International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

Volume 15 | Number 1 Article 6

May 2021

High Impact Learning for Facilitator Training and Development

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Recommended Citation
Gauthier, Launa and Waqar, Yasira (2021) "High Impact Learning for Facilitator Training and Development," *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*: Vol. 15: No. 1, Article 6.
Available at: https://doi.org/10.20429/ijsotl.2021.150106

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Abstract

Research shows that cascade training models are common approaches to improving teaching in many developing countries. Cascade models are popular for reaching large cohorts of teachers in a short time and often at a low cost. However, they have been criticized because training efforts can get diluted and transmission modes of instruction tend to prevail across all tiers of the cascade. In this essay, we discuss the development and implementation of the Facilitator Training Program (FTP) at a university in Pakistan. The FTP supports high impact learning for new facilitators to develop pedagogical knowledge and instructional and facilitation skills needed to sustain an experiential faculty development program. We define high impact learning as experiential, reflective, emphasizing feedback, and involving learning with and from others. We believe the FTP design can be useful for facilitator training in other institutions outside of Pakistan where cascade training models may also be prevalent.

Keywords

Facilitator training program, high impact learning, faculty development

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High Impact Learning for Facilitator Training and Development

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Received: 24 March 2021; Accepted: 2 April 2021

Research shows that cascade training models are common approaches to improving teaching in many developing countries. Cascade models are popular for reaching large cohorts of teachers in a short time and often at a low cost. However, they have been criticized because training efforts can get diluted and transmission modes of instruction tend to prevail across all tiers of the cascade. In this essay, we discuss the development and implementation of the Facilitator Training Program (FTP) at a university in Pakistan. The FTP supports high impact learning for new facilitators to develop pedagogical knowledge and instructional and facilitation skills needed to sustain an experiential faculty development program. We define high impact learning as experiential, reflective, emphasizing feedback, and involving learning with and from others. We believe the FTP design can be useful for facilitator training in other institutions outside of Pakistan where cascade training models may also be prevalent.

INTRODUCTION

Interest in faculty development programs intended to improve teaching in higher education has increased in developing countries over the last decade. Many institutions intend to support teaching that is informed by how students *learn* and to lessen the prevalence of transmission modes of instruction (Fink, 2013; Smith & Hudson, 2019). The more effective programs worldwide notably foster reflection, conceptual and skill development, feedback on practice and are peer-driven processes (e.g., Bell, 2001; Guskey, 2002). Research also shows that regular dialogue with small groups of trusted peers is essential to teachers' growth and development – and also a signal that change rarely happens when faculty work in isolation (Roblin & Margalef, 2013; Olsson & Roxå, 2012). Thus, faculty participation in inquiry communities (Roblin & Margalef, 2013), faculty learning communities (Onodipe et.al, 2020) and communities of practice (Enfield & Stasz, 2012; Hoyte et.al, 2010; Warhurs, 2006) have become popular approaches to fostering lasting changes to practice that lead to the enhancement of student learning.

Implementing engaging, reflective and peer-driven faculty development initiatives in developing countries that face the triple challenge of quality, scalability, and sustainability can be challenging. Fink (2013) noted that the growth of faculty development has been irregular in developing areas in Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and most of southern and eastern Europe. Fink categorizes initiatives in these regions as "Level 1" (on a scale of 1-4), indicating the percentage and quality of faculty development activity was very low. For example, professional development in some Pakistani universities has been deemed ineffective in helping teachers to develop instructional skills that foster students' 21st century skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, communication and collaboration (Khan, Jumani, & Gul, 2019). Issues with access to effective training add to this problem. There are noted biases in the selection process for training programs at some institutions, especially in cases where administrators make decisions about who participates in training programs offered by external experts. Top teachers are often selected to participate while faculty who may need training opportunities more, to develop foundational instructional skills, are deprived of these experiences (Dar et al., 2016). Realistically, the reach of high-quality evidence-informed practices is low and the transmission modes of instruction that promote rote learning continue to prevail in these regions.

