

**CHALLENGING AND PERSPECTIVE - CURRICULUM DESIGN  
AT THE AKAKI TSERETELI STATE UNIVERSITY  
(GEORGIAN CASE)**

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**ABSTRACT**

The development of the curriculum in education had been starting from 1902 to 2010. The study showed that the vector of curriculum development was going to from experience and teaching process to learning and more based on learning outcomes and skills that the student should acquire. In our research, we worked on the learning outcomes because learning outcome has become a major aspect of the curriculum development. If in the past curriculum was mainly based on the courses, subject, the goals and the content, today we observe that the learning outcomes are based on what students should know to gain the qualification. Learning outcomes reflect what knowledge and competencies our graduate may have on this very competitive market. In this study, we found information about Georgia Educational System. For example;

1. Georgia joined Bologna process;
2. The new law of Georgia on Higher Education created a legal basis for reforms:
  - Admission, National entrance examinations;
  - Authorization and accreditation procedures;
  - Introduction of ECTS credit system;
  - Introducing QA service

In our research, we decided to do research on how learning outcomes oriented curriculum is established at ATSU. For this research, we did that;

1. Analyze how and when the learning-oriented curriculum turned out to be desired (study of the definitions of Curriculum during the last century);
2. Show the similarities and differences among different countries in terms of the learning outcomes of MA program in leadership and management in higher Education ( comparative study);
3. Study what are the problems and perspectives for ATSU to implement LO-based curricula (quantitative study, online questioner)

## INTRODUCTION

This paper examines the effectiveness of learning outcomes (Learning outcomes are direct statements that describe the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that learners are expected to certainly, demonstrate in successfully completing a program.) in the ATSU. Learning outcomes plays very important role in education. We searched the similarities and differences among different countries in terms of the learning outcomes of MA program in leadership and management in higher Education. We prepared the different survey (Among them 9 students, 6 academic staff, 2 program managers, 5 quality assurance people) to study what are the problems and perspectives for ATSU to implement LO-based curricula.

- **LEARNING OUTCOMES AND ITS ROLE IN CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT**

Definition of curriculum had kind of evolution throughout the century starting from 1902 finishing 2010. The study emphases and vector goes to from experience and teaching process to learning and more based on learning outcomes and skills that the student should acquire. Accordingly, the research illustrates that;

There are several points we agree with the Pacheco, but there are seven types of the curriculum for which international for everybody. But hidden curriculum can change from institution to institution, from country to country, from faculty to faculty according to the social and cultural factors.

Also, the research show that well planning and well designing of the curriculum depends on several processes that should be considered which are planning, implementing planning, designing implementing and evaluating. Moreover, this process implies several processes within itself. In addition, this study came to the conclusion that the learning outcomes have lots of important factors we have to focus as discussing curriculum and curriculum development. It shows the processes in Georgia which are emerged or started using it since Georgia has become part of the Bologna process in 2005. Also, the research illustrates that transforming all existing curricula into new learning outcomes based on a curriculum which was somehow a formal process. Moreover, the study emphasizes some kind of theoretical background under it such as Bloom's taxonomy, with Bloom's verbs on different three basic learning domains, cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domain. Also, it's relationship of learning outcomes to the assessment, teaching methods and content. Lastly, this study illustrates that learning outcomes as well as all curriculum should not be

done by one person. It should be done by group of people which implies stakeholders, namely student, staff, and employee.

- **COMPERATIVE STUDY- HOW LEARNING OUTCOMES ARE PRESENTED IN THE MA PROGRAM PROGRAMS FOR HIGER EDUCATION IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES (ENGLAND, GERMANY, CZECH, and ESTONIA)**

Countries	Similarities			Differences		
	Curriculum and Learning Outcomes	Teaching Methods	Employability	Curriculum and Learning Outcomes	Teaching Methods	Employability
<b>United Kingdom, Czech Republic, Germany, Estonia, Georgia</b>	<p>“Evidence from the 5 country reviews shows that, during the past 5 to 10 years, all European countries have implemented some kind of reform of the curriculum in IVET.” (Cedefop, 2012)</p>	<p>Classes take the form of lectures, seminars, practical exercises, work placements and presentation, group working and discussion.</p>	<p>Significantly depend on the country’s economic situation.</p>	<p><b>In the UK,</b> “Institutions have the autonomy to design and develop their own programs of study. <b>In the Germany,</b> “the structure and contents of the courses of studies are specified in module descriptions,</p>	<p>Higher education institutions have free choice of teaching aids and technological equipment in accordance with their budget capacity.</p>	<p>Job opportunities are changes according to the country’s economic situation.</p>

- **CURRICULUM DESIGN AT THE AKAKI TSERETELI STATE UNIVERSITY – PROBLEMS AND RECOMENDATIONS**

To finish our diploma master thesis we decided to do research on how learning outcomes oriented curriculum is established at ATSU.

