum should be adaptive and comprises of obvious objective and that it should be straightforward in developing it (i.e. providing the purpose of the learning material and the course outcomes). In addition, these results should be organized and structured. This was referred to by one of the curriculum experts.

“The program provides guidance on the material and the implications of a course. The objective of the curriculum should also be open to business and country needs. This enhances the level of learning”.

### **Curriculum Comprehensiveness**

During Covid-19's emergency situation, the participants were disappointed by the curriculum inclusivity. They said the curriculum was not inclusive. Inclusion includes detailed curriculum guidance for results and addresses practical challenges. Inclusion should refer towards other contexts and should be linked to other real-world disciplines. Some teachers and school directors said they thought that the material was out of date and did not help students in this situation of emergency. One said, "Students are not sufficiently supported, because there was little intellectual development last year in daily face-to-face school practice and Interventions are omitted for students with disabilities or slow learners." This point was accepted by teachers and school directors alike. School leaders and teachers commonly criticized the context and reality of the children in the program.

### **Curriculum responsiveness according to the need of parents, students and teachers**

The curriculum should address the learning needs of students by educating them in ways that they are open to and assessment of (Moll 2004; Sarason 2009; DHET 2012; Hayes and Juárez 2012).

A participant said that a program did not react to Covid 19. She mentioned that, "A sensitive curriculum make sure that the subject matter addresses the needs and practices of pupils who study online at home. But existing curriculum cannot answer to the needs of students or teachers' pedagogical needs". Some participants said the curriculum was partly responsive: "The curriculum somehow reacts so it needs to change." They also claimed that the benchmark must be established to prepare kids to "study anywhere, in case of emergency."

### **Curriculum reactivity to local and international needs**

The school leaders believed that the new program has many shortcomings in terms of addressing local and global needs simultaneously. However, local teachers appointed at village, tehsil and district level will be able to deal with this situation. Teachers at the local level are in touch with parents and members of the community. You should schedule lessons and homework to correct the interruption of studies. A participant said, "A local teacher has an important role to play. It will sequentially support students, teaching them the geography, history, culture, flora and fauna of the surrounding areas. This will maintain a clear learning sense." The teachers of the school area, who are very much in touch with children and their parents, are an expression of the culture of Baluchistan. This encourages them during school time to communicate with children.

### **Curriculum intellectual and emotional motivation**

The teachers claimed that the content of the curriculum is intellectually and emotionally stimulating to some level in the teaching of the conventional classroom; for example, a second chapter should not be discussed without teaching the first chapter. One professor said, "The framework of the curriculum helps us involve students in the curriculum and it is emotionally and mentally stimulating because we constantly think about ways to further enhance and keep

our students involved." This sequence will however challenge the ability of students to learn independently.

### **Distance learning curriculum support**

An overwhelming majority of the people (I.e. teacher and educational directors) felt that home-based and internet-based learning is an alternative for students to keep their skills up to date. As you'll see, both of these modalities have significant limitations. Some participants, for example, said they have had electricity for the past two months in their districts. Others referred to the inadequate electricity supply in some areas. These are enormous obstacles to effective online/e-learning.

Besides usability concerns, some participant stressed that online / e-learning is not possible unless students are able to react individually to the online lecture, screen sharing and tasks. Learners inside the lesser extent (i.e., primary level) cannot take part in online learning without the mentoring of an instructor. The provincial department of education has launched a home-based concept, named 'My home is my school,' which encourages parents to ensure that their children's home education continues. One participant in response to this initiative said: "Home-based schooling is difficult because it is never as structured as schools in time and space. The usual structured way of a school would change greatly from formal education to home education. The organization of the programming materials requires enormous efforts, which in the absence of a structural solution will be exceedingly difficult to ensure".

### **Curriculum support in emergency situation**

They argued that the curriculum was not prepared for emergencies such as the Covid 19 pandemic, particularly in respect of primary grades. "The curriculum must be redesigned to respond to these incidents," one of instructors said. In addition to Covid-19, we can face more natural disasters, including food, earthquakes and wars, which can cause school closures."

There may be some covert or in explanatory instructions for such events, but the program itself is largely silent. Participants stressed that Covid-19 pandemic was indeed a case study for schools for developing a digital learning curriculum. In the event that schools are temporarily



closed, teachers can also reconsider or redefine the role of their instructor in identifying alternative teaching methods and to facilitate students. One of them believed that,

“Our program is not prepared to deal with such events because we have a pre-determined curriculum and based on results. It is severely regulated by the authorities. If it were slightly flexible, the curriculum would have been responding. The curriculum should be redeveloped so that critical and rational souls are created”.

### **Conclusion**

In the Karachi area of Sindh we carried out this report. The largest and most populous province in Pakistan is Karachi in the area. Moreover, it's the country's poorest province. There has been strife over Pakistan's curriculum issues over the last years between central authorities and provinces. In these cases, school closures because of the Covid 19 pandemic. But we concentrated on how sensitive a Pakistani curriculum is to the situations Covid-19 pandemic, regardless of if the curriculum is developed at nationwide or regional level.

Teachers showed a lack of confidence in the education system. According to the participants, Pakistani teachers should be more than specialist information distributors. The lack of self-respect for teachers has also been emphasized. A professor is an individual who gives a program. Teachers owe the program life. Their identity as a teacher in society, however, was not known. Identity is the main aspect of human life (Bracher 2006). The participants therefore proposed a restructuring of the entire curriculum to respond to emergencies such as the Covid-19 pandemic. In contrast to the demand of curricular theoreticians for more teaching capacity, we shed light on the challenges teachers' lack of autonomy in the education system as well as on its central theme whether or course that consisted of strictly of material packaged objectives, sets of course work, and series of lectures would be more effective This principle supports curriculum building components which are able to simultaneously handle both the student and the school learning background.

We conclude that this study offers a basis to evolve and improve the current school curriculum by sharing the views of curriculum expert, teacher and principal who faced the basic reality of both positive and negative aspect of the present syllabus. The results also propose way to create

a responsive curriculum that can meet the needs of students and community in emergencies. "When curriculum activities for particular contexts are required, a curriculum is often developed and rebuilt to satisfy changes," Schubert (1986) pointed out. "We still build, rebuild curricula to suit evolving requirements because curriculum activities are appropriate for certain contexts." Also, Peters (2000), emphasizes the long-term, compatible and adaptable curriculum for emerging needs.

### **Recommendations**

A special curriculum for emergencies should be available. The same can only be used in emergencies as a specialty curriculum. Alternatively, an emergency program may be considered to help students learn during these conditions as part of their daily curriculum. It is best to equip students to think critically and analytically in order to adapt to these situations. This enables students to cope with such problems as future people. Specifically, precautionary steps to prevent pandemics, such as Covid-19 should be included in a different field of health and hygiene.

Schools should remain open; a simplified curriculum or curriculum map will compensate for any reduction of learning time to define and teach the most important topics/descriptions, skills and conduct. The learning and teaching curriculums must include more material about learning and studying on your own, especially in the elementary and middle grades, as well as in the social sciences. This recommendation has to include creating a natural and human-made disaster specialist teacher guide is supported by research as part of the professional learning of teachers.

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