In this essay we discuss the development and implementation of the peer-driven Facilitator Training Program (FTP) at Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS) in Pakistan in 2019. As an institution that is relatively new to the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL), our priorities are to enhance faculty and student learning and also to support scholarly growth amongst our faculty. We do this through programs, new teaching and learning policies, dialogue, reward and recognition, partnerships with students, and research for the purpose of developing the best learning experiences for students. Thus, the FTP is one core initiative that is central to the sustainability of a broader faculty development program. The FTP supports high impact learning for new facilitators over time; it is intended to help them to develop substantial pedagogical knowledge and instructional and facilitation skills to support other instructors in improving their teaching. High impact learning in the FTP is experiential, reflective, involves giving and receiving feedback, and learning with and from others. We discuss these principles in relation to evidence from both SoTL and education literature while drawing on examples from the FTP to demonstrate how we put them into practice at LUMS. Given our beliefs about the quality and impact of extended, intentional and person-centered approaches to facilitation, we grew increasingly aware that our approach to fostering high impact learning may have wide application to institutions outside of Pakistan where short-term, technical approaches to facilitator training may also be prevalent.

A Note about Terminology

In this essay we use the term *training* to describe facilitator development in the FTP. Training is commonly used in Pakistan and South Asia to define instructional skills development across many educational contexts, including higher education. Although we agree that terms such as *education or development* may signal deeper levels of learning and engagement (Hogan, 2002; Thomas, 2004), we use the terms training because of their applicability in our region.

NEW INSTITUTIONAL DIRECTIONS FOR FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

LUMS is a not-for-profit university in Pakistan serving over 5000 students across its five Schools including Business, Science and Engineering, Humanities and Social Sciences, Law, and Education. Recently, under the direction of the new Vice Chancellor, the University has moved towards rebalancing research and teaching as equally important scholarly pursuits. The LUMS Learning Institute (LLI) was established in the Fall of 2019 to lead the institutional efforts of developing supports and services for teaching and learning across campus. Inspired by successful teaching and learning centers from around the world, the LLI supports and champions teaching and learning excellence through a range of activities and engages students, faculty, staff, and the five Schools in conversations about SoTL.

The Instructional Skills Workshop (ISW)

The Instructional Skills Workshop (ISW) was selected in 2019 to be piloted as a first step in the provision of resources supporting faculty development at LUMS. It is an experiential instructional skills development program originally established in Canada almost 40 years ago. The ISW has an excellent track record of training new and experienced teachers in more than 100 institutions in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and Central America, Europe, the Middle East, North America, Russia and South America (ISW Network, 2020).

The ISW is a 24-hour intensive workshop offered within a small group setting. The Workshop is modeled on experiential learning theories (e.g., Kolb, 1984) and participants are encouraged to actively reflect on their teaching practice while experimenting with new teaching techniques (Day, Kerr, & Pattison, 2006). Participants design and conduct three short lessons over three days using a predetermined lesson structure. They work in groups with 4-5 peers and receive verbal, written and video feedback from peers who act as learners in each other's lessons. Each group is assigned one facilitator who guides the entire feedback process. One impact study showed that having three opportunities to teach and receive peer and facilitator feedback can transform participants' teaching during the ISW (Macpherson, 2011). Other studies reported that faculty used more engaging, active learning techniques in their classes after the ISW than they had used prior to training (Dawson et al., 2014) and had taken more student focused approaches to instructional planning and lesson design (Dawson et al., 2014; Rodrigues et al., 2019).

The ISW is a part of a tiered instructional development program, and its sustainability relies on the on the Facilitator Development Workshop (FDW) to produce a second tier of skilled facilitators. The FDW is facilitated by individuals who have completed the Trainer Development Workshop, a prerequisite of which is both the ISW and the FDW (ISW Network, 2020). The FDW is typically delivered over 5-6 days and is offered in a similar experiential manner as the ISW with its focus on teaching short lessons, facilitating group development, and ongoing peer feedback exchanges. However, the FDW aims to help participants to develop and refine facilitation, instruction, and organizational skills to lead the ISW.