For this purpose quantitative as well as qualitative study has been done. We designed the questioners to investigate the state of arts among students, academic staff, program managers, and quality assurance peoples. (See the questioners in an annex) in the research 22 respondents took place. (Among them 9 students, 6 academic staff, 2 program managers, 5 quality assurance people) according to the results we may say that the students, as well as academic staff, and quality people are aware what learning outcomes are and what is correlation between learning outcomes, teaching methodology, assessment system and content.

**While analyzing the student's survey** we believe that the study is not very reliable as very few students responded. This maybe be caused because two major reasons. The first is knowledge of English among student population. The second reason maybe the student's unwillingness to participate in this type of study. Though, we are happy to receive some valuable opinions for our study. On the very first question what their opinion about learning outcomes where we may conclude that some them pointed out that learning outcomes are student results others believed that it is teachers results and many of them thought that it is something which deals with learning experience and continues study we thing that many of them just copied the definitions of learning outcomes as they are very academically written. The second question about measurable learning outcomes of their own programs, nearly 89 percent of the students mentioned that they are measurable just 11 present mentioned that the outcomes were not measurable but this may mean that the teachers do not well explain the correlations between learning outcomes and assessment system. Actually the same was with the third question in the questioner which was intended to reveal the students idea how they see the compliance between assessment system and the learning outcomes. The same percentage of the student population thinks that learning outcome and teaching methodology are not incompliance with each other. As for the employability still majority of the student 77.8 % think that the programs support employability. While identifying what are the major problems for getting quality education the student number following programs appropriate environment for research, teaching methodology lack of the practice, Teacher qualifications and students laziness. And the last question asked the students if they took part in the design of the

program or not. The answer was 100 % no. Actually we find this as a major problem while designing curriculum at ATSU. If the students do not take part in curriculum design, they will always be unhappy with curriculum. They will be 2 major problems while they say they do not take part in those processes. First they do not know what participating in curriculum design means (questions, giving feedback to teachers, and so one) and the second one, these are the students who really did not participate in the questioner design by program manager and quality people.

**As for teachers questioners** we observe that 83 % of the staff the learning outcomes are measurable. If compare this figure the students answer, we will see that the student percent who think positively issue higher than the teachers response. As for the questions what problems are people facing awhile designing learning outcomes? They mention problems two type external and internal. External problems mainly connected with ministry regulations and employers who do not mostly have adequate relationships with program staff. And internal problems are the problems connected with communication between the university treaty and staff. At the same time it is the relationship between syllabus outcomes and leaning outcomes of the program. And achievability of the programs learning outcomes within time and available resources is questionable. The next question covered issue what should be done first, learning outcomes or courses. The answers were 50 to 50. When it comes to links between learning outcomes, assessment system and teaching methodology. All the teachers demonstrated of willingness, redness, and knowledge establishing links between these issues. While talking about how marked-oriented the curriculum is going to be we observe that the diversity between answers 60 percentage of the staff think that the curriculum is market-oriented. 20 percentages says that they did not take in the concretions market requirement. And 20 percent says sometimes which may be explained in two ways. First they do not know all the requirement market concerning their curricula or they do not take into account all requirements. Gladly we found out that all the professors think that the curriculum should be done in a team work. While giving them the choice in the next question what needs do you have to prepare better curriculum? They chose several options.

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|---------------------------------------------------|------|
| ➤ Skills to write curriculum better               | 33 % |
| ➤ Better coordination with potential stakeholders | 83 % |
| ➤ Better team                                     | 33 % |
| ➤ Better technical equipment                      | 50 % |
| ➤ Better academic staff                           | 67 % |
| ➤ Better student                                  | 0 %  |
| ➤ Better administration                           | 33 % |