Facilitation and Training in a Broader Context

The relative ineffectiveness of faculty development initiatives to have a significant impact on improving teaching quality in developing countries could be attributed to the prevalence of short-term, cascade training models. Cascade models involve training that is conducted at several tiers. Typically, experts train another tier of facilitators who subsequently train teachers at a local level. These models are commonly used to train large numbers of instructors, often at a low cost (Bett, 2016; Hayes, 2000). Cascade models can also have some effect on building teachers' instructional capacities which helps to explain their popularity in developing countries with large populations (Hayes, 2000; Mwirotsi et al., 1997; Perry & Bevins, 2019).

Despite their potential for scale, short-term cascade training models can fall short in how they are implemented, diminishing their impact on the teachers they are meant to serve (Hayes, 2000). One issue is that the models often rely on experts who are often disconnected from local contexts to train local facilitators. The assumption is that in a short time, new local facilitators will be equipped to train other teachers and programs will then be sustained at institutional levels. Another disadvantage to this model is a technical approach to training facilitators. Technical approaches to facilitation are predominantly skills-based and formulaic (Thomas, 2004) and can reinforce rote memorization of pedagogical content and superficial learning of instructional skills through "implicit modeling of facilitation skills and knowledge" (Perry & Bevins, 2019, p. 7). Thus, there is a risk that in a short time, facilitators may not be able to develop facilitation expertise or even misinterpret pedagogical content (Hayes, 2000).

When skills and content are merely transmitted at all tiers of the cascade, there is a high likelihood that a series of rote practices, that may or may not be applicable in local contexts, are passed along to classroom teachers. As Hayes (2000) so accurately remarked, "the cascade is more often reduced to a trickle by the time it reaches the classroom teacher, on whom the success of curricular change depends" (p. 135). Realistically, these short-term approaches are limited in their ability to support local facilitators in developing deeper pedagogical knowledge and refined skills needed to facilitate others to develop their instructional skills (Bett, 2016).

SoTL research about the role of international facilitators in non-western faculty development contexts points to the need for facilitator sensitivity to local teaching cultures and instructional practices (Allen, 2014; Hayes, 2000; Rodrigues et al., 2019; Tudor, 2011). For example, Allen (2014, p. 17) found that in a Southeast Asian university, faculty development participants reported a "lack of contextualization to the given context and learning styles in Southeast Asia" especially around the expectation to adopt particular assessment practices they were learning about during training. In Pakistan, faculty expressed uncertainties about how to replicate pedagogical techniques they learned from facilitators in their own classroom contexts (Rodrigues et al.,2019). Thus, faculty need opportunities to openly discuss the relevance of what they are learning and critique new practices in terms of how they can be adapted in their own context (Mwirotsi et al., 1997). These discussions also need to be collaborative, reflective and happen on a regular basis (Hayes, 2000) and consider local norms and differing perspectives on both student-faculty roles and student learning (Tudor, 2011). We extend this understanding to the learning and development of facilitators as well.

The above research signals the important social and relational aspects of learning in small groups to improve teaching (Warhurs, 2006) which often gets overlooked in cascade models

that are more transmissive and short-term. Instead, intentional facilitation approaches ground facilitation skills and methods in theory and person-centered facilitation approaches also emphasize the personal attitudes, qualities, and presence of facilitators (Thomas, 2004). Other educational development professionals in higher education have referred to this as "authentic facilitation… placing "the highest value on the relationship between ourselves and our participants" (Bowman & Yeo, 2020, p. 22). We believe that when operationalized, intentional and person-centered facilitation approaches may provide necessary holistic developmental learning experiences for new facilitators and maintain high quality faculty development programs.

LUMS Facilitator Training Program

The Instructional Skills Training (IST) program is the localized name for the ISW at LUMS. To date, 87 instructors—a little less than half of the total number of instructors—have participated in the IST. In order to build local sustainability of the IST, a small initial cohort of three instructors were selected to participate in the FTP. To date, five facilitators have completed the FTP: three full time faculty from education, business, and computer science; one LLI staff member; and one full time teaching fellow from business.

The FTP has similar goals to the FDW where facilitators engage in an experiential training process. The FDW model helped us to envision a localized training program that was both intentional and person-centered and provided support and feedback to new facilitators over an extended period of time. Moreover, we sought to ensure the FTP would help develop expertise in local facilitators at LUMS. We learned that many programs in the region that rely on external facilitators fall short in this capacity as expertise is often diminished as soon as these individuals are no longer involved (Perry & Bevins, 2019).

The inaugural FTP happened over 4 months and was purposefully integrated into the IST schedule for faculty over the semester. Initially, new facilitators participated in three days of intensive workshops with the Lead Facilitator where they practiced facilitation techniques and taught IST theme sessions on constructive alignment and lesson planning, active learning, and assessment. Prior to these sessions, they read key research articles, reviewed the IST structure, and developed plans for theme sessions. Subsequently, each new facilitator was required to shadow and co-facilitate with the Lead Facilitator during two separate IST workshops. During shadowing, new facilitators practiced some technical skills (e.g., time keeping and camera work) on the first day and co-facilitated some of the small group feedback sessions during days two and three of the IST. When new facilitators co-facilitated, they adopted full responsibility for a leading a small group of 4-5 participants and the Lead worked with a second small group. New facilitators were also asked to lead a theme session for all IST participants and received feedback from the Lead on their instructional skills.

New facilitators received extensive verbal and written feedback from the Lead during the three-day workshop and their shadowing and co-facilitation experiences. The feedback focused on language and tone, phrasing, questioning techniques, perceptions of group dynamics during facilitation, and strengths and gaps in their facilitation practice. At the end of each day of the IST, new facilitators and the Lead debriefed the sessions, discussed their observations of each other's practice, and planned their involvement in the IST for the following day. Each facilitator also attended their peer's co-facilitation sessions to practice delivering one of the theme sessions. New facilitators appreciated this this practice opportunity because they were able to develop more comfort with facilitating the IST in a low-stakes environment.

High Impact Learning for Facilitators

The FTP was deliberately designed to offer new facilitators multiple opportunities to engage in high impact learning experiences over four months. We were inspired by ideas from the literature on faculty development and teacher change and ensured the FTP promoted reflection, conceptual and skills development, feedback on practice and that it was a peer-driven process (Bell, 2001; Guskey, 2002; Olsson & Roxå, 2012). In the following sections we describe high impact learning as experiential, reflective, and involves learning with and from others and giving and receiving feedback. We consider these learning processes to be high impact because they are the evidence-based and we have seen firsthand how new facilitators become intentional practitioners who develop both the skills and knowledge needed to support other instructors to develop their teaching.

Learning through Experience

At the heart of the FTP is the premise that learning is an experiential process where people learn by doing, experimenting with new skills, and reflecting on new knowledge (Kolb, 1984). Engaging in experiential learning is also a form of inquiry into the scholarship of teaching and learning (Benander, 2009). Learning to facilitate, through the experience of doing, is an example of such inquiry because "When expert teachers experiment with becoming novice learners, or when professors become students, they can come to personal, enduring insights about the experience of teaching and learning" (Benander, 2009, p. 36). In the FTP, new facilitators engage in experiential learning to plan and adapt their practices, reflect on their experiences using pedagogical scholarship and peer observations, and engage in ongoing mentorship and feedback (Roblin & Margalef, 2013; Olsson & Roxa, 2012).