Which correspondingly means that the major problem is relationship with potential stakeholders, and some recommendation would go in that direction to establish better links and to master the language while talking to potential employers, skills to write curriculum better and better team and better administration in on the same level. Staff definitely needs more training in team work and skills to design curriculum well. Better technical equipment was considered also much needed (50%) while talking about the issues to improve. Surprisingly no professor responded that they needed better students, which is very promising as if the teachers believe that the learning outcomes of the program may be achieved with any student who enters programs and course would be nice. As for the third questionnaire we can't talk about the validity of this study as just two program coordinators filled in the questionnaire, but still it gives us some kind of idea. What was the reason that not many people filled in the questionnaire? There is one obvious reason. Probably the reason is that program coordinators aren't very good at English and that was our fault to make the questionnaire just in English. To start with the first questionnaire is what kind of problems you are facing while designing the learning outcome. Actually the major problems covered the skills for the team, better academic staff and actually some of the program coordinators mentioned that there was a problem with social standards, manual and the leader's confusion, the staff and the students. Probably we have to consider here that the program coordinator who answered question somehow meant that there is no coordinator between the leader and between the staff members. As for the question what should be done first learning outcomes or the courses, 100% think that the learning outcomes should be done first. As for the question really concerning where should there be harmonized attitude between learning outcomes, assessment system and teaching methodology we have to say that some of the program coordinators answered that obviously anticipated learning outcomes and correctly selected methodology would be really a nice one but actually the problem here was estimation should help the lecturers and the students modification learning process and achieving main goals. Actually what the program coordinators meant here there should be some kind of correspondence between the student's feedback and the future continuation of the program. Are the learning outcomes in compliance with teaching methodology and assessment system? Actually the answer refers to the point that formally everything is there in order but the problem is real compliance of learning outcomes and methodology and assessment system. Actually the learning outcomes should be more measurable to make sure that the learning outcomes and assessment system are in compliance. Fifty to fifty people talk about who should design the curriculum, should it be designed by the team or one or two people and we observe that one

program coordinator said that it should be designed by the program coordinator and just designed by the team.

When we asked **the program coordinators** what need they had to prepare better curriculum approximately 100% answered that skills to write curriculum better, better coordination and better team also better academic staff. This was somehow differentiated and better technical equipment just one program coordinator mentioned that and there was zero percent for better student and better administration and we may say that this corresponds and somehow comes in compliance with the program staff who says that better students are not needed whoever comes the program should be somehow designed in the way to do the learning outcomes. Who should be the responsible? Here the ideas are different, just one thinks that it should be the program leader and the second one thinks that it should be the program team.

And the fourth questionnaire was about **QA people** and we asked them nearly the same questions and at the university we have nine faculties actually five QA heads responded which we think is quite valid. And the first question was if the learning outcomes in the programs are measurable. 60 % think that they are measurable, 40% think that they aren't. If the learning outcomes are in compliance with assessment system the same percentage 60% think that they are in compliance and 40% think that they aren't. As for the teaching methodology and learning outcomes here we have the situation like vice versa, 40% think that they are in compliance and 60% think that they aren't in compliance with each other. The next very vulnerable question for us what are the difficulties that the QA people are facing while they are checking the curricula. Actually some of this people are program leaders; some of these people are program staff. They cover several issues. The first one is the staff mean difficulties, the staff doesn't have enough skills to design a good curriculum somehow and also the second point is employment so employability and the connection is still difficulty. The second one is resistance to innovations from the part of the teachers. This is also very difficult to solve but actually we may say that somehow we are stepping forward. Also developing learning outcomes or people who are participating in this should have the acknowledgement that the curriculum is one unit and it shouldn't be separated. What should be done first the learning outcomes or the courses? Majority 80% of the interviewed people said that the learning outcomes should be done first and just 20% percent responded that it should be done by some other people. As for the question who should be responsible majority, 60% think that program leader should be responsible and it has its explanation actually that the group is never responsible for anything. It's much better for people to be accountable for something. If there are any problems

on legislative level at ATSU the vast majority everybody responded there is no legal obstacle for the curriculum development. And as for the main difficulties with the program managers while designing the learning outcomes again the same problems are covered this is staff level, employment, resistance and some kind of coordination. When we asked them how much learning outcomes are linked to employability they answered a lot approximately 80% of the respondents think that they are much linked and 20% think that they aren't linked a lot. But actually zero answered that everybody knows more or less things are interlinked. And when we asked them what should be done to make learning outcome more problem oriented actually and more valid they suggested that learning process management should be done in a better way. We have to have collaboration with labor market, program managers need some additional skills and they need some training to make the learning outcomes measurable. And the very last question was about the continuity of sustaining quality assurance of the programs and the thing that more training are needed and the program managers should think a bit more about that. And they should actively work with the market. And market oriented learning outcomes and participating discussions, trainings with the students and the employers.

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, this research shows that;

- ✘ More training for the staff in skills for better writing curriculum;
- ✘ Training in team work;
- ✘ Designing better links with stakeholders;
- ✘ Student's involvement in curriculum design;
- ✘ Improving foreign language competence among staff and the students;
- ✘ Designing measurable learning outcomes;
- ✘ Designing corresponding rubrics to measure the corresponding outcomes.
- ✘ To make the Program Learning Outcomes more market oriented
- ✘ Learning outcomes can be harmonies with Teaching methodology and Assessment System
- ✘ Learning Outcomes can be compliance with Program Learning Outcomes
- ✘ Learning Outcomes of the program market-oriented can be support employability