The FTP is a fully integrated experiential learning process based on the experiences of new facilitators. According to Kolb (1984), experiential learning is an iterative process whereby learners engage in a concrete experience which subsequently becomes the basis for reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. The FTP begins with new facilitators' concrete experiences of their roles as faculty and past participants of the IST. From this point, they play multiple roles as teachers and learners in their peers' lessons and integrate what they learn from these experiences into their practice facilitation sessions.

New facilitators engage in numerous observations, feedback dialogues, and active experimentation activities that are used to prompt reflection and inquiry into their developing facilitation practice. First, they observe the Lead Facilitator using evidence-based facilitation and instructional practices; next they participate as learners in their peer's teaching sessions; and finally, they facilitate mock IST workshops to experiment with techniques and assess their own progress to plan for future sessions. Subsequent feedback circles are led by the Lead Facilitator and peers offer feedback that is specific, focused on their experiences as learners and offers suggestions for improvement. Facilitators modify their facilitation techniques by keeping reflective notes based on their observations and the feedback they receive. New facilita-

tors find these notes to be helpful reminders for key questions to ask future instructors during the IST about learner engagement, learning outcomes and assessment. Abstract conceptualization is prompted as facilitators are encouraged to draw on pedagogical theories from the theme sessions they delivered during the IST and "theorise from reflections on their own teaching practice" (Donnelly, 2012, p. 27). The following sections offer more detail about reflection and feedback as two important high impact learning processes in the FTP.

Reflection

Reflection on teaching and facilitation in higher education can occur in experiential learning situations, such as the activities that are facilitated through the FTP. Reflection has been deemed essential to prompting practitioners to identify gaps that can exist between their beliefs about practice and their actual behaviours in action (Schön, 1983; Enfield & Stasz, 2012) and to make their hidden assumptions, beliefs, and values explicit (Brookfield, 2017). Often, improving teaching practice requires an integrated approach of changing conceptions or beliefs and teaching skills at the same time (Kreber & Castleden, 2009; Osslon and Roxå; 2012). Osslon and Roxå (2012) further argue for the necessity for and learning potential of reflection—as part of a cycle of observation, engaging with theory, and planning for future development—to long lasting improvement in teaching. Reflection is therefore central to facilitator development "in the sense that the facilitator is conscious of what she is doing and why" (Brockbank & McGill, 1998, p. 152) and so they can draw on these reflections to plan for future improvement.

One reflective technique used in the FTP is for new facilitators to complete a short self-assessment at various key points during their training. Appendix A shows an example of the self-assessment tool which focuses on three domains of skills: a) supporting the instructor; b) managing the verbal feedback process; and c) organizing and planning learning experiences. New facilitators complete the assessment at the beginning and end of the first day of the FTP. In our experience, we have found that new facilitators rate themselves high in the beginning and lower at the end of the day. When asked to explain why they change their ratings, they expressed that they made assumptions that facilitation was just like instruction (at which many of them excelled). Yet, after practicing some facilitation skills on the first day they realized that the role involves more nuanced interpersonal and organizational skills that they felt the still needed to develop. The practice of facilitating and observing their colleagues and subsequently receiving feedback from peers and the Lead facilitator helped to mirror back to new facilitators the gaps between what they believed they excelled at and what they actually did in their practice. New facilitators complete the same self-assessment at other intervals during their training, including after shadowing and co-facilitating with the Lead when there is often significant improvement in their skills.

Reflection in the FTP also gives new facilitators the opportunity to consider different aspects of their facilitator role, which is often complex and encompasses other roles (Krell & Dana, 2012). It is common that faculty in higher education hold multiple identity roles such as teachers, academics, professionals, and researchers to name a few (Åkerlind, 2011; Kreber, 2010). We have found certain reflective practices to be useful in helping facilitators to develop self-awareness and self-management of their multiple roles (Brockbank & McGill, 1998; Thomas, 2008). Practices such as the self-assessment mentioned above, scaffolded reflection questions (Salinitri et al. 2015), journaling, writing observation notes, discussions with the Lead and their peers prompts facilitators to identify aspects of their multiple identity roles which they need to draw on more and those they may need to downplay during facilitation.

Learning with and from Others

Reflection can be supported in communities of practice which offer spaces for collaboration and learning with and from others. Studies show that learning to improve instructional practice does not happen in isolation; it is more likely to occur when instructors work together (Hoyte et. al, 2010; Onodipe et. al, 2020; Roblin & Margalef, 2013; Warhurs, 2006). In the FTP, high impact learning requires new facilitators to become inquirers who work in small communities of practice of trusted peers with whom they engage in critical discussions about their facilitation practices, and their goals for improvement. For example, there are multiple ongoing opportunities for co-inquiry including co-planning facilitation and instructional sessions, developing resources, observing facilitation and instruction during "mock IST" sessions, and post-facilitation debrief discussions.

Featherstone (1996) argued that communities of practice that take an inquiry stance toward learning and improving instruction provide opportunities for group members to "ask probing questions, invite colleagues to observe, and review their teaching and their students' learning and hold out ideas for discussion and debate" (as cited in Feiman-Nemser, 2001, p. 1043). In essence, the group functions as a community of practice and a space for *situated learning* whereby collective and individual learning is prompted by the group's joint reflection on their shared practice and negotiations about its meaning (Wenger, 1998). This joint reflection happens both while peers are facilitating and afterward during feedback dialogues when the whole group is reflecting back on the experience (Enfield & Stasz, 2012)

There are other benefits to individual and the group learning when facilitators engage in practices that focus on inquiry, as opposed to making conjectures about practice. We have found that inquiry-based conversation spaces such as communities of practice offer social, emotional and practical support for development (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). This supportive space is essential for facilitators to be able to embrace the vulnerability of coaching one another through mock facilitation sessions—often a brand-new learning experience for many—and also, to deal with the emotional aspects that can often accompany learning and receiving feedback (Lutovac et al., 2017). Often a groups' willingness to share openly and honestly about the emotional dimensions of their instructional experiences has to do with the trust that they feel from others, and it becomes an important part of the learning that happens within group conversations (Gauthier, 2019). Thus, the Lead Facilitator gives deliberate attention and purposeful structing to creating conversational spaces in the FTP that enable both new and experienced facilitators to learn with and from each other.

Giving and Receiving Feedback

Feedback exchanges are core components of many established faculty development programs in universities worldwide and has been deemed a critical factor to improving practice (see for e.g.,

Bell, 2001; Brookfield, 2017; Olsson & Roxå, 2012). High impact learning in the FTP is cultivated through feedback in the form of in-the-moment guidance and support for new facilitators to deconstruct facilitation experiences—including thoughts, language, and actions— in writing and during feedback dialogues. New facilitators give and receive feedback during training sessions, when they co-facilitate with the Lead for an IST, and when they facilitate independently for the first time.

The feedback facilitators receive is meant to challenge them individually. Yet, the very act of discussing each other's facilitation practice is also a way the group develops collective interpretation of effective facilitator practice – they agree with some practices to keep, and they choose to disregard others. Thus, meaning is explored and confirmed jointly in the group – a form of "social consensus" (Salinitri et al. 2015, p. 79).

Giving and receiving feedback is essential to improving teaching; however, it can also be an emotional experience, especially for facilitators/instructors who may receive criticism about their teaching (Lutovac et al., 2017). This is precisely why feedback dialogues in the FTP follow an overarching rule: that feedback must be given on the basis observed behaviors, rather than on assumptions or judgments about *why* a facilitator or instructor does what they do. This approach to giving feedback takes the focus away from the individual's intentions and helps to diffuse the propensity that many people have to be defensive about their behaviors. The ability to direct others to give clear, non-judgmental, and useful feedback and to help instructors feel comfortable in this process is a uncompromisable skill that all new facilitators in the FTP must demonstrate before they can facilitate the IST independently.

As new facilitators lead mock facilitation sessions, different scenarios unfold that lead to teachable moments with peers who are acting as instructors and/or learners. New facilitators are asked to reflect on their peers' responses, how they personally convey messages to others, and to examine people's body language when feedback discussions are taking place. The goal of close observation and open feedback during the facilitation experience is for facilitators to "see what you mean" as they unpack their facilitation experiences with their peers' support.

LESSONS LEARNED

Not Compromising on Quality

We have learned from IST participant feedback that a critical factor for its popularity has been the immersive experience of practice teaching, receiving peer and facilitator feedback, and the opportunities to reflect on different perspectives on student learning. While these may not be novel insights in institutions with more established faculty development programs, they certainly hold true in our institutional context in Pakistan where embedded faculty development programs are scarce. The IST workshop and the FTP are not based on transmission practices that encourage rote learning of instructional skills or simply leave participants with take-away tips and tricks. Rather, we continue to offer quality facilitation by individuals who have engaged in high impact learning processes to develop knowledge and skills needed to lead instructors through inquiry and critical reflection when they meet as small communities of practice. We recognize the sustainability the FTP and the IST program requires us to uphold this quality as we continue to train future facilitator cohorts and aim to avoid the dilution of training mentioned in the literature (Hayes, 2000; Mwirotsi et al.,1997).

We have witnessed that when facilitators have the opportunity to develop strong foundations in knowledge and skills through high impact learning experiences, they are more likely to support other instructors in several ways. First, they are effective at demonstrating to faculty *how* to incorporate evidence-based instructional skills in their teaching while being able to consider variances associated with teaching in different disciples. Second, they are able to prompt instructors to challenge their assumptions about transmission methods of teaching and rote learning, which popular cascade-type models do not often do well (Bett, 2016; Hayes, 2000).

Developing Shared Values

Developing a community of practice over time where new and experience facilitators focus on inquiry, observation and feedback dialogues seems to support the establishment of shared core values about facilitation, teaching, and learning. Shared core values amongst facilitators influences our abilities to maintain a quality program and to continuously offer meaningful, high impact learning experiences for future IST and FTP participants.

In the FTP we model three core values that all new facilitators must eventually demonstrate in their practice. The first is an emphasis on feedback that is formative and facilitates further learning. The feedback must affirm effectiveness of instructional practices that work well and increases instructors'/facilitators confidence to continue to experiment and make small changes in their teaching. Facilitative feedback also identifies how instructors can improve practice and offers a focus for reflection and possible future action. The second value involves cultivating open and caring group environments where there is trust amongst people so they can grow and learn from each other. These environments take time and investment in doing regular community-building activities to help cultivate safe and supportive conditions for learning. Finally, the FTP espouses a commitment to demonstrating evidence-based instructional practices that support learner engagement. At times when a new facilitator encounters a novel instructional/facilitation situation they may attempt to resort back to familiar transmission models of instructional development. However, the ongoing modelling of facilitation skills, practice with learner-centred instruction, and dialogues with a Lead Facilitator and peers, are meant to support facilitators in developing consistency in and comfort with using evidence-based practices while facilitating the IST.

LIMITATIONS

One limitation to the FTP is that it currently relies on a single lead facilitator to plan and lead all training sessions with new facilitators. As the program currently stands, a lot of responsibility sits with the Lead who has to be present at all IST workshops where new facilitators are involved in order to observe their work and provide extensive feedback. We are hoping that this time commitment will be alleviated once we train 2 more lead facilitators who can continue the work of the current Lead.

Another limitation we face is with recruiting full time faculty members to participate in the FTP. Because the FTP takes a longer time commitment than typical training workshops, many faculty who are busy with the demands of teaching, research and service find little time to invest in facilitation. The fact that we

have a limited number of facilitators who hold PhDs does have an impact on recruitment of faculty for the IST from time to time. In this South Asian culture, titles matter a lot and are revered as a sign of expertise and authority. Therefore, facilitators who do not have a PhD are sometimes seen as lacking expertise or knowledge about pedagogy and unaware of what it is like to be a full-time faculty member; however, these perceptions fade quickly during the IST when people experience how well the facilitators perform. We are continuously working to identify more full-time faculty who participate in our other faculty development initiatives and show promise as potential facilitators. We keep our compensation rates high so there is also a financial incentive for individuals to consider as well. Our goal is to add one new faculty member to the FTP each time it is offered.

CONCLUSION

Institutions in developing countries have seen some increase in the prevalence of faculty development programs that seek to improve and support teaching that is informed by evidence about how students learn. However, a common problem is that many institutions employ cascade models to train facilitators and teachers that are often not given enough time to take hold in the local culture. A related issue is the tendency for trainers to reinforce rote memorization of pedagogical content and superficial learning of skills which can be insufficient for helping people to make lasting changes to their teaching. As explored earlier in this paper, these technical approaches to facilitation run the risk of dilution of training and limiting the impact on teachers. One way to address this issue is for facilitators to engage in high impact learning processes—experiential learning that involves reflection, learning with and from others, and focuses on giving and receiving feedback— that we support in the FTP at LUMS. We have found that a key benefit of investing in working with new facilitators over time is that we can be proactive about limiting the dilution problem. Specifically, we are able to watch people in action and provide feedback, over time, as they continue to develop their skills. However, spending more time on training is an institutional choice we made in order to promote quality over quantity in the early stages of developing the faculty development program at LUMS. The benefits of this choice of maintaining the quality of our IST program outweigh the limitations about time and recruitment of new facilitators that we mentioned above.

With the onset of COVID-19, our facilitators have offered various versions of the IST online; however, we have yet to offer another FTP for a new cohort of facilitators. We see this as a time for opportunity to make some necessary changes to the FTP in order to continue to ensure the sustainability and quality of faculty development, including the IST, at LUMS. Currently, we are revising the FTP to include more online components, given our current restrictions on gathering in person. We plan to start training a new cohort of 6 facilitators in the Fall of 2021. At this time, we also recognize the need to conduct formal empirical research in the future to further study the impact of the FTP on new facilitator to substantiate our theories and firsthand observations of high impact learning with new facilitators. We hope that by building on the work we have done so far, we will strengthen our approach to fostering high impact learning in the FTP. Our goal is to continue to engage in scholarly inquiry into our experiences at LUMS and to share these to both inform and shape facilitation practices in Pakistan and beyond where short-term, technical approaches to facilitator training may also be prevalent.

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APPENDIX A: SELF-ASSESSMENT ON FACILITATION SKILLS

Please rate yourself on a scale of 1-5 (1-poor; 2-fair; 3-good; 4-very good; 5-excellent) for the following:

Supporting the Instructor

a. Being alert to instructor needs and emotional states
b. Using affirming comments and supportive expressions and gestures
c. Sitting beside the instructor during the oral feedback session
d. Acknowledging the instructor
e. Encouraging participants to direct their observations to the instructor – not the facilitator
f. Attending to the instructor's concerns/questions during feedback

Managing the Verbal feedback process:

a. Providing an opening and a closing for the feedback session
b. Encouraging balanced participation among all participants
c. Focusing on feedback that is specific and behaviour-focused, that uncovers learner experience and response, and that emphasizes quality of feedback rather than quantity
d. Probing for clarification from participants
e. Paraphrasing for understanding
f. Balancing positive and growth-oriented feedback
g. Ensuring the instructor's concerns are addressed
h. Getting feedback on the lesson basics
i. Confirming comments from the group
j. Being alert to differences in learner experiences

Organizing and Planning Learning Experiences

a. Setting up all resources and materials in the room
b. Planning useful theme sessions
c. Making adjustments to daily agendas based on changing circumstances
d. Managing overall time and process of the